The St. Tammany Farmer.

"The Blessings of Government, Like the Dew from Heaven, Should Descend Alike Upon the Rich and the Poor."

W. G. KENTZEL, Editor. COVINGTON, ST. TAMMANY PARISH, LA., SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1901. VOL. XXVI—NO. 18.

THE DEAKIN' ON HOSS-TRADIN'

Well, yes, you take it fust an' last, I
a'pose I've made it pay
A-tradin' hosses; anyhow, so all the
neighbors say;
They've kind o' got the notion that if I
jest git a look
At any sort o' hossflesh I c'n read it like
a book.
An' on the other hand they think that if
a hoss is mine,
No matter how played out he is, I make
him look that fine
His mother wouldn't know him; but,
right here 'twixt me an' you
The man don't live but what some hoss
c'n teach him somethin' new.

A hoss is that deceivin' that I don't pertend to know
His kinks till I've perused him fer at
least a month er so;
He's got a thousand diff'rent ways, er so
it seems to me,
Fer teachin' us we ain't so smart as what
we think we be.
Before the trade you try him an' you
test him wind and limb,
An' do your best, you can't make out a
thing that's wrong with him,
But once the trade's completed, then—an'
don't it make you hot!—
He jogs your mind with somethin' that
you shouldn't have fergot.

They say in tradin' hosses that there
ain't a man so high
An' pure an' true an' noblelike but what
he'll tell a lie;
But when you speak o' liars, why, from
what I c'n recall,
I take the hoss himself to be the biggest
one o' all.
Fer don't he do his level best in every
way he can
To supplement the wicked words o' some
designin' man?
A human bein' ain't persumed to stick to
what is true,
But when a hoss acts out a lie, say,
what's a man to do!

Now what I'm gettin' at is this; a hoss,
if he finds out
You think o' tradin' fer him, will let on
he's fresh an' stout,
An' speedylike an' willin', an' so good
from top to toe
He'll make you give a lot to boot before
you'll let him go.
But when he's yours, oh, sufferin' saints!
the way that hoss lets down,
Until he looks to be about the wust old
nag in town!
He'll balk an' bite an' run away an'
bring you sech distress
That could you cheat somebody, would
you do it? Well, I guess!

At fust this attymobile—the new-fangled
thing they've got
Fer doin' 'way with hosses—sort o' worried me a lot,
But since I'm gettin' on in years an'
h'ain't got long to stay,
Now that the hoss is goin' I'll be glad to
git away.
I've traded hosses all my life, an'
'twouldn't seem jest right
To jog about the highways an' not see a
trade in sight.
But there's one thing I wouldn't do fer
any mortal price—
That's trade the heaven-sent hoss fer
this blamed fact'ry-made device!

—Nixon Waterman, in N. Y. Sun.

MY LADY'S CHOICE

By Leila Roome Harris.

YOU beautiful patrician face! How handsome and still how haughty, those large, dark eyes can smile until a man loses his reason, or stare with a cold, disinterested glance that makes a woman murmur: "What do the men see in that vain, cynical woman?"

You are looking into me as I speak (I am only your mirror, my lady), and I have seen many faces, but I wonder if there ever was a more changeable one than yours. Oh, yes! You and I are alone, my dear girl, or I would hardly avail myself of this opportunity to analyze you quite so truthfully.

I, too, have often wondered what makes you so popular. Perhaps we can find out the secret to-night. We have quite a half hour before it is time to go to the charity ball. (What a pity the remarks that will be made there about the women's gowns will not be more charitable!)

But even the most exacting can hardly find fault with you to-night, my beauty, the bride of the season, in your Paris wedding gown!

Little attention, I am thinking, the bridegroom (a millionaire of 60-odd winters) will receive as you enter the room.

You stand before me, your long pier-glass, and I look you over carefully, from diamond tiara to dainty satin slipper (so ridiculously small)!

Will they be there to-night—the old friends? What good times you have had with them, to be sure; but those pleasant days are to be all in the past now; you have a husband to please, a very jealous, exacting one. But then, my dear, remember he is a millionaire! One cannot have everything in this world. The old friends were all very well to dance and flirt with, to pass away the time, but they were out of the question when it came to marriage.

One needs a carriage, an establishment and important gowns to be popular when they are married; then they can have the reputation of "giving the best dinners of anyone in our set," and of being "such a charming hostess."

You will meet them to-night for the first time since they waved good-by to you from the shore as you leaned over the steamer's rail, and one of the ushers (you might have known it was Jim) had the audacity to throw a paper bag full of rice, which broke as it fell on the deck at your feet, and everyone turned to look with an amused smile at the blushing bride and the dignified, gray-haired groom. Yes, you will see them all again to-night, but you need not look so pleased. You will be "Mrs. Stocton Gouvenier." No one (not even Jim (and you know he would dare a good deal in the old days), will call you "Miss Phyllis" to-night.

Do you remember the night of Mme. Dyaire's ball?

You stood by Jim in the crush of the supper-room, trying to eat an ice—how he whispered: "Do you know why you remind me of the first game I ever shot? Because you are such a—dear!"

It was a very poor pun, but you laughed and dimpled, glancing up at him through your long, dark lashes, for you knew only too well you had added another heart to your already outrageously long number of devoted slaves, and you even smiled when you heard Miss Primly say, quite audibly (as you passed out of the room): "Outrageous flirt! Mr. North, how can you admire her?"

You will meet Jim to-night, and he will mutter: "Delighted to see you, Mrs. Gouvenier," and will cross to the opposite side of the room, where he will look at you longingly and bite his mustache savagely, thinking how selfish your husband is to forbid you to dance, because he is too old to find any pleasure in it himself.

They will all be there, the old friends. (It seems much longer than two months since you went abroad; have you missed them?)

Did I say "all?" No, not all, for I remember a pale face, with such earnest gray eyes.

He found more important things in life than pleasures and dances. There were so many poor to help, so many ill, so much suffering and unhappiness. He took life "too seriously," Jim had said. I do not see why your mouth should droop so at the corners. Don't do it, Phyllis, it spoils Cupid's bow. Is there still a pain in your heart when you think of that poor boy? Well, don't do it, then; forget him; there are so many you should be sorry for, and it is rather late to begin now.

There is a step on the stairs; how quickly your face changes as you recognize your husband's step. All the life has died out of it and it has grown cold and expressionless. You rise to meet him as he comes toward you.

My dear Phyllis, do be careful!

It would never do for him to see your face as it is now, such a look of longing has come into it as the thought, "it might have been so different if—" goes beating through your brain. But with a master stroke of self-restraint, you force a smile and lower the eyes that are filling with tears so fast you dare not trust them, and say with a half laugh and a voice that is perhaps a trifle unsteady: "Don't I look lovely? Is it time to go, dear?"

Just then you are interrupted by the sharp noise of a door being shut violently. Everything grows dim and confused. Your husband seems to grow dimmer and dimmer until he fades away into the darkness; you rub your eyes and look with astonisment at me. I also have changed, from a stately pier glass to a little oval mirror hanging over your desk. You look into me with eyes that can hardly believe the vision of yourself that I reflect, for instead of your Paris wedding gown you have on a dainty matinee jacket and your hair falls in pretty confusion over your shoulders. You stretch out your hand to a letter that lies before you on your desk and with a glance of wonder you read in your own penmanship these words:

"Washington, D. C., Jan. 15, 1900.—Dear Maj. Gouvenier: I have seriously considered the question you asked me last evening, and I feel much honored that you should wish me to become your wife. If I can add to your happiness by giving you the answer you so much desired—"

What is the matter?

Why should you crush the letter in your hand and then tear it up and throw it into the waste paper basket?

The confused look has left your face; you are beginning to realize that after writing that letter this morning you leaned back in that comfortable chair and thought of the great happiness that was in the future for you.

You imagined yourself as a wealthy woman, thinking of the many delightful things the "major's" money could do for you.

Gradually you grew drowsy, you leaned your head against the back of your chair, your eyes closed—the dream that followed did not picture the future at all as you had imagined it would be; you realized too late (it seemed too late in your dream) that money alone could not bring you happiness, and that it was not so easy as you had hoped it would be to forget a certain pair of gray eyes. I confess that all through that dream I did all I could to make you see the mistake you would make if you did so in reality.

What are you doing, Phyllis?

Surely, you are not so childish as to write to that poor, discouraged missionary on the western prairies? And you really intend to give him the answer he has longed for for the past three months?

Well, you are a queer girl to let a mere dream influence you so. What will society say?

The beautiful, proud Miss Phyllis Varian to be married to a missionary, to give up the gay life she has found so pleasant, to live in a wretched little log hut in the place of a church!

But you seem determined, and a smile hovers over your beautiful red lips as you seal your letter, and I cannot help but wonder if you were ever really as happy as you are now.

And you will go to the charity ball to-night, but not as "Mrs. Stocton Gouvenier," and you will tell Jim about the letter you wrote this morning and the love light will shine in those large, dark eyes as you add: "Yes, Jim, I have sent him his answer, and he is to teach me to take life 'seriously,' too."—Troy Times.

Family Suite.

"Where's your daughter Mary living now, Mrs. Herliby?" inquired one of the neighbors, who had dropped in after an absence of some months.

"Her hoosband's got a foine job on the Toimes, reporting accidents," said Mrs. Herliby, proudly, "and the two av thim and little Moike is living in a suit up town."

"What's a suit?" inquired the neighbor, curiosity having got the better of a desire to appear well-informed on all points.

"A suit," said Mrs. Herliby, slowly, "is one o' thim places where the parloor is the bedroom, and the bedroom is the kitchen, and the closets is down in the cellar, and the beds is piannys—or organs, and—well, it's one o' thim places where iverything is something else," concluded Mrs. Herliby.—Youth's Companion.

An Owner's Appreciation.

A very good story is going round about the duke of Devonshire. During his visit to the Paris exposition the duke was seen admiring one of the pictures in the British section. He could not be torn away from it. "What an admirable picture," he said. "Excellent!" But some kind official, of course, proceeded to help the duke. Would not his grace like to know the name of the picture? But his grace showed no interest in that. He did not care what was the name of the picture; he was content to admire it. Still the obsequious official hunted the picture up in the catalogue, and insisted upon stating the name. It turned out, as the story runs, to be one of the duke of Devonshire's own pictures from Chatsworth.—Manchester Guardian.

A SILENT RELIGION.

Dr. Talmage Sets Forth Its Evils in His Sermon.

Duty of Christians to Speak Out Heartily on the Side of Righteousness—Casting Out the Dumb Spirit.

(Copyright, 1901, by Louis Klopsch, N. Y.)

Washington, D. C.

In this discourse Dr. Talmage calls for a more demonstative religion and a hearty speaking out on the right side of everything; text, Mark 9:25: "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him."

Here was a case of great domestic anguish. The son of the household was possessed of an evil spirit, which, among other things, paralyzed his tongue and made him speechless. When the influence was on the patient, he could not say a word—articulation was impossible. The spirit that captured this member of the household was a dumb spirit—so called by Christ—a spirit abroad to-day and as lively and potent as in the New Testament times. Yet in all the realms of sermondom I cannot find a discourse concerning this dumb devil which Christ charged upon in my text, saying: "Come out of him."

There has been much destructive superstition abroad in the world concerning possession by evil spirits. Under the form of belief in witchcraft, this delusion swept the continents. Persons were supposed to be possessed with some evil spirit, which made them able to destroy others. In the sixteenth century in Geneva 1,500 persons were burned to death as witches. In one neighborhood of France 1,000 persons were burned. In two centuries 200,000 persons were slain as witches. So mighty was the delusion that it included among its victims some of the greatest intellects of all time, such as Chief Justice Matthew Hale and Sir Edward Coke, and such renowned ministers of religion as Cotton Mather, one of whose books, Benjamin Franklin said, shaped his life—and Richard Baxter, and Archbishop Cranner and Martin Luther; and, among writers and philosophers, Lord Bacon. That belief, which has become the laughing stock of all sensible people, counted its disciples among the wisest and best people of Sweden, Germany, England, France, Spain and New England. But while we reject witchcraft, any man who believes the Bible must believe that there are diabolical agencies abroad in the world. While there are ministering spirits to bless there are infernal spirits to hinder, to poison and to destroy. Christ was speaking to a spiritual existence when, standing before the afflicted one of the text, he said: "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, come out of him."

Against this dumb devil of the text I put you on your guard. Do not think that this agent of evil has put his blight on those who, by omission of the vocal organs, have had the golden gates of speech bolted and barred. Among those who have never spoken a word are the most gracious and lovely and talented souls that were ever incarnated. The chaplains of the asylums for the dumb can tell you enchanting stories of those who never called the name of father or mother or child, and many of the most devout and prayerful souls will never in this world speak the name of God or Christ.

Many a deaf mute have I seen with the angel of intelligence seated at the window of the eye, who never came forth from the door of the mouth. What a miracle of loveliness and knowledge was Laura Bridgman, of New Hampshire, not only without faculty of speech, but without hearing and without sight, all these faculties removed by sickness when two years of age, yet, becoming a wonder at needlework, at the piano, at the sewing machine, and an intelligent student of the Scriptures, and confounding philosophers, who came from all parts of the world to study the phenomenon. Thanks to Christianity for what it has done for the amelioration of the condition of the deaf and dumb. Back in the ages they were put to death as having no right with such paucity of equipment to live, and for centuries they were classed among the idiotic and unsafe. But in the sixteenth century came Pedro Ponce, the Spanish monk, and in the seventeenth century came Juan Pablo Bonet, another Spanish monk, with dactylology, or the finger alphabet, and in our own century we have had John Braidwood and Drs. Mitchell and Ackerly and Peet and Gallaudet, who have given to uncounted thousands of those whose tongues were forever silent the power to spell out on the air by a manual alphabet their thoughts about this world and their hopes for the next. We rejoice in the brilliant inventions in behalf of those who were born dumb. One of the most impressive audiences I ever addressed was in the far west, an audience of about 600 persons, who had never heard a sound or spoken a word, an interpreter standing beside me while I addressed them. I congratulated that audience on two advantages they had over the most of us—the one that they escaped hearing a great many disagreeable things, and on the other fact that they escaped saying things they were sorry for afterward. Yet after all the alleviations a shackled tongue is an appalling limitation. But we are not this morning speaking of congenital mutes. We mean those who are born with all the faculties of vocalization and yet have been struck by the evil one mentioned in the text—the dumb devil to whom Christ called, when He said: "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him."

There has been apotheosization of silence. Some one has said silence is golden, and sometimes the greatest triumph is to keep your mouth shut. But sometimes silence is a crime and the direct result of the baleful influence of the dumb devil of our text. There is hardly a man or woman who has not been present on some occasion when the Christian religion became a target for raillery. Perhaps it was over in the store some day when there was not much going on, and the clerks were in a group, or it was in the factory at the noon spell, or it was out on the farm under the trees while you were resting, or it was in the clubroom, or it was in a social circle, or it was in the street on the way home from business, or it was on some occasion which you remember without my describing it. Some one got the laugh on the Bible and caricatured the profession of religion as hypocrisy, or made a pun out of something that Christ said. The laugh started, and you joined in, and not one word of protest did you utter. What kept you silent? Modesty? No. Incapacity to answer? No. Lack of opportunity? No. It was a blow on both your lips by the wing of the dumb devil. If some one should malign your father or mother or wife or husband or child, you would flush up quick and either with an indignant word or doubled up fist make response. And yet here is our Christian religion which has done so much for you and so much for the world that it will take all eternity to celebrate it, and yet when it was attacked you did not so much as say: "I differ. I object. I am sorry to hear you say that. There is another side to this." You Christian people ought in such times as these to go armed, not with earthly weapons, but with the sword of the spirit. You ought to have four or five questions with which you could confound any man who attacks Christianity. A man 90 years old was telling me how he put to flight a scoffer. My aged friend said to the skeptic: "Did you ever read the history of Joseph in the Bible?" "Yes," said the man, "it is a fine story, and as interesting a story as I ever read." "Well, now," said my old friend, "suppose that account of Joseph stopped half way?" "Oh," said the man, "then it would not be entertaining." "Well, now," said my friend, "we have in this world only half of everything, and do you not think that when we hear the last half things may be consistent, and that then we may find that God was right?"

Oh, friends, better load up with a few interrogation points! You cannot afford to be silent when God and the Bible and the things of eternity are assailed. Your silence gives consent to the bombardment of your Father's house. You allow a slur to be cast on your mother's dying pillow. In behalf of the Christ, who for you went through the agonies of assassination on the rocky bluff back of Jerusalem, you dared not face a sickly joke. Better load up with a few questions, so that next time you will be ready. Say to the scoffer: "My dear sir, will you tell me what makes the difference between the condition of woman in China and in the United States? What do you think of the sermon on the mount? How do you like the golden rule laid down in the Scriptures? Are you in favor of the Ten Commandments? In your large and extensive reading have you come across a lovelier character than Jesus Christ? Will you please to name the triumphant deathbeds of infidels and atheists? How do you account for the fact that among the out and out believers in Christianity were such persons as Benjamin Franklin, John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle, Babington, Macaulay, William Penn, Walter Scott, Charles Kingsley, Horace Bushnell, James A. Garfield, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Admiral Foote, Admiral Farragut, Ulysses S. Grant, John Milton, William Shakespeare, Chief Justice Marshall, John Adams, Daniel Webster, George Washington? How do you account for their fondness for the Christian religion? Among the innumerable colleges and universities of the earth will you name me three started by infidels and now supported by infidels? Down in your heart are you really happy in the position you occupy antagonistic to the Christian religion? When do you have the most rapturous views of the next world?" Go at him with a few such questions, and he will get so red in the face as to suggest apoplexy, and he will look at his watch and say he has an engagement and must go. You will put him in a sweat that will beat a Turkish bath. You will put him on a rout compared with which our troops at Bull Run made no time at all. Arm yourself, not with arguments, but interrogation points, and I promise you victory. Shall such a man as you, shall such a woman as you, surrender to one of the meanest spirits that ever smoked up from the pit—the dumb devil spoken of in the text?

But then there are occasions when this particular spirit that Christ exorcised when He said: "I charge thee to come out of him," takes people by the wholesale. In the most responsive religious audience have you noticed how many people never sing at all? They have a book, and they have a voice, and they know how to read. They know many of the tunes, and yet are silent while the great raptures of music pass by. Among those who sing not one out of a hundred sings loud enough to hear his own voice. They hum it. They give a sort of religious grunt. They make the lips go, but it is inaudible. With a voice strong enough to stop a street car one block away all they can afford in the praise of God is about half a whisper. With enough sopranos, enough altos, enough bassos to make a small heaven between the four walls they let the opportunity go by unimproved. The volume of voice that ascends from the largest audience that ever assembled ought to be multiplied two thousandfold. But the minister rises and gives out the hymn, the organ begins, the choir or precentor leads, the audience are standing so that the lungs may have full expansion, and a mighty harmony is about to ascend when the evil spirit spoken of in my text—the dumb devil—spreads his two wings, one over the lips of one half the audience and the other wing over the lips of the other half of the audience, and the voices roll back into the throats from which they started, and only here and there anything is heard, and nine-tenths of the holy power is destroyed, and the dumb devil, as he flies away, says: "I could not keep Isaac Watts from writing that hymn, and I could not keep Lowell Mason from composing the tune to which it is set, but I succeed in silence or half silence the lips from which it would have spread abroad to bless neighborhoods and cities and then mount the wide open heavens." Give the long meter doxology the full support of Christendom, and those four lines would take the whole earth for God.

That hymn, "Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing," was suggested to Charles Wesley by Peter Bohler, who, after his conversion, said: "I had better keep silent about it." "No," said Wesley, "if you had 10,000 tongues, you had better use them for Christ." And then that angel of hymnology penned the words:

Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!

Jesus, the name that calms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears;
'Tis life and health and peace.

Do not, however, let us lose ourselves in generalities. Not one of us but has had our lives sometimes touched by the evil spirit of the text—this awful dumb devil. We had just one opportunity of saying a Christian word that might have led a man or woman into a Christian life. The opportunity was fairly put before us. The word of invitation or consolation or warning came to the inside gate of the mouth, but there it halted. Some hindering power locked the jaws together so that they did not open. The tongue lay flat and still in the bottom of tne mouth as though struck with paralysis. We were mute. Though God had given us the physiological apparatus for speech and our lungs were filled with air which by the command of our will could have made the larnygeal muscles move and the vocal organs vibrate, we were wickedly and fatally silent. For all time and eternity we missed our chance, or it was a prayer meeting, and the service was thrown open for prayer and remarks, and there was a dead halt—everything silent as a graveyard at midnight. Indeed, it was a graveyard and midnight. An embarrassing pause took place that put a wet blanket on all the meeting. Men, bold enough on business exchange or in worldly circles, shut their eyes as though they were praying in silence, but they were not praying at all. They were busy hoping somebody else would do his duty. The women flushed under the awful pause and made their fans more rapidly flutter. Some brother, with no cold, coughed, by that sound trying to fill up the time, and the meeting was slain. But what killed it? The dumb devil. This is the way I account for the fact that the stupidest places on earth are some prayer meetings. I do not see how a man can keep any grace if he regularly attends them. They are spiritual refrigerators. Religion kept on ice. How many of us have lost occasions of usefulness? In a sculptor's studio stood a figure of the god Opportunity. The sculptor had made the hair fall down over the face of the statue so as to completely cover it, and there were wings to the feet. When asked why he so represented Opportunity, the sculptor answered: "The face of the statue is thus covered because we do not recognize Opportunity when it comes, and the wings to the feet show that Opportunity is swiftly gone.

But do not let the world deride the church because of all this, for the dumb devil is just as conspicuous in the world. The great political parties assemble at the proper time to build platforms for the candidates to stand on. A committee of each party is appointed to make the platform. After proper deliberation, the committees come in with a ringing report: "Whereas," and "Whereas," and "Whereas." Pronunciamentos all shaped with the one idea of getting the most votes. All expression in regard to the great moral evils of the country ignored. No expression in behalf of temperate living, for that would lose the vote of the liquor traffic. No expression in regard to the universal attempt at the demolition of the Lord's day. No recognition of God in the history of nations, for that would lose the vote of atheists. But "Whereas," and "Whereas," and "Whereas." Nine cheers will be given for the platform. The dumb devil of the text puts one wing over one platform and the other wing over the other platform. Those great conventions are opened with prayer by their chaplains. If they avoided platitudes and told the honest truth in their prayers they would say: "O Lord, we want to be postmasters and consuls and foreign ministers and United States district attorneys. For that we are here, and for that we will strive till the election next November. Give us office, or we die. Forever and ever, amen." The world, to say the least, is no better than the church on this subject of silence at the wrong time. In other words, is it not time for Christianity to become pronounced and aggressive as never before? Take sides for God and sobriety and righteousness. "If the Lord be God, follow Him." Have you opportunity of rebuking a sin? Rebuke it. Have you a chance to cheer a disheartened soul? Cheer it. Have you a useful word to speak? Speak it.

Be out and out, up and down for righteousness. If your ship is afloat on the Pacific ocean of God's mercy, hang out your colors from the masthead. Show your passport, if you have one. Do not smuggle your soul into the harbor of Heaven. Speak out for God! Close up the chapter of lost opportunities and open a new chapter. Before you get to the door on your way out shake hands with some one and ask him to join you on the road to Heaven. Do not drive up to Heaven in a two-wheeled "sulky" with room only for one, and that yourself, but get the biggest Gospel wagon you can find and pile it full of friends and neighbors and shout till they hear you all up and down the skies: "Come with us, and we will do you good, for the Lord hath promised good concerning Israel." The opportunity for good which you may consider insignificant may be tremendous for results, as when on the sea Capt. Haldane swore at the ship's crew with an oath that wished them all in perdition, and a Scotch sailor touched his cap and said: "Captain, God hears prayer, and we would be badly off if your wish were answered." Capt. Haldane was convicted by the sailor's remark and converted and became the means of the salvation of his brother Robert, who had been an infidel, and then Robert became a minister of the Gospel, and under his ministry the godless Felix Neff became the world-renowned missionary of the cross, and the worldly Merle d'Aubigne became the author of "The History of the Reformation" and will be the glory of the church for all ages. Perhaps you may do as much as the Scotch sailor who just tipped his cap and used one broken sentence by which the earth and the heavens are still resounding with potent influences. Do something for God, and do it right away or you will never do it at all.

Time flies away fast,
The while we never remember;
How soon our life here
Grows old with the year
That dies with the next December!

Had to Tell It.

Gooph—I tell you Mutt knows what he is talking about.

Wooph—Yes, but he talks about it all the time.—Baltimore American.

COMMONEST OF WILD ANIMALS

It Is the Ordinary House Mouse and There Are Interesting Points About It.

The common little house mouse is probably the best-known wild animal in America, says the Hartford Times. It is almost impossible to avoid learning something of the appearance and habits of this little fellow, for he acts as a private tutor on the subject in almost every household.

As few of us are fond enough of him, however, to pay strict attention when he presents himself as an object lesson, a brief description of his external appearance may not be out of place. In a certain quaint dictionary I once possessed the definition of "mouse" was given as "a small rat," and this is not such a very bad one, after all, except for the fact that the reader is apt to be less familiar with the appearance of a rat than of a mouse. The total length of the latter animal is about 6¾ inches, of which the tail takes up nearly one-half. His head is longish and his nose sharp. His ears are large and erect, with very little hair on either surface. His legs are slender, and his delicate little toes are provided with sharp, slightly hooked nails. His tail is round and tapering, scaly and with a slight covering of short hair. In color, he is dusky gray above and ashy beneath. His eyes and most of his whiskers are black, and his front teeth are yellowish.

Altogether he is a very dainty little fellow, and if persons would only stop to study him a little instead of throwing things at him, or calling in the cat, every time he puts in an appearance, they would soon find him a very intelligent and attractive companion. He is very agile and graceful in his movements, and not at all vicious in disposition. For some time past I have had a number of mice in captivity, and I find them very amusing pets. They will eat anything, and are so tame that they will take food from my hand or drink from a vessel held in the fingers. They are most active at night, but often play about in the daytime. They are very bright, and immediately give their attention to any unusual sight or sound. To do this, they usually pause with their head slightly on one side, and with a most inquiring look in the eyes. After eating they wash themselves very rapidly with their front paws.

Where there is an abundance of food mice eat a great deal, but they seem able to live on very little, and when once well established in a house they manage to get along somehow, even if the provisions are carefully locked up for months at a time. When hungry, however, they are very persevering in their efforts to get food, and will gnaw their way into boxes and cupboards, scale walls, and even cross ceilings when the latter are rough enough to afford a hold for their sharp, hooked claws. They have been known to descend a rope and eat up the contents of a basket hanging from the ceiling.

They make their nests of scraps of paper, wool, rags or any soft material, which they usually chop up very small with their teeth. These homes are usually made in a hole in the wall, or beneath the floor, or in an old box, drawer or other convenient place. Often when cleaning out an old desk or trunk one comes upon such a nest, made of fine particles of old letters, penwipers and such little things.

There are several litters of young every year, and generally from four to ten in a litter. When the young are born they are very small, pink little creatures, naked and blind. The mother is devoted to them, and tends them with great care and evident affection. When they are a few weeks old they begin to come out of their hole to play about and see what the world is made of. They may easily be distinguished from the older ones by their smaller size and younger looks.

While the normal color is gray, very rarely a black specimen is seen, and the white mice with red eyes, which are often kept as pets, are albinos of this species. Others are spotted black and white, and at times have been sold at quite good prices as "fancy" mice.

Of the many enemies of the little rodents perhaps the house cat stands at the head of the list. Many people judge a cat chiefly by her qualities as a mouse hunter, and, all things considered, it is perhaps just as well that she does take a hand in the game occasionally.

Next to the cat, perhaps the owls and hawks account for the greatest number and foxes, 'coons, weasles, skunks and crows all look upon mice as a delicacy. But the troubles of the rodents do not end here. Scores of ingenious traps have been invented for their destruction, and they are also poisoned in great numbers every year.

When it becomes necessary to destroy mice, perhaps the most humane way to do it is with the spring trap," which kills them instanly with a blow. Poisoning is very cruel, and this method is also a menace to human life, not only because it is always dangerous to have poison where there is a possibility of children getting hold of it, but because the mice are apt to die in the walls, floors and other inaccessible places.

Drowning is also cruel, though I once knew two dear elderly ladies, who were so kind-hearted that they used to drown their mice in warm water, "because," they said, "it is so cruel to drown the poor things in cold water, in the middle of winter, too."

Animal Gluttons.

Most people, if asked what animal eats the most, would probably say the lion or tiger. This is quite a mistake. Thirty to 40 pounds of flesh will satisfy a lion, which, as an average specimen weighs 450 pounds, is by no means extravagant. A bear has much more capacity than a lion and can make away with a small pig at a meal, say half a hundredweight of meat. Wolves are amongst the hungriest of the larger carnivores. A wolf will starve for a fortnight, and then eat a third of his own weight at a single meal.—Golden Age.

A Dutch Custom.

In Holland it is the custom for women to wash the china and silver used at breakfast and tea immediately after the meal in the presence of the family guests.—London Answers.

An Al Enemy.

Casey—Whoi don't ye pay Cassidy th' tin cints ye owe him?

Costigan—Faith, Cassidy puts up such a good foight Oi wudn't be friends wid him for anything.—Judge.

TIME AND OVERTIME.

Change of Conditions in the Executive Departments of the Government at Washington.

"Of the many changes which have been gradually taking place during the last few years in the departments the question of time and overtime is one of the most important," said an old government clerk to a Washington Star reporter.

"Old residents will recall when clerks were permitted to go out during office hours and return, and no account was taken of it. Also if a clerk was occasionally a few minutes late it was overlooked. This condition helped to fix in the public mind the impression that a clerk's berth is a soft one, and this impression continues to hold good today.

"But times have changed. Now if a clerk is even one minute late it is charged against him, and in some of the departments he is obliged to make a personal explanation to the chief of his division in other instances to the chief of his bureau, while several of the departments have even more stringent rules, compelling a clerk to lose half a day if he is a certain number of minutes late. This is all right in the main as some clerks are habitually tardy, or would be if permitted, as others are habitually punctual. If a clerk be late it is his misfortune and he should suffer, but it illustrates the tightening of the regulations.

"Now, for the other side, as it is a poor rule that won't work both ways. If a clerk is required to be on time to the second, as he is, he should be permitted to leave the office on the second at four o'clock, which is not always the case. A division chief in the morning will eat a clerk's head off for being late, and in the afternoon, with indifferent complacency, give him, or know that he has been given or already has work which, to keep up his desk, necessitates his working like a nailer all day and remaining after four o'clock several days in the week. The chief will in some instances go so far as to intimate that the clerk may work after hours, and will say: 'I am obliged to do so myself,' or by similar insinuation play upon the clerk's fear of losing his place or upon his good nature and willingness, as the case may be. He raises no objection to the clerk's staying until six if he pleases, forgetful that the clerk's obligation to work by statute rule and practice terminates at four o'clock in the absence of a general order to the contrary, which the chief of the division has no power to make; and if the work is so heavy that it can't be kept up it is the chief's business to provide a means of handling it and not the concern of the clerk who is absolutely without discretion.

"If the government deducts from a clerk's pay if he is late, as it will if he has not the requisite leave coming to him for every minute he is late, a just corollary of the rule would appear to be an allowance for each minute the clerk is required to work overtime. The argument to meet this proposition that the overtime work is 'voluntary' on the part of the clerk is only partially true in fact and not at all true from a business and equitable basis. It's voluntary in the same sense that a condemned man steps to the scaffold—because he can't help himself.

"I don't mean to advance the proposition that the government should pay for its overtime, but I do mean to say that the work should be so regulated and an adequate force maintained that overtime work should be unnecessary. In other words, let the officials be as punctilious in terminating the hours of labor in these instances as they are in beginning them."

GEORGIAN WOMEN.

In Youth There Is Extraordinary Loveliness Among Them—Majority Mature Early.

Are the women of Georgia as beautiful as we have always been told? When they become matrons, which is at an early age, they are too stout and broad in the beam for beauty, but in their youth, I should judge from glimpses at windows and passing faces, there may well be extraordinary loveliness among them—the loveliness or perfectly chiseled features true to the racial type, large calm dark eyes, firm, full mouth, alabaster skin, indigo-black hair—the precise antithesis of the piquancy of irregular features and nervous temperament which generally passes for beauty among ouselves, writes Henry Norman in Scribner's. These are women, you feel, whose lips would whisper passionate love or, if times allowed, sing high the song that sends their men to battle—whose fingers would grasp the dagger or fall lightly across the strings of the lute, with equal aptness. Dagger and war song, however, are out of date to-day.

A Result of Illiteracy.

The general illiteracy of the Russian country people has one curious result. A writer in Scribner's who has traveled widely in their country notes that the shopkeepers announce their wares by pictures rather than by names. The attention of customers is sought by paintings of the articles on sale; as of coats and trousers in the clothing stores; bread, butter, cheese and sausages in the line of provisions; knives, forks and carpenter's tools at the hardware dealer's, and so on. Even in the barracks, the sentry is taught the proper military motions by a series of pictures. It all seems like dealing with children—as it is! "There are millions on millions who read no books or newspapers, and write and receive no letters."

By Proxy.

Teek—What's the matter, Hen. You look tired.

Peek—Yes, I've been a victim of dyspepsia for the last few days.

"Why, you've often told me you weren't subject to it at all."

"I'm not; but my wife is."—Philadelphia Press.

A Good Name.

"This is the parlor, eh?" tentatively remarked the house agent, who was looking over the house.

"Yes," replied Jones, "but I usually call it the courtroom—I've got seven daughters, you know."—N. Y. World.

Egypt's Products.

Egypt exported last year 65,000 tons of sugar, 55,300 of which went to America.—Scientific American.

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

Germany exports to Canada about six times as much as she imports from that country. On the whole, however, German products are gradually losing ground in British North America.

In Borneo and Labuan postage stamps to the value of $100,000 were sold last year, though the postage on the mail from these two countries does not exceed $4,000 a year. It is the collectors who buy the stamps.

The ten largest German cities are today Berlin, 1,884,345 inhabitants; Hamburg, 704,669; Munich, 500,000; Leipsic, 455,120; Breslau, 422,413; Dresden, 395,349; Cologne, 370,685; Frankfort, 387,813; Nuremberg, 260,743; Hanover, 234,986.

At a small village near Namur a discovery has been made of 960 pieces of Roman money in a perfect state of preservation, belonging to the third and fourth centuries, and bearing effigies of no fewer than 15 different emperors and empresses.

A Chinese poem celebrates the praises of a Chinese beauty named Ai-ee, who lived about the time of the much-lamented Emperor Mo-vang, in the eleventh century. She was said to have the largest eyes and the smallest feet of any lady of her time.

A veritable "quick luncheon," it is said, is to be had at a restaurant in Paris, where a dinner of several courses composed of concentrated food in the form of tablets can be consumed in a few minutes. The entire meal, indeed, can be carried about in the vest pocket or pocketbook.

German capitalists have planned the construction of a railroad through the Samoyede peninsula with the object of bringing the wheat of western Siberia quickly and economically into the world market. The wheat will be shipped by the Ob and its navigable tributaries to Obdorsk; then by rail to the seacoast and thence by vessel to London or other ports.

FEAR OF WILD ANIMALS.

There Is Really Less Ground for It Than for a Dread of Lightning.

Of all questions asked by people who have never been much out of doors none seems so simple to the old-timers as that which concerns the dangers to which the camper may be exposed from the attacks of wild beasts. It is chiefly women and children who ask such questions, but it is evident that in the brains of many inexperienced persons is firmly established a belief that wild animals are dangerous—that wolves, panthers and bears prowl about seeking whom they may devour. This belief is in all probability a survival in part of earlier days, when the most civilized men dwelt largely in the east, where might be encountered lions which would attack them, or hyenas ready to snap up the stray child wandering away from the camp, or bears of the type encountered by the incorrigent infants who apostrophized Elisha, and also in part of that time when the weapons of primitive man were so feeble and of so little avail against the wild beasts that these were justly to be feared.

This feeling, says Forest and Stream, already existing is encouraged and strengthened by a certain amount of the writing of the day. The average man and woman love to read a bear or panther or wolf story not less than do small boys and round-eyed children listen with pleasure to the tales of some venerable uncle or grandfather who relates the story of the wolves that used to howl about his cabin or visit his sheep fold when first he settled in the country.

In this land of America, as many know, there are no such things as dangerous animals, though there are creatures which may be made dangerous. The wolf, the bear and the cougar are far more anxious to get away from man than man is to get away from them. If given the opportunity they will always slip away and run, and if they fight it is because they believe that they have been cut off from every avenue of escape. Where an animal has been wounded it is a different matter. Then often considerations of prudence are forgotten and the animal acts on impulse, instead doing what it knows to be wise; but even so, there is much more danger from a wounded deer than from a wounded panther, and vastly more from a wounded moose.

But for the average man who is traveling through a new country where wild animals may be plenty, who stops when he has made a day's march and is at home where night finds him, there is not now nor ever was more danger from the wild animals of the country than from the lightnings which blaze in the summer sky. Many more people have been killed by lightning than have been run over by stampeding buffalo herds or killed by unwounded grizzly bears or by all the other animals of the prairie put together. One might almost say that more people have been struck by falling meteorites than have been killed by panthers or wolves. And yet from day to day the newspapers continue to print bear stories, catamount stories and wolf stories, and probably they will do so until long after the last bear, catamount and wolf shall have disappeared from the land.

Marriage Broken in Italy.

Marriage brokers are a regular institution in Italy. In Genoa there are regular marriage brokers, who have pocketbooks filled with the names of the marriageable girls of the different classes, with notes of their figures, personal attractions, fortune and other circumstances. These brokers go about endeavoring to arrange marriages in the same offhand mercantile manner which they would bring to bear upon a purely business transaction, and when they succeed they get a commission of two or three per cent. upon the portion, with such extras or bonuses as may be voluntarily bestowed by the party.—N. Y. Times.

Similar But Different.

Miles—Do you believe that history really repeats itself?

Giles—Yes—with the exception of a man's personal history.

Miles—Why the exception?

Giles—In the latter case it is repeated by the man's neighbors.—Chic