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Backbone.

When you see a fellow mortal
Without fixed and fearless views,
Hanging on the skirts of others,
Walking in their cast-off shoes,
Bowing low to wealth or favor,
With abject, uncovered head,
Ready to retract or waver,
Willing to be drove or led;
Walk yourself with firmer bearing,
Throw your moral shoulders back,
Show your spine has nerve and marrow—
Just the things which his must lack.
A stronger word
Was never heard
In sense and tone
Than this, *backbone*.

When you see a theologian
Hugging close some ugly creed,
Fearing to reject or question
Dogmas which his priest may read,
Holding back all noble feeling,
Choking down each manly view,
Caring more for forms and symbols
Than to know the Good and True;
Walk yourself with firmer bearing,
Throw your moral shoulders back,
Show your spine has nerve and marrow—
Just the things which his must lack.
A stronger word
Was never heard
In sense and tone
Than this, *backbone*.

When you see a politician
Crawling through contracted holes,
Begging for some fat position,
In the ring, or at the polls,
With no sterling manhood in him,
Nothing staple, broad or sound,
Destitute of pluck or ballast,
Double-sided all around;
Walk yourself with firmer bearing,
Throw your moral shoulders back,
Show your spine has nerve and marrow—
Just the things which his must lack.
A stronger word
Was never heard
In sense and tone,
Than this, *backbone*.

A modest song and plainly told—
The text is worth a mine of gold;
For many men most sadly lack
A noble stiffness in the back.

SILENT BILL.

I had been for nearly a year roaming over the West. In the course of my wanderings I came upon an emigrant train which was just starting out from "the States," and joined it.

The novelty soon wore off and I found the days fatiguing, the nights and sleep only being desirable. I had been conscious for days of a fever in my veins, but had scorned to complain, and taking a sort of savage delight in seeking to do an extra amount of toil. It was my turn to prepare supper for our mess, but once ready I went off as far as I could crawl from the noise of the camp and the odor of the cooking. The last I remember of that day was my dropping down by the side of some shrubs.

Two weeks afterward I opened my eyes upon a different team from the one I started with, and the driver was the largest, most uncouth looking man I ever saw. I was on a straw bed, made up on one side of the wagon, and in answer to my call, the strange man bent over me. I asked all the questions I had strength for, and then waited for the answers. He told me in the fewest possible words that I was missed from the train, and he sent back to look for me. That I had "been dead beat for two weeks, and had better keep still and go to sleep if I could."

I obeyed, because I could not help it. I received my food and medicine from the hands of my strange-looking friend, but it seemed impossible to get any information from him.

My recovery was rapid, and as soon as I made my appearance in the camp I was warmly greeted by our company and treated to many an extra dish by the kind-hearted people.

I learned that I had not been missed until nearly noon of the day that I was left, and then they had halted, and "Silent Bill" had volunteered to look me up, had found me, and had taken upon himself the whole care during my sickness. I could find out very little about the man who had thus brought me back to life. He had joined the company, like myself, at the last minute, had given only the one name, to which the boys added another, until he was called all over the camp "Silent Bill." His team was good, and he was well supplied with provisions, which he handed out generally to any one who had need.

With my returning strength, I felt a strong interest in everything, and would gladly have been companionable and useful, but he never called on me to do anything, unless some one needed help, then he would leave the care to me for a time. He was always ready to walk that others might ride; fatigue seemed unknown to him. Foremost when danger threatened was his gaunt form, and it was always his rifle which brought in the earliest game. It came about that he held the gratitude of almost every one in the train, but loud thanks seemed to offend him greatly.

I never saw him hesitate but once; then some children, two little girls, had been running along with their mother, and she asked him to lift them up into his wagon and give them a ride, as their own team was far behind. He went up to one of them, laid his hand upon the arm of one, started back, rubbed his hands together [illegible] called to me.

[redacted] them o[redacted] up his team and did not speak again for hours.

All hearts became lighter as we ascended the Sierras and began to think of finding an abiding place.

When it came to leave-taking "Bill" was missing, the others started on with their teams, and I staid by his until sundown. Any number of good bys and kindly messages were left with me for him. And one woman gave me a little package saying: "He was so kind to Willie when he was sick, and his hand made that precious little grave on the mountains." I thought, to know the full value of the gift, Bill should have received it, as I did, wet with the mother's tears.

When he came back, we were alone upon the hillside.

He asked, "Why didn't you go on with the others?"

And I answered, "Because I did not choose to leave you alone, after all you have done for me. I shall go with you, if you will let me, it does not make much difference to me where."

He looked at me keenly.

"You had better not," said he, slowly; "you will wish you hadn't some day."

We had started a fire, and I could see his face by the light of the blaze.

I felt drawn to him, not from any sympathy of feeling, but because I was convinced there would come a time when I could in a measure repay him for his kindness to me.

I reached out my hand, "We'll stick together a while, old fellow."

He wouldn't take it, but said; "The kettle boils, we might about as well eat our grub as to waste time a talking."

I gave him the messages, which were received in silence, and when I handed the package he only said, "Lay it down."

We made ready for an early start in the morning, then I rolled up in my blanket, and with my feet to the fire lay down to sleep. When I waked up the blaze had died down, but I could see Bill at a distance, bending over what proved to be a hole in the ground. After a while he broke off some green boughs, threw them in, and then hastily threw in the earth.

He came and sat down by the fire. I watched him for an hour or so, but he never moved, and when I woke in the morning, he had not changed his position.

We started off, but I made an excuse to return, and hurriedly opened the ground where I had seen him working in the night. I do not know what I expected to see, but I certainly was surprised when I found under the covering of earth and green, the little package, which had tearfully been intrusted to my care.

I broke the string and found a small copy of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress."

"I will keep it," I said, "and when he needs me most he will need this too."

When we reached the first miners' camp, Bill waked up and was eager enough until he had scanned the face of every man. That day he looked weary, and it was the first time he laid down when I did for the night.

In the morning he sold his team, all but two horses; those he packed with blankets and provisions, and we struck off down the canon, stopping wherever any one was at work, and going out of our way if we heard of a solitary miner.

After a while he left off telling me to leave him, and I think the companionship made him feel more human. Once he stopped a week when I seemed tired out, but was restless and uneasy and declared "another day would kill him."

"Tell me," said I, one day, "why you will not rest; this life is wearing upon you; you cannot endure half the fatigue you could upon the Plains. Let's take up a claim and settle down, or if you will go on—let me help you; couldn't I?"

"No," he answered, "and I believe you are holding me back. I have felt it ever since I first looked upon your face when I found you half dead by those bushes that day. I wish I had left you to die."

He sprang up and confronted me, "I will have no more of this, I shall go on alone, and don't you dare get between me and my work or I'll——"

His eyes fell before mine. "Do you think I am afraid of you? you, who wouldn't harm even an insect. Haven't I seen you go out of your way, rather than tread the life out of a crawling worm? Shall all those months of unselfish care for others go for nothing, and your hasty words make me leave you." Besides," said I, "I have a work as well as you." He looked inquiringly at me. "Shall I tell you what it is?"

He sat down by the fire which he had lighted.

"Keep still," said he, "for one month more, and then you may have your say."

In the morning when we started out, the air was heavy with smoke. When we reached San Francisco, after a day or two, we found there had been an extensive fire. Bill was unwearied in helping build tents for the homeless, and his money went freely to feed the starving hundreds, who were likely to find only a grave in the land which had promised them so much. I felt that I had never known half of his genuine goodness of heart until those days, and I left off watching him as I had done.

We were stopping at one of the places dignified by the name of "Hotel," and in those "early times" considered magnificent in the way of accommodations, quite worth the fabulous prices which were demanded for them. But one parlor was the bar-room, and our "room" a bunk, one of a dozen or so in the same apartment. We had been staying there perhaps three weeks, when one night I was awakened from a sound sleep by the fall of some heavy body. I listened, but there was no repetition, then I groped my way to Bill's bunk. He was not there, though I had seen him "turn in" when I did.

I took my hat and passed out through the bar-room into the darkness and night. Drunken men of all nations and tribes were to be met on the muddy sidewalks, their horrid oaths and obscene jests, muttered or shouted in half-broken language, reminded me of a terrible description I listened to when a child, of the abode of the lost.

The gleaming lights from the drinking saloons and gambling hells only added another touch to the picture.

I hurried on, peering into every place where was light or sound, and I kept up the search until the first rosy tints in the East told of the coming day.

When I came round to our hotel, I found I had been sent for three times, and was to remain there until the messenger came again. I waited two hours, and then saw the bar-tender pointing me out to a Spaniard. He beckoned to me, and I followed him without a word. We went through lanes and bypaths, until I lost all idea of locality. Finally we came to a cabin, when he motioned me to come round by the side, then he pointed to me to look through a slight aperture.

Two men lay on the floor, which was covered with blood.

I saw at a glance that one was Bill, and the other bore the same face I had often seen in my dreams.

I thought at first that they were both dead, but a low groan came from Bill, and I rushed to the door. I knelt down by him and spoke.

"I did not do it," said he, "but I meant to."

I asked him no question, only if he was able to be moved.

"Yes, but never mind."

We made a litter of a door, and by the help of some men the Spaniard brought, we carried him to our boarding-place.

I summoned a physician, who pronounced the wound dangerous but not necessarily mortal.

I watched over him, and saved him in spite of his own desire. He chose to die, but by my care he came slowly back and took up his burden again.

One day as I sat by his bed, I took from my pocket the little book I had found buried under the green boughs. I read two or three chapters aloud, then put it up without a word. He became interested, and I read on from day to day, as he could bear it, until the book was finished.

Then he asked, "Where did you get it?"

"I dug it from the ground," said I laconically.

He held out his hand for it, and so it passed into his keeping.

When he became strong enough we took walks together, which gradually increased in length until we would spend whole days down by the bay.

I knew he would tell me his story when he could bring himself to it. He was two weeks going over it, sometimes giving me a single picture, and at another time unrolling whole years like a panorama before me.

His first remembrance had been of a hovel where rum had left nothing but ruin. He never heard a kind word, or had a kiss left upon his childish face, but he hated the meanness and filth which surrounded him and ran away to sea, when only fourteen years of age. When he came back, grown to manhood, his old home had been swept away by the tide of improvements, and his relations were all gone, save one fair-headed sister, who might have been his idol, but she vanished out of his life without a word of farewell, and for years he never heard of her or the man who had lured her away.

The year that I met him, he had been through the West; he couldn't tell what for, except that he had made money and wanted to spend it. Vice and luxury were strangers to him, so his wants were few and simple.

He came to a cabin, one night, and as it was late, asked to be allowed to stay; the man consented, and bade the woman provide some supper for the traveler.

His host went out, and his voice could be heard at some distance from the front of the house. The woman eyed him closely from a window, then motioning to Bill, led him to a slide window at the rear of the cabin, whispered to him that 'twas only a mile to the next house, slipped a piece of paper into his hand, and bade him run for his life.

He said he could not tell how it happened, but for the first and only time he ran from danger. He aroused the people, and was given a place on the floor to sleep.

Saying nothing about his adventure, he managed to read by the light of the coals the paper which the woman had given him. Imagine his surprise when he found that he had seen his long-lost sister, and that she had sought to save his life by getting him away from her husband, who mistrusted that he had money, and would not hesitate to murder him in order to obtain it. She said she had witnessed dreadful things, but begged him not to try to meet her, as his life would be imperiled.

The next morning he determined to return and have an interview with her, and if possible persuade her to accompany him.

The house was closed, boards nailed up before the windows, and no sign of life upon the premises.

He looked for his horse; that, of course, was gone, and he was about leaving, when he heard moans. Again he listened, and traced the sound to the window out of which he had escaped the previous night.

He wrenched off the boards and soon found the sister he sought, but she was in a dying condition. She had been terribly beaten by the brutal husband; upon her had come the full brunt of his disappointment when he discovered his victim had left. She told of terrible sufferings and crime, but death hastily closed her recital, and poor Bill held a lifeless form in his arms. He called in the only neighbors, within several miles, the people where he stayed over night. Together they buried the bruised and mangled body, and over the grave the brother vowed to revenge the life which had been sacrificed for him.

He heard of "his man" crossing the plains, and so had followed, nursing all the time the deepest hatred in his heart, never doubting that he should find him, and then the end was plain.

He held up his hands. "I have seen his blood upon them all the way," said he.

"That night," he continued, "I could not sleep, and something whispered that he was not far from me. So I went out and continued my search. I heard his voice on the street. I should have known it anywhere. I followed him to his cabin, and entered close behind him. I had something to say to him, and you know I couldn't shoot him down without giving him a chance; 'twant in me to do that.

"But he turned upon me quicker than thought and gave me this shot through my shoulder. My right arm dropped powerless, but I sprang upon him, and as we closed he gave me a stab in my side, his own pistol, pointed toward himself, went off, either by accident or design, I shall never know which, and we fell together on the floor.

"That Spaniard came in, attracted by the firing. I had helped his family to food and shelter, so I easily prevailed upon him to go for you, not because I thought you could do anything for me, but I did not want you to spend your time hunting me up.

"The wretch died; although I didn't kill him, I meant to, so I am a murderer to you. My work on earth is done, and you had better leave now. I am afraid I shall get to care for you if you stay, and that would be foolish, as there hasn't been any love in my life. I shan't trouble you with any more talk. I guess I have lost my right now to the title the boys gave me."

As soon as he was able, we went back into the country and pitched our tent among the grand old trees. There came days when the hushed stillness brought thoughts of rest, peace and almost believing.

Under the branches where the stray sunbeams touched us with light and healing, I told the story of Him whose blood can wash the deepest stain from human hearts and hands, and into nature's temple came the great, invisible, loving presence which stands human as ever, though unseen—in our very midst, and whose coming into any life will lift it from its mire, and defilement into the lost Paradise which lies about us everywhere.

As I dwelt upon the wondrous love and compassion, he asked earnestly, "Why has my life been so dark and loveless?"

Ah, how many aching hearts have asked that, as they look back over dwarfed and thwarted lives.

But there came a time when his questionings ceased, and he changed his lifelong burden for a cross.

And for years, "Silent Bill" was known all through the mines and camps as "The Big Elder."

The Ohio River is going into decline. It keeps its bed and is quite low.

French Peasants During the War.

If I am asked what was the attitude of the peasants during the war and between the two armies, I reply that their behavior was the most lamentable of all the lamentable spectacles in this unhappy struggle. It is among the peasants that the results of ignorance and selfishness have exhibited themselves in the most striking manner. In the Ardennes the people were not heroic, but at any rate they assisted the French Army, helped the wounded, and were not utterly vile before the enemy; but in Normandy and the Beauce, where I was afterward stationed, the state of demoralization was frightful. The peasants were too selfish to make the least sacrifice for their own soldiers; and thus both from fear and from interest became subservient to the Germans, furnishing them with provisions and other assistance. The people of Bonnieres, between Mantes and Evreux, were weak enough to send their letters to the Prussians at Mantes that they might be read before being forwarded to Evreux. With rare exceptions they did nothing for the wounded; but if we happened to be successful in an action, I cannot describe the low ferocity with which they turned upon the Germans, before whom they had so recently been cringing. At Oucques the ambulance had some difficulty in preventing two wounded Bavarians from being massacred by the people. A St. Leon-and a peasant actually amused himself with pulling the broken leg of a German, for the mere sake of causing him torture. At Ouzouer the people thronged round a solitary wounded officer, and assailed him with threats and insults of all kinds. And their stupidity was equal to their wickedness. They were constantly mistaking us for Germans on account of our flag, and of the ambulance cross on our sleeves. They were certain that we were in communication with the Prussians, because we were not afraid of them; and accused us of firing rockets to point out the position of the army to the enemy. At Sommanthe they were convinced that the Prussians had come because our ambulance was established there; and at Ouzouer it was believed that we had plundered the wounded, and that our only object in nursing the patients was to make money. I do not deny that devoted hearts, and souls above the common, were occasionally to be met with. I have heard from peasants of both sexes golden words, which will remain in my recollection as long as I live; but the great majority, even when intelligent, are shamefully demoralized, and scandalously profligate, selfish and wicked. Quarrels and scandals rage with fury in the villages, and even in the families themselves things occur which are too bad to be mentioned.—*Gabriel Monod, in Macmillan's Magazine.*

An Indian Sun Dance.

A correspondent of a Western paper gives some revolting details of the "Sun dances" of the Sioux Indians, which take place annually. About the 1st inst. the "Sun dance" commenced at Cheyenne. It continues 24 hours without intermission, the dancers not even stopping for refreshments. It is during the carnival that the young Indians who aspire to rank among the "braves" are subjected to a trying and cruel ordeal. Incisions are made in either breast with a sharp knife, cutting clear to the bone, when the muscles are raised up and a stout stick inserted beneath. A similar incision is made in the back, and a stick passed through the flesh as in the other case. Then a stout cord is attached to either end of the stick, so that it may not draw out, and the cord securely fastened to the ceiling of the council chamber. The candidates for promotion then commence a dance, jumping forward and backward, throwing their whole weight upon the cord, and they keep up until the sticks are torn through the flesh. The young Indian who gives up from pain or exhaustion before he succeeds in wrenching the sticks from his body is declared unworthy to be a warrior, and is forever disgraced in the eyes of his brethren. The scene is said to be a most revolting one to witness. The blood streams from the torn and lacerated flesh, while the devotees with demoniac yells plunge around in a perfect frenzy. The spectators applaud and taunt by turns, inciting the poor wretches to more desperate efforts to free themselves, until finally, as the last sinew snaps, and they fall all gory and exhausted upon the ground, there is raised such a series of savage whoops and yells that one could well imagine himself in a veritable pandemonium.

An Illinois Farm.—Twenty years ago, a farm eight miles square in Livingston county, Illinois, was entered by its present owner at $1.25 per acre. It is now sub-divided into thirty-two farms of 1,280 acres each, every farm being run by separate sets of hands, the whole under the direction of the owner, M. L. Sullivant. There are 15,000 acres under the plough; 250 miles of hedge fence, besides other fences; 150 miles of ditch for draining. One hundred men and four hundred work horses and mules are employed on the farm, besides two book-keepers, four blacksmiths, and eight carpenters. An accurate account is kept with each sub-farm, and with each man, horse and mule, the animals being all named or numbered, and charged with the amount paid for them and their food, and credited with their labor. The entire farm, with improvements and personal property on it, is now valued at about $2,000,000.

The Swedish Colony.—The people of Maine are highly pleased with the success of the new Swedish colony in the Aroostook region, which now numbers one hundred families. To each family a farm of one hundred acres is given with a conditional deed, which requires for the completion of the title that the ground shall be occupied for five years, and that at the expiration of that time fifteen acres shall be under cultivation, and a house shall have been erected. For the present, those of the colonists who are without means are supplied with the necessaries of life by the State, which they are to repay by labor on the public roads. All of the colonists are able to read and write, which is accounted for by the statement that in Sweden no person is allowed to marry unless he is a member of the church, and no one is permitted to join the church until he can read and write.

Personal Gossip of Horace Greeley.

Mr. McDermott of the Jersey City *Herald*, in his personal gossip of New York editors, speaks of Horace Greeley of the Tribune. Mr. Mc D. says:—Mr. Greeley, early in life went to work for Mr. West, setting type on the Polyglot Testament. Mr. West didn't like his appearance, and told the foreman of the office, "for Heaven's sake discharge that stupid looking fellow." But Horace set a good proof, and was retained. He was the butt of the printers in the office. They called him "the Ghost." The printer's devil used to play tricks on him. But they all borrowed his money as soon as he earned it. Of course he never was paid back. What did such a sleepy looking fellow want with money anyhow," was the borrower's argument.

On the 10th of April, 1841, appeared the first number of the *Tribune*. Mr. Gregory loaned Greeley and Mc Elrath $1,000 to start it. It printed 5,000 and sold 600 Mr. Greeley says he had hard work to give the balance away. He expended the first week $592. The receipts were $92. He created a sensation, and he was at once dubbed "the philosopher." Beach of the *Sun* tried to injure him by forcing newsboys to stop selling the *Tribune*. Greeley exposed the trick in his paper, and the people rushed to his assistance, and filled his columns full of advertisements. The first issue of the *Tribune*, Greeley made up the paper and stayed in the office till morning.

The compositors were always playing tricks upon Mr. Greeley. They were playing penny-ante one afternoon in the composing room. There was a hole in the floor directly over Greeley's head. One printer said to another that he would bet him a drink, he could drop his tobacco juice through the hole without touching the wood. The bet was accepted. The stream of tobacco juice fell on Greeley's bald head. He felt of it and looked at his fingers. Terrible swearing was heard coming up stairs. The printers grabbed their coppers and hid. They watched Greeley. He had both fists clinched. He was shoving his arms in and out, striking imaginary blows. "I can lick the man who spat on my head," he shouted as he searched around the office to find the offender. He didn't find him. He took a piece of paper from the floor, gave his head an angry rub, and walked down stairs, swearing fearfully.

When the heating pipes took the place of stoves in the *Tribune* office, Greeley entered one cold morning. He placed his exchanges beside him on a chair, took off his boots, warmed his fingers, and then placed his feet to bake a little on the heating pipes. After remaining in this cozy position half an hour, somebody entered his room, with the remark, "Mr. Greeley, we are all freezing. I think there is something wrong with the pipes. There hasn't been any steam on to-day." Greeley glanced at his feet, pulled on his boots, and never uttered a word.

Suicides in Ireland.

The people of Kilquiggan, County Wicklow, Ireland, deal in a summary way with suicides, perhaps with the object of preventing them from repeating their crime. A tailor named Bryne hanged himself there a couple of weeks ago and, the coroner's jury having returned a verdict of temporary insanity, his remains were interred in the churchyard under the coroner's warrant. A night or two afterwards the body was exhumed by unknown persons, conveyed into the County of Carlow and there buried in a field. On the next morning it was found on a cross-road near Coolkenno with a hand-barrow, which was probably used in carrying it. The magistrates, seeing that the people would not let the corpse rest in peace, proceeded to Shillelagh Workhouse (ominous name for poor Bryne) and conferred with the guardians as to the advisability and legality of bringing the remains within the precincts of the workhouse, but were met by a delegation of the female inmates who declared their determination to resist such a disposition of the corpse. The magistrates, fearing further to arouse the already excited feelings of the paupers, buried the suicide's body in a field adjoining the place where it had been found with the hand-barrow.

The Fight in Corea.—Some naval officers formerly cruising in the East, were conversing about Admiral Rodger's attack on the Coreans, and expressed no surprise as to the disparity of losses, though exceedingly gratified with the result as vindicating the honor of the flag and causing the American name to be respected. The Coreans, are regarded as a brave and warlike people; but their primitive modes of fighting avail little against improved weapons. An officer described a battle in which hundreds of wounded Asiatics were destroyed by their own weapons in a recent war, fighting with gingalls—a species of old-fashioned musket fired from the hip—a sort of cat-tail burning with a slow fire, is used to touch them off, and returned to the belt ready for another shot. But when the wounded soldier falls, the light cotton clothing is soon in flames, wreathing the vanquished man in a funeral pyre. In consequence the battle-field presented a shocking array of disfigured corpses. Hereafter the Coreans will probably be more careful about firing on the American flag, or at least to offer a suitable explanation.

Summer Tours.—A Boston paper speaks thus of the difficulty of choosing which way to go for a summer tour: "One may start from Boston with four weeks, and a hundred and twenty-five dollars at his disposal, and see in full the picturesque beauty of the Adirondacks, or plant himself in the wild mountain scenery of Virginia and drink his fill at some of her innumerable springs. Or, if he can command a couple of months and six hundred dollars, he can traverse the continent, look out on the Pacific, and see the wonderful Yosemite. Or with still less means, he may embark on a European steamer, spend a day in London, give fifty days to Switzerland, and be at home in ninety."

Fish.—Four years ago a new kind of fish, specimens of which Prof. Agassiz called a variety of alewives, appeared in Seneca Lake, N. York. This year they they have been attacked by a singular mortality. Thousands have perished from some unexplained cause, and their dead bodies line the shores in such numbers as to threaten a pestilence.

Dutch Marriages.

The proverbial slip 'twixt cup and lip is not unknown in Holland as elsewhere; nevertheless, this system of making formal engaged calls certainly does tend to prevent a rupture upon slight grounds; for it is a matter of no small embarrassment to call upon the same people a second time and ceremoniously introduce sweetheart number two! It is held to be part of a lover's duties to accompany his mistress to parties and balls, and also his right and pleasure to take her to theatres and concerts unaccompanied by a chaperon; but he is seldom asked to pay a visit in the same house with her for more than a day. Lovers always choose the house and buy the furniture together during the courtship. When the time comes they two go together alone to the town-hall for the "aanteekening" or betrothal. This is merely a public notice of the intention to marry, and is given in writing. The notice is then put into a kind of box, protected by brass wire, and placed for some time in a conspicuous part of the hall. Bans are also published in church. A runaway match is held to be thoroughly disgraceful, is accomplished with difficulty, and seldom attempted. Friends now, in place of wedding-cards, receive by post a lithographed document announcing the aanteekening. On the first Sunday afternoon subsequent to this the bruid and bruidgom, who are thus called in the interval between the aanteekening and the wedding-day, hold a grand reception in the drawing-room of the father of the bruid. A sofa, sometimes gayly decorated with flowers and evergreens, being occupied by the two; the bruid's relations range themselves at his right hand, the bruidgom's at hers. The bruid wears her wedding-dress, veil, and orange wreath on this occasion, and the company generally are in gala costume. Visitors then, when announced, march up between the two opposite lines of relations, and make pretty speeches to the happy pair, and, after having intrusted themselves for a short time to the care of the bruidsmeisjes, who dressed for the occasion, show the presents, placed upon a table at the other end of the room, and offer hippocras and sweets called "bruidssuikers," and cake, make a rapid departure, and are succeeded by others. The wedding commonly takes place on the Thursday week after reception Sunday, and during the interval balls and parties are given in honor of the young couple. On the appointed day of the wedding-party bruid and bruidgom, going alone in the first carriage, make first for the town-hall. The burgomaster marries them, makes a little speech, and receives their signatures; to all this there must be four witnesses. Then to church in the same order. The party having assembled in a sort of evstry, the bruidgom gives his right arm to the bruid, and leads the way to the chancel (reserved nowadays for marriages only) or to the body of the church in front of the pulpit. Here the pair seat themselves upon a central sofa, and relations range themselves as at the aanteekening reception. The ceremony is simple, the couple being already married. After a hymn has been sung they merely have to acknowledge the fact of marriage in answer to the clergyman, and having advanced to two kneeling-chairs ready placed a few steps in front, receive a blessing from him and a short exhortation. No ring is used, but one is sometimes worn subsequently. The new husband then gives his left arm to his wife and leads the way home again. The wedding breakfast is a small affair, attended by very near relations only, and the happy pair slip off without adieux as soon as possible. The wedding dress is never worn again in its original state.

A New Electrical Theory.

M. Becquerel has just communicated to the Academy of Science in Paris a new hypothesis concerning the origin of atmospheric electricity. In his opinion, its source resides in the sun, which, according to the recent discoveries of Mr. Norman Lockyer, is surrounded by an immense envelope of hydrogen which, being mixed up with a considerable proportion of watery vapor, is therefore positively electrified. This communicates its fluid to the whole mass of ethereal substance which fills the interplanetary spaces, and thence to our atmosphere. But as the latter is a bad conductor, the consequence is, according to our author, that the upper strata of the air must be saturated with positive electricity. Here, says a French journal we pause to ask what evidence he has, in the first place, of the existence of this ethereal substance; and secondly, of its conductibility? M. Becquerel does not think it necessary to stop at such details, but seeks to establish his theory by various arguments, such as, for instance, the fact that *in vacuo* an electrified liquid evaporates more rapidly than when not in that state; and that an auroraborealis is acccompanied by a noise which he finds to be exactly the same as that produced by an electric spark.

The Paris Sewers.—The close inspection which has been made of the sewers in Paris has already led to the discovery of large quantities of weapons and ammunition, and also of many ex-federalist combatants, who, despairing of escape from the regular troops sought refuge in the subterranean passages, with whatever provisions they could secure. The greater part of these miserable creatures are reported by the *Opinion Nationale* to be in a most deplorable condition from hunger and the poisonous atmosphere of their hiding places. At the angle of the Rue Vavin and the outer Boulevard the scavengers found five bodies in the sewer, one that of an officer, and all mutilated by rats. The bodies were brought out by means of ropes, and, after search for papers and documents, were interred in the Mont Parnasse Cemetery.

A Fall River (Mass.) photographer was called on a recent Sunday to take some pictures of a deceased child. The latter was placed in a chair, and over it was arranged an arch of roses, with one sprig hanging down from the centre. It is related by an eye-witness that several pictures were taken, and in the sixth, partly obscuring the pendent sprig, appeared clearly defined the face of the child's mother, who had been dead several years. Considerable local excitement is said to have resulted from this "spiritual photograph," if such it was.

Faith.

A swallow in the Spring
Came to our granery, and neath the eaves
Essayed to make her nest, and there did bring
Wet earth and leaves.

Day after day she toiled
With patient art; but, ere her work was crowned,
Some sad mishap the tiny fabric spoiled,
And dashed it to the ground.

She found the ruin wrought;
Yet not cast down, forth from her place she flew,
And with her mate fresh earth and grasses brought,
And built her nest anew.

Facts and Fancies.

Mere matter of form—Fitting a dress.

An old miser starved to death in an Albany barn with $85.60 in his pocket.

An Illinois gentleman has taken a gold medal for raising 1,000 varieties of apples.

There are 368 collegiate institutions in the United States, eighteen being in New England.

The Lutherans in the United States number 2,200 ministers, 3,537 churches, and nearly 400,000 communicants.

A down-east editor says that since the recent rain the farmers "are smiling like new shingles on a patched roof.

The Indiana State Medical Association, at a recent meeting, expelled one of its members because he advertised his profession.

A boy in Lancaster, Pa., in sliding down a pole, caught a gold ring he had on his finger in a spike and the whole skin, nail and all, came off the finger intact.

A strong mind is more easily impressed than a weak one; you shall not as readily convince a fool that you are a philosopher, as a philosopher that you are a fool.

In the vestry of the Notre Dame, at Paris, they exhibit a portion of the vertebræ of the neck of the Archbishop who was shot in 1848, with the bullet still fixed in it.

There is now in the State of Massachusetts one mile of railroad to every five miles of area. A similar ratio for the whole country would give an aggregate of more that 600,000 miles of line.

A Bainbridge serenader who mournfully warbled "I'm lonely to-night, love, without thee," had his loneliness alleviated by a number of dogs, who made it lively enough for him for the balance of the night.

It is a comfort to be criticized. Few things please the writer better. Censure is better than indifference. When a man finds that a woman will not love him, the next best thing is to get her to quarrel with him.

The Kansas City (Missouri) *Journal* says that about 500,000 head of cattle will be received in the western markets this season from Texas. Already 287,000 head have been received by the Kansas Pacific Railroad.

An Indiana artist was recently fined $4 for sprinkling Scotch snuff on the moustache of a sleeping lawyer. It is said the force expended by that lawyer in sneezing would have sufficed to have run a windmill for a week.

The Indian substitute for tobacco is the bark of red willow. It is scraped fine and dried. When smoked it produces no sickness or headache, and the Indians of Wisconsin who use it turn from tobacco with disgust.

A young man in Ohio hung his vest, the pocket of which contained sixty dollars in greenbacks, near a brush heap, which he afterwards set fire to. He was next day enquiring whether the government would make good his loss.

A gentleman on getting a soda, was retiring from the store without the usual little ceremony which follows that operation. "Recollect, sir," said the polite proprietor, "if you lose your pocket-book, you didn't pull it out here."

A local paper asserts that the dogs of Calhoun, Ga., have become so habituated to having tinware attached to their tails that whenever one of them sees a tin kettle lying in the road he backs up to it and waits for somebody to tie it on.

A correspondent of the Bangor *Whig* writes that a horse and a cow had a pitched battle Sunday in a field. The cow hooked the horse, making a wound four inches in length; the horse kicked the cow in the head, instantly killing her.

The Janesville *Recorder* says that mischievous boys attending the schools fill their pockets with locusts, and, at a given signal, each boy taps on his pocket, causing the locusts to give forth their deafening, doleful cry, as if forty children had been whipped.

A Louisiana paper, in apologizing for the editor being drunk, says there are so many rattle snakes there that he has to keep "tight" to keep from being poisoned from their bites. He don't believe that tincture of iodine will cure a bite, no matter what the doctors say.

The following speech is attributed to a member of the Legislature of Pennsylvania: "I known womin, Mr. Speaker; I say it with no disrespect; I know'um; I have had a heap to do with'um. They'rs a useful class and—and yet with the best of 'um you may have trouble.

A faithful old dog who had run with a Louisville fire company for years, and always made it a part of his duty to keep people from standing on the hose at fires, fell a victim the other day to misplaced confidence in a policeman and a piece of poisoned liver. The engine company turned out and gave the old fellow a big funeral; but they did not enjoy it half so much as they would if the funeral had been the policeman's.

Betting in England.—In England a peculiar question in relation to the payment of racing debts has been decided by the Master of the Rolls. Lord Charles Kerr had made a claim against the estate of the late Marquis of Hastings to recover £850 which his lordship alleged he had paid on bets made by direction of the Marquis. The legality of the claim was objected to by the residuary legatees. The Master of the Rolls allowed the claim, saying if a man made a bet which he was liable to pay in a court of honor, if not in a court of equity, and asked another to pay that bet on his behalf, the latter would not be involved in the illegality of the original contract, but would be entitled to recover from the person at whose request he had paid the money.

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