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The Reward of Duty

By EDWARD B. CLARK.

"DO YOUR duty though the heavens fall," said the commandant of cadets to the battalion of stripling soldiers. The commandant had a curious way of mixing his aphorisms, but he meant well.

Obedience and devotion to duty are the keynotes of the scale of life's harmony at West Point. Duty begins in the morning when the student "noncom" reports his fellow cadet for having forgotten to turn his wash bowl upside down, and it ends at "taps," when the inspecting officer reports some luckless one for being a fraction of a second late in getting between blankets. It's duty, hard duty, generally distasteful duty, but in the end it generally pays in acquired discipline. Even at West Point, however, it is sometimes possible to stretch the idea of duty beyond the normal limit.

Billy Lang was a first-class man. Billy was a private. He probably would have been a cadet officer if he hadn't been caught the previous winter taking a trip to Cold Spring over the frozen surface of the Hudson. That was the time Billy felt the result of an officer's devotion to duty. Billy took his punishment without a murmur, for he was a "crank" on the subject of duty. The commandant's lessons on the subject, especially as applied to what it was one's duty to do to others who happened to make disciplinary slips, had made a deep impression on Billy Lang's mind.

It was in Billy's "yearling" camp that he met Frances Curtis. She was a mighty pretty girl, who lived in New York city and who had spent a month at the Point with her mother. Billy had called on her in New York when he went on his furlough as a second-class man, and now that he was in first-class camp, here was Miss Curtis back again with her mother at the old hotel on the brow of the bluff overlooking the siege battery.

Billy Lang was the oldest man in his class and consequently was called "Dad." He was just under the age limit when he entered and would be within a month of 26 when he graduated. Now Billy was in love with Frances Curtis. There wasn't any question about that at all, and he had an idea that was not in the least dim that Frances Curtis had fallen victim to his handsome face, soldierly bearing and brass bell buttons.

He was sitting with her now under the trees near the camp guard tents.

"I ALWAYS DID ADMIRE A SOLDIER'S DEVOTION TO HIS DUTY."

Billy was on guard, though off post for the time being.

"You see, Miss Curtis," he said, "the second class being on furlough and the 'plebes' not being military enough yet to do duty, we first-class men have to walk post to help the 'yearlings' out. When the 'plebes' are turned into the battalion we will do guard duty only as officers."

"It must be hard work, this walking up and down all night long, Mr. Lang," said Frances, "but then it's duty, and I always did admire a soldier's devotion to his duty."

"Yes, duty is everything; I was always a great stickler for it," answered Billy. "One should always do his duty up to the handle, no matter what direction it takes nor whom the doing of it hits."

"I think you are right, Mr. Lang. There's a certain nobility about it that appeals to one."

Billy Lang was hugely pleased to find that on the subject of duty Frances Curtis' ideas coincided with his own. He changed the subject, however, abruptly. "I see that Mr. Jackson is here," he said, looking at Frances in a half-curious way.

"Yes," answered the girl, a touch of color coming into her cheeks, "he came up on the Powell yesterday and is to stay here until to-morrow."

Frederick Jackson was a civilian admirer of Miss Curtis. He was a fine fellow, and as a matter of fact the girl in her heart of hearts hardly knew which was her chosen one, civilian or soldier.

"I'm sorry I'm on guard today, Miss Curtis," said Billy, "for there is a hop to-night in the mess hall, and I can't be there. I shall think of you waltzing while I am walking my dreary post."

"What number are you, Mr. Lang?"

"Number four," answered Billy. "It's just back of the commandant's tent and runs parallel to the road leading along the bluff to the hotel. I go on post at taps and walk till midnight. I'll be there just at the time the hop is over."

"Hurry up and turn out first relief!" yelled the corporal of the guard, and Billy Lang said a hasty good-by and dug out at double time for the gun rack outside the first guard tent.

"It's duty," he sighed to himself, "a hard duty, but still duty even if it does take you away from the girl you love."

It was 11 o'clock at night. Taps had sounded an hour earlier. Billy Lang was pacing up and down number four between the trunks of the great elms, which, with the sentinels, guarded the camp. It was the blackest kind of a night. Up on Cro' Nest mountain and to the northward toward the Catskills Hudson's crew was playing tenpins. It is a long bowling alley which Old Rip's friends use when they begin their favorite game. The thunder came nearer and the lightning played overhead. This is a time when the sentinel, with his steel bayonet pointing skyward, feels more nervously apprehensive than when in the face of a human enemy. Patter, patter, patter the rain began to fall on the leaves of the elms. The sentinels on number four knew that in a minute the gates would open and then the deluge. There are no rains like those on the Hudson. There are no drops—a solid mass of water falls.

The flickering oil lamp at the south end of the post sent a feeble gleam out into the darkness. Forty yards down the roadway Billy Lang saw some one approaching. "Who comes there?" rang out the challenge.

"Friends," came the answer, in a man's voice.

A flash of lightning lit up the roadway and Billy Lang saw Frederick Jackson and Francis Curtis held motionless by his challange. At that instant came the deluge. Umbrellaless and unprotected in any way stood the young couple, straining their eyes toward a place where they knew was a young fellow with bayonet-tipped rifle.

Billy Lang knew that he could strain a point and let these twain pass. Any cadet in the corps would have done it on recognition as certain as his. But Billy was a stickler for duty. He knew his orders. "Halt, friends," he said, and then, raising his voice, he yelled: "Corporal of the guard No. 4."

No one has a right to cross a sentinel's post after taps unless he have the countersign. In times of peace the corporal is called to recognize and advance people without the password.

How the rain did come down. Frances Curtis' light ball dress was a rag. She was chilled through and she stood holding the arm of her escort and shivering from her light slippers to the bedraggled rose that crowned her hair. Frederick Jackson was in as bad a plight, though he didn't allow himself to shiver.

"It's my duty," said Billy Lang to himself, "and Frances is a stickler for duty; she'll like me all the better for it."

The corporal came at last. He allowed the shivering couple to pass on to the hotel. He saw the plight they were in, and if he hadn't been a yearling corporal and Billy Lang a first-class man, he would have told No. 4 that he was an ass for not using a little common sense and allowing the storm-stricken pair to pass.

Frederick Jackson left for New York the next morning. When he was relieved from guard Billy Lang called at the hotel. Miss Curtis could not be seen that day. She was slightly indisposed. The next afternoon Billy Lang received a note. It was in Frances Curtis' handwriting. It read like this: "A telegram from New York tells mother that Mr. Jackson is dangerously ill with pneumonia as a result of exposure in the storm. He has no relatives nearer than England. I am a great stickler for duty, and so mother and I are just leaving for New York to nurse Mr. Jackson. You will doubtless approve my course, for you are one of duty's own disciples."

Frances Curtis did not return to West Point that summer. It was late in the fall when the postman one day handed Billy Lang an envelope postmarked New York. It contained wedding cards, in which the names Curtis and Jackson were prominent.

A yearling corporal stuck his head in the door. "To-morrow, Lang," he said, "you are on special duty."

"Hang the duty," said Billy.

And the officer of the day who was passing "skinned" him for profanity.—Chicago Record-Herald.

THE DEAR LITTLE GIRL I KEWN

In the wonderful calm of the twilight; in
the night when the day voices cease,
I sit by the bank of the river, the marvelous River of Peace,
And out of the shadows there stealeth a face with the morning aglow,
And the fragrance of blossoms that faded in fields of the long, long ago.
Dim forms o'er the river are floating in barks that the shadows enfold,
And a song through the silence is stealing, a song unforgotten and old;
White hands reaching out in caresses, the hearts that were loving and true,
And the form, like a phantom that blesses, of a dear little girl that I knew.

Oh, cold is the heart of the Northland, and chill is its winter of snows,
And over the mound of her sleeping the wind like a requiem blows.
Yet out of the grave and its silence she comes through the pitiful night,
And her breath on my forehead is warmer than wine that is kissed by the light,
And her heart beats to mine like the music Love plays on his harp when he wills,
Till it reaches to uttermost spaces, and the soul of creation it thrills.
And, sitting where shadowy faces pass by me in phantom review,
I sigh at the thought of the graces of a dear little girl that I knew.

Oh, white was her hand, as the mantle that Winter has woven of snows;
And red were her lips as the ruby that under a tropic sun glows;
And true was her heart as the truest that ever Death's finger has stilled;
And blue were her eyes as the bluest of skies that the day-fairies build;
And still through the silence she beareth to-day and its trials surcease,
As I sit by the bank of the river, the marvelous River of Peace;
And her lips on my forehead fall lighter and softer than beat of the dew,
As I dream of my beautiful darling, the dear little girl that I knew.

I know not the love that enhaloes the ones that in loving are blessed,
But still in the darkness and silence my lips by my darling's are pressed.
No bliss and no rapture of living and loving my being have thrilled;
No heart to my warm heart is beating, none heedeth the structure I build;
But still when the twilight has gathered, I sit in the darkness alone,
And dream of a face unforgotten, a face that smiles back to my own,
And I know, though the world gave me nothing, not vainly the swift moments flew,
Since they leave in my fond recollection the dear little girl that I knew.

—Alfred J. Waterhouse, in N. Y. Times.

Watercress should be washed in salt and water, for water alone is not enough to destroy the insects that may be in it.

Justice *vs.* Chivalry

By MILTON MARKS

A young man stood in his place in a long line of patient human beings who were working slowly towards a bank teller's window. He had been in line for a long time and the window was now only one or two persons distant. Just as he was congratulating himself that his errand was almost accomplished, some one touched him on the arm and a woman whom he knew appeared before him. He smiled with pleased surprise and lifted his hat.

"Oh, Mr. Jones," she said, with a mischievous disregard of business etiquette, "can't I squeeze in there somewhere? If I have to go clear to the end of that awful line I'll just die, and what's more, I'll miss an important luncheon engagement."

The young man would gladly have had her step in ahead of him, but it occurred to him to look around to see what effect the request had on those immediately behind him. His look of inquiry met only scowls of disapproval; it would mean the taking of two or three minutes of the time of every person in that long line, and here and there he saw an exceedingly impatient face. He knew what the only alternative was: Gracefully to step out of line and, with an undisturbed smile and bow, to say: "Certainly, Miss ——; take my place." But just at that moment he remembered that his time was not his own and that his mission was one of haste. All this, however, could not be explained satisfactorily in the second or two at his command. So he reddened and—what did he do? What would one do? It might depend some on one's nationality, and some on other things.

It was unquestionably a case of justice versus chivalry. The hurry and jostle of modern city life bring the two often face to face. If, as is frequently asserted, chivalry is waning in America, is it not because the love of justice, which has always been a strong American trait, is growing still stronger? WAS THE OLD CHIVALRY JUST? WAS IT NOT OFTEN A BOWING TO SELFISHNESS? DOES NOT THE LOVE OF JUSTICE, IF IT BE TEMPERED WITH THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION, LEAD TO A TRUER CHIVALRY, AND LEAVE LESS ROOM FOR SELFISHNESS IN EITHER SEX? True, we are not rid of selfishness by a good deal; but it is doubtful if it is more common now than of old. It has always been pretty evenly distributed among the various members of the human family, of whatever nationality, color or sex.

Milton Marks

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

There is said to be not a single house in London which is more than 200 yards from a pillar postbox.

It is proposed to erect state convalescent homes in Austria for anaemic children and those whose weakened condition renders them liable to consumption.

Night robberies have practically ceased in the St. Gilles suburb of Brussels since the local police began making their nightly rounds accompanied by watch dogs.

Water is so scarce in the Japanese island of Oshima that it is the custom of the bride to take a large tub of drinking water with her to her new home as a kind of dowry.

It is reported that the Russian minister of the interior is considering a project for nationalizing the medical profession, so that all doctors and chemists would be state officials. A commission has been appointed to collect information on the subject.

Six hundred children of the poorest class in Edinburgh have been washed en masse at the corporation baths. Afterwards they were provided with new clothes. One of them was overheard to remark that they were "good clothes enough, but awfu' dear at the price."

The smoke nuisance is moving even the quiet soul of the Austrian and half of Vienna is worried because the other half is disfiguring the city with the thick clouds from the chimneys of industry. Several proposed bills have been drawn up, and it is likely that in a comparatively short time a strong effort will be made to have one or other of these become a law.

In Liverpool is a room—that of a dentist whose grandfather occupied the same premises—that contains many mirrors and pictures, the frames of which are made entirely of sharks' teeth. Near Birmingham a manufacturer has a study that is lined, even to the roof, with nothing but chains of various thicknesses and padlocks of different sizes.

EFFECTS OF MENTAL TENSION

It Is a Hard Matter to Realize the Difficulty of Maintaining a Perfectly Natural Pose.

We never know how active our imaginations can be till we let them out, or till they get the better of us, for some reason. A major in the army, stationed at Gassett's Mills, recently admitted that when he went into action for the first time he was so scared that he did not know which way was north, but he had an overwhelming desire to reach it, wherever it was. Yet, after six or eight battles, and after being wounded a couple of times, he regarded battles very much as people hereabout regard the evening fight at the Manhattan end of the bridge, says the Brooklyn Eagle.

Cases of wanting to run when bullets fly are by no means difficult to find. But a young soldier in Brooklyn confesses to a more queer experience. His regiment was in camp, and had been ordered out for dress parade, as usual. When lined up for inspection, every man as stiff as a ramrod, and not a white glove moving, this young man—a lieutenant—began to ask himself: "Suppose I should slip or anything, to break the quiet? Suppose I should fall?" The idea of falling kept growing in his mind, till before the inspection was over and the regiment was allowed to use its feet once more, he could hardly keep on his legs, and was in a sweat of agony, from the dread of tumbling over and making an exhibition of himself.

People who have never tried it do not realize how hard it is to stand absolutely still and yet appear interested and at ease. Artists' models succeed at it, especially those in Italy, and will hold a pose, not too difficult, for an hour. Actors, when they group about the man in the center of the stage, who is enjoying all the limelight—and how they hate them for it—are required to keep still, so as not to distract attention from the great man's sayings and motions, and because they must group in such a way as to form a picture and keep it till it can be realized by the eyes in front. But this enforced statuesqueness is hard on the supes. They are not used to it. When they are put under the strain, and when as Roman warriors they must stand at the back without winking while Brutus or Virginius or some other ponderous person unbosoms himself respecting love or politics, they are in a small torture. One such, last season, who could no longer abide it to listen to the soliloquy by the head man, pitched over on his face and had to be lugged out by the arms, to the spoiling of the scene.

CAUSE SHADES IN WATER.

Varying Conditions That Determine the Hue of Lakes and Rivers.

The varying shades which natural water assume are due chiefly to two causes—vegetable stain and suspended matter. When the latter is present in appreciable quantity it causes turbidity and is not a real pigment. The true color or vegetable stain is greenish-yellow to reddish-brown and is due to decayed plant growth. The suspended matter is generally mineral and often contains iron. The color acquired by water at the bottom of a deep pond is largely due to this cause, says a scientific exchange.

Experts have adopted a method of stating the depth of color in water by comparison with a mixture of platinum and cobalt, the color produced by one part of platinum to 1,000,000 parts of water being taken as the unit.

Thus it has been shown that the color of surface water depends both on the character of the neighboring vegetation and on the time that the water remains in contact with it. Water near steep rocks, where there are few trees, will generally be below 20 units in color; steep wooded or cultivated slopes give 20 to 50 units; similar but gentler slopes from 5 to 100 and swamp areas 100 to 500 or even higher. Highly colored waters are more common in the northern states than in the south.

Colored water is gradually bleached by sunlight, the action taking place chiefly within one foot of the surface. The study of color in water is of commercial importance because most people object to drinking brownish water. Hence, in a town water supply the color must either be removed or its formation must be prevented. The latter is often the most economical thing to do and it may be accomplished by intercepting the water from the uplands and leading it into the streams without letting it pass through the swamps.

Men Who Die for Others.

In China it is nothing out of the way for a criminal under sentence of death to secure, at a price, a substitute to die for him at the hands of the executioner. A remarkable case of substitution is reported from Foo-Chow. When a certain childless criminal there was adjudged to death his family met to see what should be done. The superstition of the land ran counter to a man dying without leaving a son, at least, to worship him after death. The criminal had a brother who had so many sons that he had no fear of being left without worshipers. The family decided to put him in as a substitute for the childless one, so that the latter could live on to get a son. The military mandarin concerned was bought over, the criminal was set free and his guiltless brother's head was cut off.—London Chronicle.

THEATER PREVENTS STRIKES.

Employes of the Factory Write the Plays and Act Them in a Town of France.

Entertain the workingman and prevent strikes. Upon this theory a novel social institution has been established in Bussang, France, says the Chicago Tribune.

It is a workingman's theater—directed by a factory owner, producing plays written by him and his employes, and using the native dramatic talent of the French laborer.

The actors are factory men and women. The audience is composed of the same class of people. The theater itself is a novelty worth traveling far to see, and the methods by which it is operated are absolutely unique.

So successful has the unique theater been that employers of labor in other parts of France and in Germany and Italy are studying it to imitate it. As a factor in reconciling employer and employe it has proven invaluable, and as a means of entertainment for the factory people it has been unexcelled. Since the theater was opened there has not been a strike at the factory.

Maurice Pottecher, a man of wealth, is the employer who has carried out the peculiar ideas. In the theater which he has built performances are given every night, and six nights a week no admission fee is charged. Once a week, on a holiday, a small charge is made. This is on the occasion of the production of new plays.

The building itself has no cover except a canvas roof which may be drawn over it when the sun becomes too strong or when a rain threatens. Many of the plays which have been given were written by the factory owner and some of them by his workmen. Mme. Pottecher has taken parts in the performances, and with credit, it has been said. One of M. Pottecher's most popular plays was "The Devil as a Liquor Dealer." It "took" immensely because of the humor of its situations.

Occasionally a classic is given. Recently "Macbeth" was rendered. It was a curious performance, and an old theater goer who has seen "Macbeth" in many capitals of the world, played by all famous actors, declared that this Bussang production, in his opinion, came more nearly to the true Shakespearean idea than any of the others.

Some of the spectators had traveled hundreds of miles to see this unique rendition of "Macbeth." Some of the costumes worn by the players would have shocked a modern tragedian. For instance, the artisan who acted the part of Macbeth wore a red wig and a crimson nightgown and flourished a dagger as if it were a sickle.

The main object in conducting the theater has been to make the factory people happy and contented by furnishing them a beneficial and inexpensive form of amusement. It has done that and it has done more by cementing the ties between the employer and the employe. For this reason other wealthy men of Europe who have seen M. Pottecher's plan in operation are preparing to imitate it, and soon there may be many such playhouses in different parts of the continent.

THE MISCHIEVOUS EMU.

Tricks of One of the Big Birds That Were Done to Annoy Its Keeper.

In an article in Century on "Animals in British Parks," and especially on Warnham court, Mrs. Annie H. Knight tells this anecdote of the English pheasant:

"Down through the meadows we come to the playground of the poet, Shelley, where the old mill still stands, its grinding-stones propped against its sides, quietly registering the flight of time. Swans glide to and fro upon the pond or rest upon its edge; black-and-white rabbits scurry across the wooded paths; fan-tailed pigeons disport upon the lawn; in the tall grass tiny fawns feign sleep, while furtively watching with half-closed eye; and everywhere the mischievous emu stalks about in conscious pride of his importance in this strange land.

"The a special aversion of the gamekeeper's, this bird takes apparent delight in annoying him in every way. Prying about until he finds a choice nest of pheasant's eggs, he dispatches the dainty morsels instantly, thereby destroying the hopes of both keeper and hen. Every effort to break him of this pernicious habit has been unsuccessful. Once the keeper resolved upon a plan which he thought would without doubt prove effectual. Having hard-boiled a number of eggs, he carried them in steaming-hot water to the field and placed them before the ever-ready emu. Much to his surprise, the dish seemed to appeal strongly to the voracious appetite of the bird, for in a twinkling they were gone, a seeming look of wonder accompanying his grateful appreciation of this unusual attention."

Women Diamond Cutters.

An important part of the craft of diamond-cutting is now done almost exclusively by women. The first process of diamond splitting—that is, separating a large stone full of flaws into several flawless stones, is done by men. Women then handle the diamonds, which they round with little pearl-shaped tools tipped with diamonds, removing all angles. As some of the diamonds are so small that several hundred of them weigh less than a carat, the work is very hard on the eyes. The last process by which the stones are facetted is done by steam.—Jewelers' Review.

Circumstances Altered.

Mrs. Greathead—What kept you so late at that meeting?

Mr. Greathead—I had to draw up a long set of resolutions for publication, complimenting Mr. Bullhead on his great efficiency as a member of the board, and expressing our heartfelt regret at losing his invaluable aid and counsel.

"Of all things! Why, you and the rest have been fighting for three months to get him out of the board."

"Yes; but to-night he resigned voluntarily."—Stray Stories.

Hard to Please.

The hardest woman to please is the one who doesn't know what she wants.—Chicago Daily News.

VELVET NOT EXTRAVAGANT.

It Is Worn at Present Both in Street and Home Costumes by Many.

Although the term velvet gown has such an expensive, not to say luxurious sound, it is really not at all extravagant when it is remembered that it may be made to serve for both street and house purposes, and certainly it would be difficult to find a winter frock in any other material that is so comfortable, and what is of perhaps greater importance, becoming. Even a very stout woman looks well in one of these costumes, for the long lines given by vertical plaits and folds of some contrasting material afford the appearance of slenderness, which seems in these days to be the chief ambition of those women who go in for being fashionably attired.

One of the recent velvet models has a long skirt with an exceptionally full train, and is perfectly plain all around excepting for two narrow bias bands of black silk, which are on either side of the front breadth and extend from the belt almost to the foot of the skirt, where they are joined together in a sharp point, says the New York Evening Telegram. The waist, plain in the back, blouses slightly in front, with two similar bands running from the shoulder to the belt; the sleeves, small at the top and tight to the elbow, flare broadly, though not exaggeratedly so, to the wrist, where they are gathered into a narrow cuff trimmed with three bands of the silk, and the stock collar is similarly trimmed.

To transform this into the street costume, all that is necessary is to don the coat, which is a trifle longer than what is known as the three-quarter length, very full both back and front, and absolutely without trimmings, excepting for the deep cape collar, which is trimmed with many diagonal rows of the silk and very elaborate cords and tassels; the sleeves are extremely flaring from the elbow, come well over the hand, and are trimmed to correspond with the collar.

TO PROTECT SILK CLOTHING.

It Is Easily Done and Will Well Repay One for the Slight Trouble Involved.

The possessor of a cherished bridal or evening dress of white silk or satin should certainly wear the gown occasionally, because these expensive fabrics are almost sure to take as much harm stored away as they would if occasionally worn. Taffeta and most other silks with a glace finish have a way of splitting or cutting whenever they are folded, even when comparatively new, so it is much better to hang garments of this material in a closet or wardrobe than to fold them away in a box or drawer where the creases will be more speedily pressed in and cut through. An old sheet that is perfectly clean should be hung over the silk garments carefully to keep off the dust and contact with other clothing.

If you want a silk petticoat to last as long as possible, sew a couple of loops at the head of the ruffle on the inside and hang it upside down when not in use. Hanging in this way, in the opposite direction to that in which it is worn, will freshen it, make it stand out and take a new lease of life. If silk dress skirts are made with ruffles they may also be advantageously hung in this way.

When laying away any article of white silk or satin, remember that white tissue paper is not a good wrapping material because the chloride of lime used in bleaching the paper will soon cause the white silk to turn a yellow tinge that will be found practically indelible. The deep blue tissue paper that is so common is an excellent wrapping and will preserve the purity of the white silk almost indefinitely. Another simple precaution against discoloration is to shave up pure beeswax and place it among the folds of silk.

Discussing Our Bodily Ills.

There are no more tiresome or depressing people than those whose complaints are scattered broadcast in this way. It is perfectly natural on greeting a friend to ask after his health, but it isn't very pleasant to receive a minute account of his past, present or prospective bodily woes. We are intensely selfish people and good listeners are rare. Why, then, should we bore them with our troubles—real or fancied? If we would put ourselves in others' places once in awhile we would refrain from these rehearsals which so easily become habitual. Before telling of the ache or tired feeling, stop and think if it is worth while. When we are really ill, we want sympathy and we will get it too, if we haven't worn it threadbare with trivial things. The grumbler is a bore—let us help exterminate him.—Home Magazine.

Delmonico Salad Dressing.

The yolks of two eggs, one-half cup of tarragon vinegar, one-half cup of water, two teaspoons of salt, one-half teaspoon of white pepper, four drops of tabasco sauce or a pinch of cayenne pepper. Cook in a double boiler till thick, beating constantly. Add one teaspoonful of butter. When cold rub a clove of garlic in salad bowl and beat in one pint of olive oil, or three-fourths pint of cream.—Good Housekeeping.

Sweet Potato Cobbler.

Slice some cold, boiled sweet potatoes very thin, place a layer of these in bottom of a baking dish; sprinkle with salt and pepper and dot with bits of butter; then cover with a thin layer of white sugar. Add another layer of potatoes, etc., until the dish is full. Moisten with a little water, cover the top with buttered crumbs and bake in the oven until a rich brown.—Washington Star.

To Distinguish Linen from Cotton.

If you are buying handkerchiefs you may make sure of their being linen or not by a very simple process. Moisten the tip of one of your fingers and then press it on the handkerchief. If it wets through at once the fabric is linen, but if it is cotton several seconds will elapse before the threads are saturated.—American Queen.

THE MONGOL'S LAST RIDE.

In the Saddle All His Life, His Funeral, Though Barbarous, Is Not Inappropriate.

The wild nomad tribes who range over the vast country known as Mongolia have been celebrated for their horsemanship from the earliest days of history, when they swept across Asia and down through central Europe, leaving tracks never to be effaced.

In the mother country of the race, Tibet, and in the deserts of Mongolia, the tribes of wild horsemen have altered very little with the march of the centuries, but of late years they have been reduced to a certain degree of order, and, lacking the outlet formerly provided for their superfluous energies by wars and intertribal raids, they are likely to lose much of their old spirit and characteristic customs, says the London Graphic.

The hereditary aristocracy play a great part in Mongolian life, and even among the wildest nomad tribes "princes" and "dukes" are quite common. The "princes," it may be noted, have for some time past been little more than pensioners of the suzerain, China, receiving a small yearly revenue, in return for which they are bound to furnish military service if called upon.

Beyond the possession of a more numerous flock, finer sheepskin coats and a larger tent, it is difficult to see what privileges are conferred by rank. The expression, "a beggar on horseback"—to denote a ludicrous or incongruous sight—would have no meaning in Mongolia, for prince and beggar alike ride everywhere.

Every Mongol is a born horseman, and he herds his flocks of sheep, goats and camels on horseback, being able, it is said, to keep his seat even when intoxicated, as he is not infrequently.

Horse racing is an extremely popular amusement, the number of entries for each race being enormous, and a kind of polo is played in which the place of the ball is taken by a fat sheep, held in the arms of one of the players, from which the others try to snatch it.

There is, in fact, no circumstance of Mongol life in which horsemanship does not play a part. Courtship and marriage take place on horseback, a simulated case and abduction of the bride constituting the ceremony of the latter, while even in the last scene of life's drama the "ruling passion strong in death" is frequently shown in the funeral obsequies.

The method of burial most congenial to the wild, free soul of the Mongol is, however, that which is so repugnant to our western ideas, and yet there is something weirdly characteristic about the scene.

The dead man, wrapped in his blanket, is taken from his yourta, or felt tent, in the still hours of the night, when the cold air blows keenly across the bleak, open steppes. Four companions mounted on their rough, wiry little ponies bear him up, and at a mad, wild gallop the little band sweeps across the plain toward some distant hills.

Frequently the lean prairie dogs of the village follow the funeral cortege, and a black cloud of ravens, known to the people as the 'Mongol's sepulcher," hangs round the hills.

Once at the appointed place, there is little more to do; a last farewell to their comrade, and the little band is in the saddle again, speeding back to the cluster of tents, or rudely built town, at full gallop, with only a stoical regret for the stiff, stark figure out there on the hills, with glassy eyes staring up to the starspangled sky.

Each man knows that the time will come when he, too, must take this terrible last ride, but with oriental philosophy he says: "If God wills it, what can we do?"

ECCENTRIC RAILWAYS.

How Engineers Overcome Difficulties in Construction Which Appear Insurmountable.

As the iron track is bound to force its way into most corners of the world, it is not surprsing that some lines of railway exist which are striking evidence of a singularly bold conception carried out in the face of obstacles which seemed almost insurmountable. Sometimes, says the London Globe, the route of the future line lies across a desert; then the great law of the compensation of nature seems to make itself felt, for to balance the saving of time and money, due to the fact that long tunnels will not have to be cut through hills or mountains, the engineers are confronted by the total absence of three essential elements of construction, namely, wood, iron and water, which have to be transported along the newly laid line as it stretches its low length across the desert.

Russia's Transcaspian railway, now know as the Central Asian railway, was built under these conditions; thousands of logs of timber were needed and the region traversed cannot boast of a single tree for more than 700 miles. This timber was required for building the long bridge, two miles in length, over the river Amu-Darya. This bridge was always the weak point in that highly important railway, and it has been replaced recently by a stone bridge. Between Merv and Charjul the line had to be carried over shifting sands 64 feet deep. When the work is being carried on in such regions the trains become a little town on wheels. They are composed of two storied wagons, which contain sleeping accommodations, butchers' stalls, canteens, grocery stores and forges. As the Transsiberian railway grew in length it was resolved by the authorities that the workmen should have their own "church car." A wagon was fitted up accordingly as a church, with a little peal of bells in the alcove above the entrance.

So Stylish.

"Oh, yes, women would make an intelligent use of the ballot, I don't think," grunted Oldboy. "Here's my wife's been saying she is so glad I can vote the Australian ballot in Maryland, because it matches her kangaroo waist."—Baltimore American.