CHALKER BROTHERS.

Charles Goodhead and Robert Coxham, professionally known as Chalker Brothers, felt that they distinctly owed one to Mr. Justice Shortt. A case in which they were implicated had come before his lordship a few months previously, and the judge had gone out of his way to say some very nasty things about them. He had alluded to them and to their class as public pests, scourges of society, etc., adding other polite titles of the same description, which were quite uncalled for, and which had nothing whatever to do with the point of law on which his lordship was pronouncing.

Now this was all very fine. But Mr. Justice Shortt was notoriously prejudiced in the matter, and it was a shame (said Chalker Brothers) that he should be allowed to vent his personal prejudices from his seat on the bench. In his private capacity, of course, he had an equal right with every other citizen to object to horse racing and all its attendant circumstances; but he had no right to air those views from the bench in a manner calculated to injure them seriously in their business. Turf tipstering might not be the most elevated of professions. Still, honestly conducted, it was as good as many others. And so long as horse racing was a recognized institution, so long as royal princes ran and backed their own horses, to say nothing of prime ministers and other lesser fry, it was absurd to make a set against turf tipsters. Goodness knew that their tips were cheap enough. No one could call eighteen pence an exorbitant charge for putting a customer up to a good thing. And as for saying that they, the turf tipsters, encouraged gambling, the statement was ridiculous. People would gamble just the same, whether there were tipsters or not. All that tipsters did was to give the ignorant plunger a better chance of bringing off his coup than he could ever have by his own unaided knowledge (!). Possibly they promised greater certainty than this in their advertisements. But what of that? Did advertisements ever adhere to literal truth? If that were demanded there would be the end of all advertising. An advertisement was not a warranty. And if a customer purchased a tip on the strength of an advertisement, well, there was the good legal axiom caveat emptor.

In this strain did Chalker Brothers write to sundry newspapers in defense of themselves and their profession. They were enterprising men, and did not mean, if it were avoidable, to let their lucrative business be ruined either by a judge of the high court or by any one else. They netted £1,000 a year by imparting tips; and £1,000 a year wants some making in these hard times. Had they stuck to their original professions—those of bank and solicitor's clerk, respectively—their united incomes would probably not have been a third of this amount, and the work would have been incomparably harder. They much preferred, therefore, to go on with their present occupation, risking the unpleasantness and odium to which they were not infrequently subjected.

This unpleasantness and this odium took several forms. There were, for instance, judicial strictures, such as have been mentioned above. There were paragraphs in weekly papers, full of libelous matter, for which, however, it would not have suited their purpose to bring an action. And there were savage and indignant letters, addressed both to the press and to themselves, by many parents, guardians and tutors. In fact, nearly every post, along with its batch of envelopes containing postal orders, brought them a scathing protest or two from the father or tutor of some young fellow to whom their circulars had been sent. But they made it a rule to ignore all such letters, treating the writers of them with silent contempt.

Now and again, however, these protests did not take the form of letters. Sometimes an indignant parent would call personally at the little office, just off the Strand, where Chalker Brothers conducted business. If possible they avoided seeing such visitors. They employed a very sharp office boy, named Dick, who had a wonderfully discriminating eye for callers, and could generally tell at a glance whether they were genuine customers or not. If he thought them to be otherwise, the odds were much against their obtaining an interview with Chalker Brothers. But sometimes even Dick was at fault, and sometimes a visitor simply forced his way into the inner office. Then there were ructions. Chalker Brothers did not remain silent in the face of these personal protests. They gave as good as they got; often (judged by mere force of language) better; and it usually ended in the indignant caller bustling out of the office at a great pace, banging the door behind him and proclaiming in a savage voice, that those d—d impudent swindlers should yet be made to pay for their scoundrelly conduct.

But hard words and vicious threats do no great harm, after all; especially if you treat them as little unpleasantnesses just incidental to business. Chalker Brothers so treated them and went on prospering amazingly. The law could not touch them. And what else mattered? Parents and guardians might rave to their heart's content. Parents and guardians were always raving about something. It was, so to speak, their normal condition. They were never satisfied unless they had some grievance.

But the time was at hand when something more than a verbal protest was to be addressed to the notorious Chalker Brothers. One morning just as they were leaving their private house—for they lived together at Bloomsbury—to go to the office, they were met by Dick, red, breathless and excited.

"Good Lord, Dick! What the deuce is up?" inquired Charles Goodhead, catching the lad by the shoulder.

"There's two blokes awitin' for you at the horfice," said Dick, gasping. "And—and—"

"Well, who are they?" asked Robert Coxham.

"Dunno, sir. I never went in to hinquire. Didn't like the looks on 'em, sir. And when I jest caught sight of 'em through the door of the lobby I made tracks and came on here. They're two big gents, of a milingtary cut, and they both carry 'orsewhips."

"Ha! indignant parents, I suppose," remarked Charles Goodhead.

"The devil!" said Robert Coxham.

"Are they more than a match for us, Dick?" asked Goodhead.

"I should say one of 'em could smash the both on you," replied Dick, with emphatic candor.

The two partners interchanged glances. Robert Coxham thrust his hands deeper into his trousers pockets and whistled.

"Guess we'd best take a holiday from business to-day, Charlie," he observed.

Charles Goodhead said nothing for a minute or two, but stood, with knitted brows, apparently thinking hard. He was a shrewd, enterprising man, and, altogether, of a much bolder nature than his partner, over whom his influence was, practically, paramount.

"Well, what is it to be?" asked Robert Coxham, after a pause, rather anxiously.

Charles Goodhead suddenly burst into a hearty laugh, and gave his thigh a sounding slap.

"By jove, Bobie!" he said, "I've got a glorious idea."

"What's that?"

"Just come back into the house and I'll tell you. Hi, you, Dick! Wait here for us, my lad. We shall be out again in a quarter of an hour."

"Right y'are, guv'nor," said Dick; adding to himself with a grin: "Wonder what little game the old cock's hatching in his cocoanut now? Ah, he is a deep 'un—he is."

"Now, look'ee here, pard," said Goodhead to Coxham, when they were fairly closeted indoors, "this little affair wants delicate management. 'Taint no manner of use to skip the office to-day, for they'll only look out for us, and catch us unawares some other day; and then, perhaps, we shan't get a chance of escaping from them. We must go boldly down there this morning and sell 'em."

"How's that to be done?" demanded Coxham.

"Pretty easily, my boy. We must take horsewhips, too!"

Robert Coxham emphatically shook his head.

"Not me!" he said, with decision. "I'm not taking any, thank'ee, pard. A tussle with hunting crops ain't my sort. Not to-day baker!"

"Ah! you don't take me," answered Goodhead, screwing up his eyes and looking very leery indeed. "There won't be a tussle, Bobbie; nothing in that line. I'm no more nuts on a welting than you are. We shan't go down as Chalker Brothers. We shall go as two other outraged parents—twig?"

"Ha!" exclaimed Coxham, drawing a deep breath and then beginning to chuckle, "so that's to be the game—is it, pard?"

"Yes, don't you think it a good one?"

"Jolly good, if it can be worked. But I say it will want careful playing. If we get spotted at it, we shall be in a hotter pickle than ever."

"Aye, but we shan't be spotted, if we just lay our plans carefully, and keep our heads. It seems to me it would be best engineered in this way. We'll just change into quieter togs. You get yourself up, say, in topper, frock coat, Sunday bags; London solicitor; son at school enticed into betting by Chalker Brothers, furious; law gives no remedy; come to take law into own hands. I'll mount my country tweed suit; Squire from Bucks; son at Sandhurst; got into awful gambling scrape through Chalkers; mad; bent on giving both the scoundrels a hiding. Oh, it will be as easy as anything!"

"Well, supposing the introduction goes off all right, how about the sequel?" inquired the cautious Coxham.

"Oh, we'll manage that nicely. Dick shall come in by and by. We'll lay hold of him, and pump him about the movements of Chalker Brothers, and he'll tell just what he's been primed to tell—twig? Then we'll lead 'em a nice dance about London, in pursuit of Chalkers and, in the end, set 'em on to a couple of the most harmless pedestrians we meet. Properly worked, it will be as rich a sell as was ever contrived. We can just think a bit over the details while we're changing; and then we'll have Dick in and put him up to his part in the gambo."

Chalker Brothers were not early birds in the morning. They had no necessity or long business hours, and seldom went down to the office before noon. On this occasion, owing to the above delay, it was nearly 1 o'clock before they were ready to leave Bloomsbury. They walked together, accompanied by Dick, for part of the way. Then Charles Goodhead, duly armed with a hunting crop, and really looking very much like a country 'squire in his new get-up, took a hansom and proceeded first to the office.

The senior partner in Chalker Brothers was famous for his brass, even among his fellow tipsters. He chucked a cabby a florin—double his fare—with the air of a duke, and strode into the lobby of the office, looking determined and ferocious. The two military gentlemen were still there. They also looked determined and ferocious. They were men, apparently, of about forty; one was tallish and one rather short. But both were of powerful build, and had a "no nonsense" cut about them, which evidently meant business. Goodhead felt grateful for Dick's warning, and thanked his stars that he had not blundered upon these truculent avengers unprepared.

"Messrs. Chalker in?" demanded Charles Goodhead, fiercely making as though he did not notice that they were visitors.

"Not at present, sir," replied the taller of the two, rising from his seat. "We ourselves are waiting to see them. Why—why—" (as his eye fell upon Goodhead's hunting crop) "I—I do believe that you—you—want 'em for the same—"

"By Jove!" interposed Goodhead, seeing (apparently) for the first time the other's weapon of chastisement. "So you've come to give 'em a thrashing, also!"

"We have, sir," struck in the other military gentleman, brandishing his horsewhip viciously. "My old friend here, Major Lascelles, and myself have come in the interest of our sons—both youngsters still at school—whom these villains have done their best to ruin. They tell us we have no legal remedy. I take it that this remedy will have more effect than the law upon rascals of their kidney," he added, again shaking his whip ominously.

"My lad's at Sandhurst," said Goodhead. "Fine young fellow; got into the devil's own scrape all through these d——d scoundrels. Will probably have to leave. Career absolutely spoilt" (with a well assumed tremor on his voice.) "But I'll take it out of 'em. Haven't come all the way from Blisworth and missed the best meet of the season for nothing; as those blackguards shall soon know to their cost. Hark!" (starting). "There's some one coming. Wonder if—"

Before he could complete his sentence Robert Coxham entered through the outer door. Robert Coxham, in his new top hat, frock coat and Sunday inexpressibles, looked a very respectable personage indeed. No one would have suspected him to be a common racing tout. He strode in with an air of confidence and assertion.

"Are Chalker Brothers in?" he inquired.

"Why—why. By the Lord!" ejaculated the gentleman who had been spoken of as Major Lascelles, eyeing the riding switch which Robert Coxham carried in his right hand, "I do believe that you, too, sir, have come to administer corporal punishment."

"I—I—good gracious!" said Coxham, starting, as he surveyed the three hunting crops. "What an extraordinary coincidence, gentlemen! We are a quartet of horsewhips, as it seems."

"All the better," remarked Charles Goodhead, with emphasis. "There'll be two of us to each rascal; and one can take on, when the other one is tired."

"My son, who is coaching for the army, has got into serious betting difficulties through these scoundrels," explained Robert Coxham. "I should not have stooped to this course had any other been feasible. But the law is helpless in the matter. And what else can one do? Of course we shall all render ourselves liable to actions for assault and battery; still—"

"I don't mind if they give me hard labor," interposed the shorter of the two military men, determinedly. "Provided I can first have ten minutes at one of the Chalkers with this whip."

At that minute the door opened, and in hurried Master Dick, the office boy. Dick started and looked surprised to see these four visitors waiting there. His surprise developed into evident uneasiness when his eye fell upon the hunting crops. However, Dick was not without his share of assurance; so, putting a bold face on the matter, he asked:

"Are you gents a w'itin' to see Chalkers?"

"That is our intention, young man," replied Major Lascelles.

"Then I'm afraid you're wystin' your time," said Dick. "For Chalker junior's out o' town; awy for 'is 'oliday; and Chalker senior—e's engiged in a little kise at the law courts, and hain't comin' back to the horfice to-day."

At this point Charles Goodhead, the Buckinghamshire 'squire, seized Dick firmly by the collar—

"Lemme go—lemme go!" cried Dick, beginning to struggle.

"Now just you stop that," said the 'squire, menacingly, "else I shall give you a sound hiding, young man. First of all, who are you? The office boy?"

"I'm the clerk!" answered Dick, with dignity. "Chalkers' clerk."

(It is hardly necessary to say that he pronounced the word as spelt.)

"What do they pay you?" demanded the 'Squire.

"Thirteen bob a week," said Dick.

"Would you care to earn a five-pound note?" suggested the 'Squire.

"Just you give me a chance and see," answered Dick with emphasis.

The 'Squire let go his hold of Dick's collar, took out his pocketbook and produced a bank note.

"Now," he said, "you just tell us the truth, and put us on to one or both the Chalkers, and that note's yours."

"I 'ave told you the truth," replied Dick, eyeing the note eagerly, "and I can't put you on to Chalker, junior, 'cos 'e is out o' town, and 'aving 'is 'oliday. But I can put you on to Chalker, senior, if you like."

"How will you manage it?"

"This way, guv'nor. Chalker senior's kise at the law courts won't be hover to-day; and 'e'll 'ave to stop there 'till the courts rise at 4. Then 'e ain't a comin' back 'ere; but e's a goin' stright to the Temple Station, to tike the trine to 'Ounslow, where 'e 'angs hout when 'e's at 'ome. This I knows, guv'nor, cos 'e's guv me horders to bring the letters from the horfice, and to wite for 'im in the Temple Bookin' horfice at 4:15."

"Is this the real truth?" demanded Major Lascelles, sternly.

"S'elp me, guv'nor, it's gospel. Now, if your four gents jest follows me when I goes to meet Chalker senior with the letters, and watches me giv' 'em to 'im, why then you'll 'ave the very bloke you warn't."

"Now, you understand, young man," said the 'Squire, "that if we find you playing us any trick not only will you go minus your fiver, but you'll get such a thrashing as you'll remember."

"Lord love yer, guv'nor, I ain't goin' for to ply you no tricks. I don't howe Chalkers no love—blessye. I serves 'im 'cos of the thirteen bob. And thirteen bob's thirteen bob, in these 'ard times; even though it ain't orlways pide reg'lar. But the've done me more than one shabby turn, and I shan't be sorry to cry quits with 'em you may bet your boots."

A short council of war was now held by the four horsewhips, and it was decided to adopt the clerk's suggestion. Arundel street, down which Chalker, senior, would pass on his way to the Temple Station, was not a much frequented thoroughfare; it would then be growing dusk, and there would be ample time and opportunity to administer to him a sound horsewhipping before he would have any chance of being rescued by the police. In the meanwhile—as it still wanted more than two hours of the appointed time—it was arranged that Major Lascelles and his friend should go out and get luncheon; while the 'Squire and the solicitor (both of whom happened to have lunched already) should remain on guard at the office and see that Dick had no chance of communicating with his employer.

By and by—shortly before 4 o'clock, in fact—the Major and his friend were to return to the office, and the four of them, under the guidance of Dick would then repair to their rendezvous at the bottom of Arundel street.

This was the programme, and it was faithfully carried out. They reached their point of ambush soon after 4 o'clock; but they were kept waiting for some time. Chalker, senior, was late.

The four avengers, especially Major Lascelles and his friend, began to betray symptoms of impatience, and they looked suspiciously at Dick, their guide. At 4:40, however, the longed-for moment arrived.

"Hist!" exclaimed Dick, in an excited whisper. "Hist! Here he comes."

"Which? Where?" all demanded in one breath.

"There! There! 'im on the hopposite pivement; the little old cove with the bag," answered Dick, hurriedly. "That's Chalker, senior."

There was a rush on the part of the avengers; then a scuffle; oaths, shouts, protests, the sound of savage lashes, and piercing cries of pain.

The 'Squire and the solicitor, however, took no part in the fray; but at the first onset they and Dick slipped away in the dusk, and the two military gentlemen had their victim all to themselves.

* * * * * * *

Major Lascelles and his friend had to pay exemplary fines for their assault upon Mr. Justice Shortt. Had it not been established that they were the victims of a humiliating hoax, they would certainly have been sent to hard labor.

As for Chalker Brothers, their place knows them no more. It is generally supposed that they are carrying on their business elsewhere under a changed name. Anyway, they have not yet been brought to book, and the next move is still with Sir Horatio Shortt and his two military assailants.

—London Truth.

THE SHIRT WAIST.

The New Ones Will Make Last Season's Article Look Out of Date.

Fashion Letter.

It is conceded that shirt waists will lose none of their past favor, and that everybody who is young enough to wear the uncompromising garment will have several in next summer's outfit. Fashion does not repeat herself at too short intervals, so the waists of next summer must differ as much as possible from those of last. A shirt waist, to live up to its name, must be almost devoid of trimming, and be of mannish cut and finish. This necessitates a good deal of study on the part of the designers to evolute something which shall make all the old waists look out of date and create a market for the new.

Many of the new shirt waists now shown in the shops have white collars and cuffs, no matter whether the main portion is striped, spotted or solid color. Sleeves are all made after the bishop pattern, and some waists have a yoke back while others have a half dozen plaits the length of the back. The front may have a single, a double or a triple plait on which some ornamentation may be applied. The woman who feels that the stiffly starched collars are too trying may wear a black ribbon stock. Pass the ribbon round the neck, cross at the back and bring the ends forward and tie in a set, prim bow under the chin in a way that shows the first band of ribbon above the bow. This, with the little ornamentation on the front plait, is as frivolous as it is allowable to make the shirt waist.

While there is sonsiderable work in the making of a shirt waist one who has time and any faculty at cutting and making will be able to have waists at one-third the cost of the ready made. The most difficult part is the collar which is often made removable and is fastened with collar buttons exactly as a man's collar is adjusted. The usual ginghams, percales, cheviots and similar materials will be used again and although grass linen can scarcely be called a becoming material there is strong probability of its being a favorite the coming season. It is, however, improved this season by stripes and dots of color.

There were ever so many devices offered last season to keep the shirt waist and the dress skirt from parting company. The silver belt pin is strikingly inartistic and cannot claim to be an ornament however useful. Then there are several complex affairs, that are too much of a puzzle for everyday use, therefore general dependence is placed on a good strong safety pin. But between the cloth made brittle by starch and laundering and the weight of the dragging skirt, rents and tears soon make the waist shabby. It is always best to have the back of the belt strengthened by a double facing of cloth. Another way is to sew four eyes on the belt of the waist on the outside to correspond with four hooks sewed to the inside of the dress skirt, thus distributing the weight over a space of four or five inches. The eyes are no hindrance to laundering the waist.

Finely Dressed, but Starving.

Washington Post.

The assistant Senators, the wives of the occupants of the seats in the upper branch of Congress, have queer experiences, and see queer people. The doorbell at the house of one of the Senators from California rang one morning this week, and the maid who answered the bell found a very richly dressed and stylish looking woman at the door.

"Is the Senator in?"

"No; he has gone to the Capitol."

"Then I will see Mrs. ——"

"She is not at home," answered the maid.

"I'm sorry, but I must see her." And then the woman suddenly said: "For heaven's sake give me something to eat. I haven't tasted food for two days."

The maid was surprised, as the woman stepped into the hall and closed the door behind her. The maid hurried upstairs to tell the Senator's wife. Food was given the woman, who ate as if she was actually starved. Her talk was that of an educated woman, and she seemed a "perfect lady," as the maid characterized it. She wouldn't give any name, but left as mysteriously as she came.

And the Senator's wife is wondering still who the finely dressed woman was that was starving.

OFFERINGS OF THE POETS.

Biography of a Poem.

A heaven-sent thought-spirit
Like a burst of dawning light
Dazzled me with her beauty—
One moment with her beauty,
Then vanished from my sight.

Yet in that fleeting moment
My soul, electrified,
Received a lasting image—
A radiant, glorious image,
Fairer than all beside.

Then—then my trembling pencil
Profanely sought to trace
The form of my sweet vision—
My soul-uplifting vision—
And the glory of her face.

I failed, and wept; but another
Treasured my sketch; for he
Had seen the self-same glory—
He, too, had seen the glory
I had thought was alone for me.

—S. W. Gillilan.

Richmond, Ind.

A Valentine.

Must write a valentine? What! Mold
To words and sentences the thought
That in my inmost heart dost hold
Supremest sway? Mere words have sought
And failed to show
My heart's warm glow.

Love thoughts, sweet-scented as the air
That comes with Spring, rush through my heart
When thou art named, when thou art near,
But words are powerless. Thou art
My heart's sweet sign,
My Valentine.

—R. Z.

Memory Children.

I see them when eve-time cometh,
Where misted meadows glow—
The beautiful, fair-haired children
From fields of long ago.
Softly they gather about me,
Each with a rose in her hand,
And glints of gold on their tresses
Of a far-off, sun-kissed land.

But they will not stay—the children,
Tho' fondly I call each name,
Fade where the misted meadows
Border on seas of flame;
And singing still as they vanish,
Calling me fondly by name,
The beautiful, fair-haired children
That seem forever the same.

Sometimes in the care-worn faces
I pass on the busy street
I see a look of the children—
A gleam of their smiling sweet.
I long to say as they pass me,
Dear hearts, let us not forget
The love and trust of our child-time
Will keep us like children yet.

Pray God, when my eve-time cometh,
The gray of life's afterglow,
The beautiful, fair-haired children
From meadows of long ago
May gather blithely about me,
A star-eyed and laughing throng,
Voicing the hush of my eve-time
With faint, sweet echoes of song.

—Sophie Fox Sea.

Lonely.

I sit in my chamber lonely, and the city's pulses beat
As the human wavelets ebb and flow along the dark'ning street.
And the lamplights glance and quiver on the forms of passers-by,
And the hum of ten thousand voices goes up to the evening sky.

And little scraps of music and broken sounds of mirth
Rise up beneath the silent stars and float away from earth.
And I sigh to think the music, the laughter, and the glee
That rise from the great city are strangers all to me.

So I sit beside my window and gaze into the night,
Till the sounds and scenes around me are lost to sense and sight.
And my ears hear other voices with a sweet familiar tone,
And time and space have vanished, and I'm no more alone.

Dear voices fill the darkness, dear faces crowd the gloom,
And forms I love move silently about my silent room.
And I hold my breath to listen and I close my eyes to see
The voices and the faces that speak of home to me.

—Owen Hall, in Harper's Weekly.

When the Cows Come Home.

The light on the mountain falls aslant,
The birds in the bush are still;
The cricket chirps in the pasture plant
When the cows come over the hill.

The swallows circle about the eaves,
A pale star mounts the sky;
The squirrels rustle the golden sheaves
When the cows are passing by.

Over the valley the shadows creep,
Dark'ning the green of the pine;
Down in the garden the honeybees sleep,
Missing the breath of the kine.

The tinkle of bells is sweet to my ear,
But sweeter the words of a song
That the singer is slowly bringing near
As she follows the cows along.

She sings of a lover whose faith is fast
Wherever his footsteps roam;
And her cheek grows red when we meet at last,
As the cows are nearing home.

—Sarah M. H. Gardner, in The New Bohemian.

The Difference.

Young grief is hot grief,
Sudden scorching bud and leaf;
Then swift the tears rain,
Leaf and bud do bloom again.
But old grief is cold grief,
Kills together root and sheaf;
Spring comes back to sea and sky,
Blasted lies the field for aye.

One is the gray dark
That hides the dawn of day,
Loud sings the soaring lark,
And soft it melts away.
And one is the black dark,
Cold and scant of breath,
Twilight fading cold and stark
Into night's grim death.

God! We hail the message fond;
Morn of heaven waits beyond.

—Mary Elizabeth Blake, in the Independent.

Reading Helen's Face.

Helen's face is like a book—
Charming in all its pages,
Helen's face is like a book;
What's the story I forsook,
When on Helen's face I look,
When her smile engages?

There I read an old romance;
Here I see one living.
There I read an old romance;
But in Helen's slightest glance
Far a livelier tale enchants,
Wild excitement giving.

What is printer's ink to me?
Commas, dots and dashes!
What is printer's ink to me?
If with Helen I may be,
Exclamation points to see
Underneath her lashes!

—The Lark.

Song.

O the world it is a good place and I would dwell therein
While the primrose comes in April, the daffodil in March,
While blackbirds sing at daybreak, when the spring it doth begin
To show a pale, green mantle on the tassels of the larch.

O the world it is a good place and I would never die
While there's still a kiss unstolen from a lass that loves the thief,
But if she should grow unfaithful there were none so lost as I;
I would go into another world to get me some relief.

—Black and White.

A Thrush's Nest.

Far from this clay-built cup the soul is gone—
Here broken twig and ragged fibre lie;
But with dear fancy's wing my thought flits on
Through arch of woodland green and sunny sky.

There—though in rigid boughs chill winter grieves,
And barren every shrine of joy may be,
Still broods a golden bird among the leaves—
Still floats a hymn of lover's ecstasy.

—Emma Carleton, in Nidologist.

How Kipling Got Even.

Washington Post.

That reminds me of a story they tell about Rudyard Kipling—indeed, I won't be sure that it isn't he who tells it. He staid at a hotel once upon a time, in Montreal, I think it was, and when he came to go away he asked for the landlord. The landlord appeared.

"I wanted to see you," said Mr. Kipling, "because you are a wonderful man. I have never known your equal. I have sojourned in hotels all around the world. I have never seen one like this."

The landlord swelled with pride. He intimated that the thing was really nothing when you knew how to do it. He was in a seventh heaven of delight. Mr. Kipling waited till he neared the earth again. Then he resumed:

"I want to tell you that of all the hotels under the shining sun I have never seen one that for unmitigated, all-around, unendurable discomfort could even be named in the same day with yours."

And when Mr. Kipling's bill was made out one item in it read: "To impudence, $3." But what's $3, when one has spoken one's mind?

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

Blue-eyed cats are always deaf. The physiologists have in vain attempted to explain this curious circumstance.

China has a war god to whom they have burned incense from time immemorial, and who has over three thousand names.

The record of embezzlements in the United States last year revealed losses of only $10,000,000, compared with $25,000,000 in 1894 and $19,000,000 in 1893.

A Sepoy regiment will walk a European regiment to death, and do it on food which their competitors would pronounce wholly insufficient to sustain vigorous life.

Secretary Morton, in his annual report, figures that the farm property of the United States is worth $13,000,000,000, there being 4,564,641 farms, averaging in value $2,909.

Italians believe that, to avert the "evil eye, it is sufficient to hang anything red colored over the bed, or to wear red coral; but white colors do not exercise a similar spell.

"Familiarity breeds contempt" is a proverb found in one form or another in every European or Asiatic language having a literature. Its earliest form is believed to be the Sanskrit.

It is estimated that in India, counting all Protestants, there is about one missionary to every 500,000 people. The entire revenue of all the Protestant missions of the world is computed at £2,450,000.

Cats can smell even during sleep. When a piece of meat is placed immediately in front of a sleeping cat's nose the nostrils begin to work as the scent is received, and an instant later the cat will wake up.

A glass eye may, it is said, be used only six to twelve months. The humors of the eye corrode the glass, and cause it to become rough, thus irritating the delicate membrane and necessitating a renewal of the false optic.

"Every two hours a homicide is committed somewhere in Italy" is the startling way in which Baron Garofalo puts the fact that there are four thousand homicides a year in his country, ten times as many as in Denmark.

The greatest depth, writes Professor Seeley in his "Story of the Earth," at which earthquakes are known to originate, is about thirty miles. It is also calculated that a heat sufficient to melt granite might occur at about the same depth.

Chickory, which is used by us in the adulteration of coffee, serves the same purpose in France and England. In France its leaves are eaten in salad. It is mentioned in the classics as a food, and Pliny comments on its use by the Egyptians as a staple article of diet.

Of 1,771 breweries in the United States 289 are in New York, 251 in Pennsylvania, 174 in Wisconsin, 122 in California, and one hundred in Illinois. These are the States which have no breweries: Arkansas, Florida, Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, Vermont and Wyoming.

A regular Hindustanee carrier, with a weight of eighty pounds on his shoulders—carried, of course, in two divisions, hung on his neck by a yoke—will, if properly paid, lope along over one hundred miles in twenty-four hours, a feat which would exhaust any but the best-trained runners.

The term "abigail" as applied to ladies' maids originated from the Christian name of Mrs. Masham, better known as Abigail Masham; at first a waiting maid upon Queen Anne, and at last the intriguing favorite who supplanted the Duchess of Marlborough in the good graces of that sovereign.

A foreign journal describes a wonderful mechanical contrivance, a watch made in Switzerland that calls out the hours in a voice like that of a human being. This mechanical curiosity is the invention of one Casimir Livan, who based its principles upon his knowledge of the workings of the phonograph.

Maine's Labor Commissioner has been gathering statistics on the cost of living in that State. He figures that the average daily cost of living is 21 cents a day for each individual in the average family. The cost of living to single men, boarding, is 46 cents. These figures cover rent, food, fuel and light.

Between 1881 and 1893 the number of suicides in Germany was 105,327. The highest rate, sixty-five in 100,000 inhabitants, was in the Prussian army. Saxe Altenburg heads the list of political divisions with forty-six suicides to 100,000 inhabitants, while the proportion in Elsass Lothringen, eleven, is the lowest.

Those who imagine that the "skirl" of the bagpipe was first heard on Caledonia's shores will find their belief disturbed by the fact that that instrument was known in Babylon. The Assyrians took it to India, while it was played in the temple service of Jerusalem. In England, it was used soon after the Roman conquest.

The invention of paper took place in China not long after the birth of Christ. During more than seven centuries the knowledge and use of this important article was confined to the Chinese, who, while every modern civilized nation had been advancing in wisdom and practical knowledge, remained stationary.

The Chicago General Railway Company will operate the heaviest trolley car ever used. The new car weighs 230,000 pounds, and has a seating capacity of forty-four persons, but, according to established street-car ethics, it will carry 150 persons easily, and fifteen persons can ride on either of the platforms.

George Ebers, the Egyptologist, has discovered that many of the queer medical recipes found in the old English and German books come from the ancient Egyptians. They were unknown to the Greeks, but were spread from Salerno, the great medical school of the middle ages, through which they must have come through Coptic and Arabic translations.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Consolation.

Life.

"I lost one of my best pictures by fire the other day."

"Yes; but there was no frame on it."

Information Wanted.

Puck.

Mr. Churchly—My friend, I trust you are in favor of the American Sabbath?

His Friend—Do you mean the side-door system?

Compensation.

Puck.

The First One—I saw you speaking to Mrs. Hyman, of Chicago, just now; (with a sigh)—poor woman, she's had many trials.

The Second One—Yes; but she always got alimony.

A Theory.

Washington Star.

"I should like to know," said one New York sportsman to another, "what makes Lord Dunraven's apologies so slow in getting here?"

"May be he's bringing them over in his yacht," was the reply.

Not Necessary.

Puck.

Mr. Huggard—Ah! darling, must I say good-night?

Harsh Voice from Top of Stairs (full of sarcasm)—Not necessarily, young man; not necessarily! If you wish to be truthful, you must say good morning.

Popular Women.

New York Weekly.

Miss Longpurse—Why, of course, Helen of Troy was beautiful. Do you suppose there would have been a twenty-year war over her if she hadn't been beautiful?

Mr. Shortcash (forgetting himself)—Oh, I don't know. Maybe she was rich.

No Scene.

Detroit Tribune.

See the man.

Is the man wild of eye and disheveled of hair?

The man is wild of eye and disheveled of hair.

Perhaps the man is about to make a scene.

Ah, no.

The man is an artist of the modern school, which never makes scenes; merely posters.

Yes.

The Modern Bird.

Chicago Tribune.

"There's no occasion for fretting, Lucinda," said the shiftless husband who felt too languid to make another trip down town in search of work. "We'll be taken care of the same as these sparrows are. Remember what the good book says."

"These sparrows aren't taken care of," retorted his wife. "They have to look out for themselves. They are English sparrows."

Inconsistency.

Puck.

Traveling Man (receiving his change)—Here! I don't want this silver. It's too heavy in my pocket.

Colorado Cashier (sneeringly)—And yet you Eastern people claim that every dollar of it is about 40 cents too light!

In a Matrimonial Vein.

Woonsocket Reporter.

Miss Northside (to her brother)—Do you know, Fred, that no fewer than four men want to marry me?

Fred—All right, sis, may the best man win.

Miss Northside—You don't know much about those things. A bride does not marry the best man.

Picked His Place.

New York Weekly.

Saint Peter—Who were you?

New Spirit—I was the author of the best school grammar of my day.

Saint Peter—Take a seat up there just below Lindley Murray. Well, what is it?

Another Spirit—Can't I have that vacant seat above Lindley Murray?

Saint Peter—Who were you?

Spirit—I was an office boy on the New York Sun.

FIRST WESTERN STEAMBOAT.

How She Was Built—Her Exciting Trip Down the River.

New Orleans Times-Democrat.

The building of the first steamboat for Western waters was one of the greatest events in the development of the great empire lying west of the Allegheny mountains. In 1810 Fulton and Livingston, of New York, sent Mr. Roosevelt, an experienced marine architect, to Pittsburg for the purpose of making an exploration from that place to New Orleans. He commenced his voyage on a small flatboat, with a flatboat pilot and two men to handle the oars, by means of which the boat was propelled. After a long and tedious voyage he arrived at New Orleans, where he took passage on a sailing vessel for New York, where he explained to Fulton and Livingston his explorations, and among them the great danger of snags and logs, and that a steamboat must be built to resist being sunk by them.

Fulton and Livingston then sent him back to Pittsburg to commence the building of a steamboat. Upon his arrival at that place he built a sawmill. He also had with him a skilled engineer, a Mr. Baker, who was to superintend the building of the first Western steamboat engine.

During the year 1811 work was commenced on the steamboat. As the sawmill was very small, it was found impossible to saw the long planks for the bottom and sides. Sawyers were, therefore, hired to saw the planks and keelson by hand. This was done by digging a pit some eight feet deep, one sawyer standing on top of the log and one in the pit. By this means the long planks were sawed. This boat was built like a ship. The keelson was three feet in depth and two and one-half feet wide; the timbers were eighteen inches deep and one foot wide, placed close together. The bow of the boat for twenty-five feet was a solid mass of timber, so as to make her snag-proof. On her main deck was a bulwark extending around her like a ship. The engine was built upon the Watt & Bolton plan, with an upright cylinder, condenser and walking beam. This was the only engine known at that time, and had been used by Fulton and Livingston on the steamboats which they had built for the Hudson from 1806 to 1811. They were all side-wheel steamers using this engine.

This steamboat was launched in due time, and, after a most remarkable voyage, reached this city Jan. 14, 1812, just eighty-four years ago Jan. 14.

The steamer was called the New Orleans, and was built to ply between New Orleans and Natchez. It left Pittsburg in October, 1814, for an experimental voyage, with Mr. Roosevelt as captain, his wife and family also being on board. Mr. Baker was the engineer, Andrew Jack the pilot and six deck hands were employed. Captain Roosevelt took tools to work the beds of coal he had found upon his first voyage of discovery, 120 miles below the falls of Louisville, and used this as fuel. Late upon the fourth night, after quitting Pittsburg, they arrived at Louisville, having been seventy-two hours in descending seven hundred miles. On the arrival of the boat at Louisville, in the night time, the extraordinary sound which filled the air as the pent-up steam was permitted to escape from the valves produced a general alarm, and multitudes in the town arose from their beds to ascertain the cause, the general impression being that a comet had fallen into the Ohio. So great was their consternation many fled to the woods. Next morning they found the steamboat at the landing.

The shallow water on the falls of the Ohio prevented them from pursuing the voyage. They were detained three weeks and made two trips between Louisville and Cincinnati. The water then rose and they continued the voyage. When they arrived about five miles above the Yellow Banks and moored the boat opposite the first vein of coal on the Indiana shore, they found a large quantity already quarried. With this they commenced loading the boat. While thus engaged they were asked by the squatters if they had not heard strange noises on the river and in the woods, insisting that they had repeatedly felt the earth tremble. On the following day they resumed the voyage. The weather was oppressively hot, the air misty, still and dull. The sun, although visible, looked like a glowing ball of copper.

As they sat on the deck at night every now and again was heard a rushing sound and a violent splash, and they saw a large portion of the shore tear away from the land and fall into the river. It was an awful night, and so still one could hear a pin drop on the deck.

The second day after leaving the Yellow Banks the signs of the earthquake were apparent. The pilot affirmed that he was lost, as he found the channel changed. Some islands had disappeared, and the trees and land were constantly falling into the river. Everywhere they saw the banks disappearing and overwhelming many flatboats. A large island in midstream had disappeared. They found a small island and moored to it for the night. The lady of the party was frequently awakened from her sleep by the jar given to the furniture by the passing shock of the earthquake. It was a long night. The shores and channel were equally unrecognizable, for everything seemed changed.

About noon they arrived at the small town of New Madrid. Here they found the inhabitants in the greatest distress and consternation; part of them had fled in terror to the higher grounds, and others prayed to be taken on board, as the earth was opening in fissures on every side and their houses hourly falling around them. The inhabitants said that fifty flatboats had been sunk, and more than 100 flatboatmen had been drowned or killed in this great earthquake.

Proceeding on the voyage, they reached Natchez in the first week of January, 1812, and reached New Orleans Jan. 14, 1812.

TRAINED HOUSE SERVANTS.

A Movement to Educate Maids, and Pay Them Accordingly.

New York Evening Post.

Much interest is felt in the contemplated plan of the Civic Club, of Philadelphia, to regulate the wages of maid servants by their efficiency. The Civic Club is composed of many intelligent, progressive and plucky women, who, having been successful in other campaigns, now propose to find out if they cannot set domestic affairs in better order by requiring that a maid engaged for certain work shall know her duties. Cooks, who receive $4 or $4.50 a week, must understand the following: Care of stove or range, of sinks and drains, of kitchen, cellar and ice chest, of utensils, of making soup stock, roasting, boiling and broiling meats, dressing and cooking poultry, cooking eggs, fish and oysters, cooking vegetables, fresh or canned, making tea and coffee, making plain desserts. Waitresses, at $3 to $3.50 a week, must know how to care for dining-room glass, silver and china, must understand care and attention in waiting on the table, care of parlor and halls, and how to answer the door bell properly. Chambermaids, who receive $3 or $3.50 a week, must know how to take care of beds and bedding, care of toilet and bath rooms and of hardwood floors. The child's nurse, who gets $3 or $3.50 a week, will be required to know how to wash, dress and feed children properly, and must understand the general care of the health and well-being of children. Provisions are also made for the duties and compensation of laundresses and sewing women. The former, paid $3.50 to $4 a week, must understand washing and ironing and general care of bed and table linen and clothes. Seamstresses, who receive the same pay as the laundresses, are to understand plain sewing, mending and darning, and the use of the sewing machine. When enough signatures are secured to make it safe to endeavor to carry out this plan, circulars containing the requirements are to be posted in every intelligence office, and only those will be engaged who claim to possess a knowledge of the things required. The housewife, if she finds her servant thus employed ignorant of some points of doctrine, cannot discharge her for inability alone. The plan of the club for such cases is to send the girl to a cooking or housekeeping school, where she may overcome her deficiencies. The costs of the teaching are to be paid for in part by the housewife and the other half by the maid herself, who is pledged to allow sufficient to be withheld from her wages to pay for her share of the expense.

LATCHSTRINGS EVER OUT.

Good Old-Fashioned Customs Still Prevail in New England.

The Chautauquan.

On moonshiny evenings dwellers in small cities practice driving out for supper to some farmhouse where the summer boarder has been followed by large parlor and dining room. The traditional repast of cold meats, brown bread, "riz bread," mince pie and doughnuts, made more toothsome by coffee brewed from kernels fresh ground in a fragrant mortar, and made velvet smooth to the taste by cream skimmed from the pan shortly before using, is gone. Cream is not quite out of date, but the coffee, roasted the morning beforehand in an iron basin set on live embers drawn from under a lazily-charring backlog, "comes up among the missing." Concerning that we hear only the dreary croak of Poe's raven, "Nevermore." Their menu of oysters, salads, ices and confectioner's cake shows just how far New England has gone down into the valley of humiliation on the food line.

Home and neighborhood life and sports feel the mutations that close settlement and increasing push from outside always bring, but home holds its sacred place as the holiest spot on earth outside the temples of God. Home, church, school, the olden trinity, made the new helps and methods possible, and dominate everywhere. Youth and hope and love walk in and out the doors as of yore. Latchstrings are ever out, and welcomes, warm and hearty as those of a hundred years ago, greet kindred, friend or stranger.

There abides still among the hills the ancient esteem of sterling character, the primitive love of fair play, and, where outside men have not done their worst, the time-honored hate of bribers and bribetakers. The old-time repression and shyness linger still, as well as an interest in everybody and for everybody. Borrowing, lending and "swapping," together with delightful "neighboring," go on among farmer folk. Women take their work and walk a mile to spend a day; perhaps even patchwork appears once in awhile on state occasions.

The dear, sweet spice of gossip is current yet, though tittle-tattle may be fallen into shade; but so have knitting sheaths and snuff boxes. Apple bees, spelling schools and quiltings are now rare as a piece of home-made tansy cheese, but away back from rail and telegraph they flourish something like those in older times, but spelling schools have lost their quaint custom of speaking pieces, and apples are no more pared by hand or home-made parer.

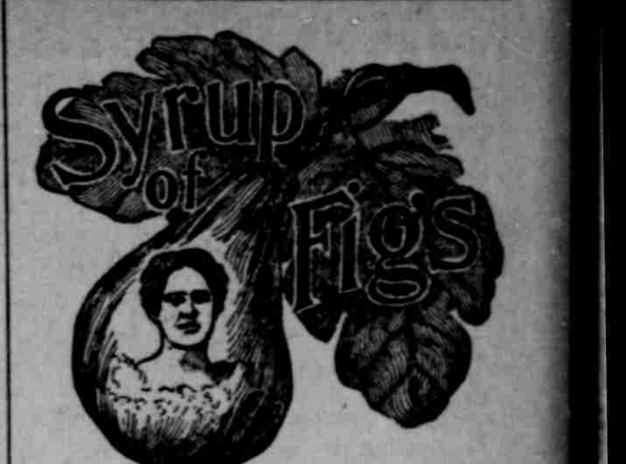
Bilious Rhetoric.

New York Advocate.

E. P. Whipple, in Literature and Life, speaks of Thersites as "all gall at human depravity." Thomas Carlyle seems to have been all gall at everything that he disliked. The following is from Notes and Queries:

Carlyle had his flings against science, but they were not very virulent; nevertheless, in regard to literature, he placed himself in the position of the ill bird that fouled its own nest, as witness the following amenities; Keats is "curried dead dog" (whatever that may mean); Shelley is "a ghastly object;" Coleridge, "a puffy, obstructed-looking old man, talking in a maudlin sleep an infinite deal of nothing;" Lamb, "a puir cratur, with a thin streak of Cockney wit, nothing humorous but his dress;" Walter Scott, "a toothless retailer of old wives' fables;" Brougham, "an eternal grinder of commonplace;" Wordsworth, "stooping to extract a spiritual catsup from mushrooms that were little better than toadstools;" Sir Robert Peel, "a plausible fox;" J. W. Croker, "an unhanged hound;" Lord John Russell, "a turnspit of good pedigree;" Lord Melbourne, "a monkey."

As an idol Carlyle was almost as hideous as some of the gods in the museums.



Gladness Comes

With a better understanding of the transient nature of the many physical ills which vanish before proper efforts—gentle efforts—pleasant efforts—rightly directed. There is comfort in the knowledge that so many forms of sickness are not due to any actual disease, but simply to a constipated condition of the system, which the pleasant family laxative, Syrup of Figs, promptly removes. That is why it is the only remedy with millions of families, and is everywhere esteemed so highly by all who value good health. Its beneficial effects are due to the fact, that it is the one remedy which promotes internal cleanliness, without debilitating the organs on which it acts. It is therefore all important, in order to get its beneficial effects, to note when you purchase, that you have the genuine article, which is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only, and sold by all reputable druggists.

If in the enjoyment of good health, and the system is regular, then laxatives or other remedies are not needed. If afflicted with any actual disease, one may be commended to the most skillful physicians, but if in need of a laxative, then one should have the best, and with the well-informed everywhere, Syrup of Figs stands highest and is most largely used and gives most general satisfaction.

IN INDIANA.

Doctors of the State Make Many Interesting Tests.

CALL SOME CURES MAGICAL.

From Richmond to Terre Haute and from Ft. Wayne to Evansville Indiana doctors are conservative. They take up no fad of the passing hour and run no risks with patients.

Marion county people know this and so do the people of every other county in the State. Because they know it they have confidence in what their physicians say. Whether this be criticism or praise they know it is the result of investigation, of knowledge.

Some of the leading practitioners of the State have recently tried Dr. Hobbs's Sparagus Kidney Pills in their practice. One of them says: "Their effect in a case of rheumatism was magical;" another, "I commend them because they act admirably." But the results are best told in the doctors' own words.

Indianapolis Physician Commends.

Indianapolis, Ind., Nov. 23, 1895.

Hobbs Medicine Co., Chicago.

Gentlemen—I received your sample of Dr. Hobbs Sparagus Kidney Pills and find them to be first class. The agents that they are made of are no strangers to me, having used them in my practice for years. I commend your products because they are made palatable and do the work as they are claimed to do. I tried the pills on a patient who was suffering with incontinuance of urine. They acted admirably.

G. W. IRICK, M. D.

Richmond Has Remarkable Cures.

Richmond, Ind., Jan. 6, 1896.

Hobbs Medicine Co., Chicago.

Gentlemen—I received the sample box of Dr. Hobbs Sparagus Kidney Pills, and immediately commenced to give them to two patients, one an old case of irritability of the bladder, and the other a rheumatic case. The one with the rheumatism has been afflicted for ten years. The effect in this case was magical. The chronic inflammation of the bladder is now in excellent condition. I am satisfied you have an excellent medicine, and, when prescribed, will always bring the patient back

R. R. HOPKINS, M. D., 110 N. 5th St.

Dr. Hobbs Sparagus Kidney Pills, which are thus indorsed by the best physicians, are sold by all druggists at 50 cents.

A valuable book mailed free. Address Hobbs Medicine Co., Chicago or San Francisco.