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The Making of Private Flatt

By J. S. FLETCHER.

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At nineteen a man is not usually supposed to cherish very gloomy views of life, but by the time he had arrived at that advanced age Nathaniel Flatt through sheer force of circumstances had become a confirmed pessimist.

Although he never admitted it to himself—probably because his powers of thought and introspection were almost as limited as his vocabulary—Flatt never assumed very favorable colors for himself. He was the eldest son of his parents, and his father was a drunkard and his mother a slattern, and that very small corner of the earth which he called home had never at any time been either sweet or welcome to him. He had no very distinct ideas of what it had been during the days of his helpless infancy, but he remembered the years wherein a sufficiency of kicks and blows had been meted out to his youthful body, and he knew what it was like now—that is to say, what it was like whenever he ventured or was absolutely obliged to put his nose through the door. There was no about the lines in his dirt, scoundrel, and general unattractiveness, though these things did not repel him as they would have repelled other folk who have been used to a cleaner sort of existence. What with his mother's shrill voice, and the crying of the younger children, and the curses of his father—when that worthy person chanced to be at home—the Whitechapel tenement was no bower of domestic bliss, and Nathaniel knew it by some sheer, blind instinct, and kept away from it as religiously as he possibly could.

There came a day—somewhere about the middle of Nathaniel's twentieth year—when circumstances of an extremely pressing nature obliged him to slouch homeward. He was hungry. It was not the ordinary, common, twopenny-halfpenny hunger which was always with him, but real, ravenous, fierce hunger; hunger that seemed to be gnawing the very inside out of him. He had had no luck for some days. Nothing had seemed to get right. He had found no difficulty about lodging himself, for it was summer and you can always find a corner wherein to sleep in London, however many policemen there may be about.

But when one has put no food into one's mouth for two days and a night—well, one must be excused for visiting one's paternal home and soliciting help from one's maternal parent. And so Nathaniel turned his face from Covent Garden, where he had been trying to find a job and had not succeeded, and went slouching eastward until he came to the peculiarly dirty and noisome court wherein the ancestral roof was situated. It was then mid-day, and the smells were many and vicious.

Mrs. Flatt was not pleased to see her eldest son. It may have been the way in which Nathaniel came in at the door which worried her. He had a trick, born of long years of fear and suspicion, of making his entrance by a very gradual mode of progression. He would get his foot round the doorknob first of all, and then one eye, followed by his nose and the other eye, and after these members of his body had reconnoitered the situation his brain would either signal a retreat or an advance to them and the rest of his frame, according to prospects.

It was somewhat disconcerting to any one within the tenement to thus be approached, particularly if it happened to be drinking something out of a small bottle, as Mrs. Flatt was upon this occasion. Therefore there was no wonder that Nathaniel's mother greeted him by flinging the bottle—when emptied—at his head, and then emphasized her welcome by a volley of choice terms and carefully chosen epithets. Nathaniel evinced no surprise—it was the usual thing. He laughed uneasily and stood fumbling his greasy cap. Something—he never knew what—always made him take off his cap when he approached his mother.

"Give us a bite o' somethin', mother," said Nathaniel, urgently. "Ain't had a taste o' nothin' since day afore yesterday—help me, not a biscuit! Biscuit come on, mother, give us a bite o' bread."

Mrs. Flatt burst into speech. She asked Nathaniel what he took her for. She wished to know what he thought of himself. Did he think his poor, hard-working father and mother slaved for the likes of him? Wasn't he old enough and big enough and strong enough to work for himself? Didn't he ought to be ashamed of himself for coming there and taking the bread out of the children's mouths? Didn't—

"Gawd's trufe, mother, I can't get a job!" interrupted Nathaniel, humbly. "Ain't I ain't had a bite—"

"Why don't her go an' list, then?" demanded his parent. "List, yer bloomin' do-no-good, list!"

Nathaniel fumbled at the greasy cap and looked at Mrs. Flatt with futile entreaty. There was a loaf of bread lying on the table immediately before him, and the sight of it was making him desperate. He looked at his mother and then at the bread, and at the bread and then at his mother. Suddenly he made a dash for the loaf and his mother with a scream made a dash for him.

But Nathaniel was young and nimble, and Mrs. Flatt was fat and unwieldy and much spoiled by inordinate consumption of bad gin, and ere she had realized what had happened the thief and his loot were safely outside the door and speeding down the court. Mrs. Flatt filled the open doorway and fired three volleys of curses after him. She saw Nathaniel turn the corner into the street—and since then she has never seen him back since that day.

That was the manner of the final severance of the relations between Nathaniel and his family. He was not at all concerned that it should occur in such a fashion, his sole concern just then was to find a quiet corner and fill his aching belly. That was no difficult thing—his knowledge of the locality quickly steered him into a safe refuge. He sat down and drew the loaf from under his coat and looked at it. If the loaf had been a sentient thing it would have remarked that the end was at hand. Within ten minutes, indeed, the loaf was not, and Nathaniel grunted with delighted relief. He got up and went away a short distance to a pump, and there he drank water and was satisfied. Then he stood in a patch of sunlight, against the wall of a blacking manufactory, and he put his hands in his pockets and whistled a tune and danced a sort of shuffle with his feet, and for the first time he was happy.

But when the first flush of excitement consequent upon this magnificent banquet was over, Nathaniel gave over shuffling and whistling and went away up the street thinking. The stern admonition of his maternal parent still rang in his ears. Why should he not go and be a soldier? He looked himself up and down and wondered what a recruiting sergeant would say to him. And suddenly—knowing exactly where a man should go when the thing was to be done—he set out in order to lead the recruiting sergeant answer that question for himself.

The recruiting sergeant eyed Nathaniel narrowly. He remarked to himself that Nathaniel was scum. Still you can get something out of scum—sometimes. It would take a good deal to get something out of this scum, but there were men in the army who would do it—plenty of them. As for the rest, Nathaniel was not bad material. He was half-starved, true; but a six months' existence on a British soldier's rations would make a man of him. He slouched, and shambled, and had contracted a foolish habit of rounding his shoulders, but the army is not a drill-sergeant. Altogether, there was just a chance that he might make a soldier.

And so Nathaniel Flatt became a soldier of the Queen and was sent off to the depot of the regiment into which he had enlisted and for the next few months he was licked and kicked and earthquake into something like shape, and knew misery in many forms; but as the Queen colored him, found him a bed and gave him regular meals, he was satisfied, and in some respects happy. Also he learned something about the art and science of soldiering, and the importance of keeping himself clean; and when, a year after his enlistment, they sent him out as part of a draft to the regiment in India he presented a very different appearance to that which he had exhibited when he slouched up to the recruiting sergeant and asked for the Queen's shilling.

It was something more than a pity that Private Flatt's military lot should have been thrown in with that of the Queen's Own Northshire Light Infantry. Most of the men of that distinguished regiment are Northshires—were so in the territorial system desired; they look so; and being Northshires they look upon the children of other counties as of no importance when compared with themselves. But about the time of Private Flatt's enlistment, the Q. O. N. L. had been below its strength; and as Northshires could not or did not come forward there were some men who were not Northshires came into the regiment and Nathaniel was one of them.

It was a mistake, and Nathaniel had dim, very vague notions that it was a mistake during the time he spent at the depot in Northshire town. But then he was only one amongst a crowd of recruits, all equally raw and rough; it was not until the draft got out to Kistnamugar and was absorbed into the regiment that the fullness of his isolation began to realize itself in his soul. When the realizing process began, the heart of Private Flatt became very bitter within him, and he went down into hell, and there he abode for a weary space, as many better and lots of worse men have done before him.

It was the first night in cantonments that Private Flatt began the easy descent, and it was Private Hollingworth who pushed him to the edge of the first step. He was a devout Northshirer, this Hollingworth, who believed in the territorial system to such an extent that he hated every Westshire and Southshire and Eastshire man who dared to come into the regiment by any door that might be opened to them. Therefore, when he, finding that by some means or other a Cockney street boy had been introduced into his own particular company, opened his mouth to ventilate his opinions on the matter, he said things unpleasant to hear. They were not intended for Private Flatt's hearing, or not supposed to be heard by him, but he heard them very plainly. He was somewhat dull and obtuse by nature, and it surprised him at first to hear that there were people in this world who regarded what they called Cockneys as being the most supreme fools, or knaves, or scoundrels, or scum, in creation. Until then Private Flatt, who had enjoyed a liberal education in the ways of the world as seen and felt amidst the London streets, had always believed himself to be a citizen of no mean city, but now—

He looked round in some amazement at Hollingworth. The latter, a magnificent animal with the strength of a lion and the mental ability of a rabbit, said the Cockney laid at him, and looked back. From that moment there was war between these two men. Some old survival of savagery in Hollingworth impelled him to treat the smaller and weaker man with whatever cruelty he could bring to bear upon him; and the mere fact of his physical defenselessness and of the injustice of his tormentor's pursuit of him woke up in Flatt such a hatred of his oppressor as only the weak can feel for the strong who misuse this strength. And so the thing began.

Private Flatt went down into hell swiftly and surely. He had no mate, pal, friend, and scarcely an acquaintance. His Cockney accent made him an object of dislike. Everybody drank with him, talked with him, or walked with him. His life became an affair of dull, colorless monotony, relieved only by the tricks his comrades played with him. He did his duty in a mechanical, spiritless sort of fashion, and the sergeant watched him as a huntsman watches a hound that looks like slipping away. Nobody took his part when Hollingworth treated him to a few brutalities—it was fun, thought the men, they thought about it all to see the Cockney baited, and besides who would waste sympathy on a Cockney? Moreover, private Flatt hadn't the spirit to defend himself—wasn't he known throughout the regiment as Perfect Flatt?—and therefore was not worth defending. And, after all, what did it matter that one man should possess his soul in bitterness?

But at last there came a time when Private Flatt broke out—broke out in the worst way. Seeing that he could get no companionship from men, and feeling perhaps, the want of the society which he had enjoyed at street corners and in railway arches during the days of his youth, he made friends with another creature which until then had been as friendless as himself—to wit, a lone dog of most despicable appearance and enormous appetite.

With this dog Private Flatt used to walk much at such times as duty did not oppress him, and for it, being foolishly weak in his affections at that time, he conceived a great liking. If he and the dog had only shown their affection for each other far removed from the sight of other people all had been well; but, unfortunately, the dog grew so fond of Flatt that it began poking its nose into Company D room in quest of him. It did this twice without experiencing mishap; but on the third occasion it foregathered at the door with Hollingworth. The dog knew that it had no business there, and it snuffed deprecatingly in Hollingworth's face and wagged a ragged tail. Then Hollingworth raised his foot and kicked the dog fair and square into the parade ground, and it, being always a dog of no luck, lighted on its head and broke its neck, and lay there dead.

Flatt was approaching the door and saw the dead dog. He said no word and made no sign, but he walked over to the dead dog and picked it up and came back and laid it down against the wall, in the shade. Then he straightened himself, and walked to the door, and two or three men standing about there with Hollingworth saw his face and were suddenly more afraid than they had ever been in their lives, and they slunk away. And Flatt lurched past them and went across the room, and before anybody could get to him he had taken down his rifle.

No doubt Flatt cursed that rifle many a time afterwards. Something jammed, or something stuck—anyhow, before his trembling fingers could put things right he was pulled down by a dozen pair of hands, and the rifle torn away from him. And thereupon rose a hubbub and such interchange of opinion as you can only hear in a barrack room—and as can only happen in a barrack room—there arose a diversion which put Flatt clear out of everybody's mind.

For there was one man of Company D who loved dogs—any sort of dogs and all sorts of dogs—much better than his own soul, and who had witnessed the occurrence wherein Hollingworth and the dead mongrel were concerned, and he told the former his opinion of him in such a very plain and easily understood language that within two minutes everybody but Flatt was hurrying to get away. As to what happened there between Hollingworth and the dog-lover matters not; but the events in which they figured for the best of an hour made everybody forget that Flatt had been on the verge of a murder.

That afternoon, for the first time in his life, Private Nathaniel Flatt got drunk. Not quietly drunk, nor outrageously drunk; but hopelessly, overwhelmingly drunk. He was not aware that he spent the succeeding night in durance, but he was painfully aware that he had transgressed next morning.

But transgression became common to him. He had broken out at last, said the sergeant who had been watching him, and now he was "a-going it with the worst of 'em." And so Private Flatt probed some very low depths of hell and suffered badly, and there were times when he was sorely tempted to put a bullet through his brain.

But there was one thing kept him back. He had made up his mind that sooner or later he would give himself the pleasure of killing Private Hollingworth. He was not quite sure how he would do it, but he would do it somehow. An opportunity would come when he could perhaps do it comfortably at his leisure. Meanwhile he got drunk as often as possible, and spend his time in doting on his knees, and on so on, and in anticipating his revenge.

Meanwhile, some other folks were troubled about Flatt. Hollingworth was troubled because he remembered the look in Flatt's eyes when he sighted him over that murderous rifle. He had left Flatt alone after that, but he was not sure of him and for a long time he kept out of dark corners and lonely places.

Flatt himself frequented lonely places a great deal; so it was in one of them that the colonel came across him one memorable afternoon. Oddly enough, the colonel had Flatt in his mind for quite ten minutes when he chanced to meet him. It bothered him that one of his men should be slipping along the broad and easy path so quickly as Flatt seemed to be doing, and he had more than once wondered whether it might not be a good thing if he had a little friendly conversation with the delinquent.

He came upon Flatt therefore at an opportune moment. Flatt was sitting on the bank of a ditch, and looking at the picture of misery and depression. The colonel looked at him for a moment and felt uneasy. Then Flatt became aware of his presence and sprang to his feet and did customary reverence. The colonel looked at him again and something outside a military feeling suddenly filled his breast.

"I'm afraid you're not very happy, my man?" he said.

Flatt stood at attention, flushed and awkward. "There's something in the colonel's tone which he had never heard in his life before.

"You don't get on very well with your comrades I'm afraid, eh?" said the colonel.

Then Flatt forgot his confusion and pulled himself straight.

"I ain't no complaints, sir, thank you," said he.

The colonel smiled. He liked Flatt better after that.

"But you don't get on with them very well, eh? Rather down on you, aren't they, now and then, eh?"

Flatt grew stiffer. He turned red, pale, and mottled; his mind was endeavoring to realize what all this meant.

"I—I ain't got nothing to—say, sir," he stammered at last. "Thank you, sir." Then the colonel liked Private Flatt still more. He looked at him more searchingly.

"Where's that curious-looking dog you used to have about you?" he inquired.

"He—he's dead, sir," answered Flatt. "Dear, dear," said the colonel, who had long been acquainted with the truth of the unhappy mongrel's death. "How did he die? What was the matter?"

"Met with an accident, sir," said Flatt, promptly enough.

"Ah! I think you are fond of dogs?" "Yes, sir."

colonel the Cockney had troubled the company so little with his presence that he had almost almost forgotten to mention it. He was not occupied with his duties he was attending to his dogs, as lonely and silent and reserved as ever. But Flatt was watching and waiting for all that.

It was pure chance that suggested the final means to the fulfilling of his vow of vengeance to him. He was returning homeward one day from a long stroll, every yard of which had been accompanied by some thought of the deed he meant to do, when in passing through a thick grove of trees he caught sight of a man who was evidently sitting on the bank of a pond or tank. The figure had its back to him, but Flatt was certain that it was Hollingworth's. He crept nearer and still nearer, and at last executed a flank movement through the undergrowth, which brought him to a spot where he could command a full view of his enemy. And as he looked he suddenly saw how the thing could be done.

Hollingworth was sitting on the bank of a square pool—a pool of artificial construction, the four sides of which rose to a considerable altitude above the water's edge. There were several fish lying on the bank at the side, and he himself was deeply absorbed in his sport, and heard nothing. It flashed upon Flatt that here was the very place for his revenge, and here the very place for his snatching his gain. He could steal upon his enemy from behind, stun him with a blow, thrust his body into the deep pool beneath. Flatt knew it was deep—deep enough. If a senseless man were rolled into it he would drown before consciousness came back to him. Nothing could be easier, nothing better. He stole away again, revivifying and perfecting his plans.

The next day, Flatt, strolling casually about, saw Hollingworth set out with his rod and vanish in the direction of the pond. He himself lounged up and down for a long time, and when he went off at last it was in the opposite direction to that in which he had been walking. When he heard some little distance away when he heard sounds of canine activity in his rear, and looking round, perceived that his own particular pet amongst the colonel's dogs, a little fox terrier, was following to his rear. Flatt uttered an exclamation of annoyance; and he was not minded that even a dog should see him do what he meant to do ere he returned. But he waited until the animal came up and jumped at him.

"You bloomin' little noosance!" said Flatt, taking him into his arms and fondling him. "What'll I do with you, now, eh? S'pose you'll have to go along o' me, eh? Come on, then."

He set the dog down and the two went on together, the man walking with bent head, occasionally muttering to himself, the dog frisking about his heels. For an hour they went straight on; and then Flatt made a wide sweep round, traveling by ways well known to himself until he came within sight of the grove wherein sat his enemy, all unsuspecting of danger. When they came to the edge of the grove Flatt stopped. He peered about through the undergrowth until he caught sight of Hollingworth's broad back, and then he looked at the fox terrier in some perplexity.

The fox terrier looked back at Private Flatt. He had a pair of very bright and inquiring eyes and a trick of cocking one ear holding its head on one side as it looked at you. That trick used to please Flatt and made him love the little dog almost as much as he had loved the mongrel. But for the first time in his period of friendship with it Flatt found himself unable to return the fox terrier's ardent gaze. His eyes were fixed firmly.

Flatt suddenly sat down at the foot of a tree and his head dropped forward towards his chest. He couldn't do it with the dog there—no, he must go back and follow Hollingworth some other time, unaccompanied. If he did it in the dog's presence he felt that he would never, never be able to look it in the face again.

He jumped to his feet, with a low whistle to the fox terrier which had strayed some yards away when he sat down, and made as if to turn away. But the fox terrier had suddenly noted some live thing in the undergrowth and with an anxious succession of yells and yaps it dashed between the branches in the direction of the place where Hollingworth sat dazing his line over the duck water. Then Flatt forgot his enemy's very existence and turned after the dog, calling, whistling, cursing. He crashed through the grove after it. . . . He was all done so very suddenly that Flatt never knew exactly how it occurred. He had a confused vision of Hollingworth, the peaceful anger, suddenly starting up, losing his footing and tumbling over into the deep pool below, then he himself was on the bank, holding on to the branch of a tree and looking fearfully down, wondering if his enemy's head would ever bob up again.

Hollingworth came to the top with the force of a projectile. He had gone on a long way down and he came up with corresponding speed. As his head rose above water he blew the water out of his mouth and opened his eyes, and looked full into the face of the man who had just been shot. He had sore missed, and for the first time in his life Hollingworth's soul grew sick.

Flatt stared and stared—he had forgotten the fox terrier entirely. He noticed the depth of the four artificial walls of the pool—no man could possibly climb them. He looked about him desperately—there was a mighty log of wood close by. If he could get that into the pool the man might cling to it until he got further help. But—

"Can you swim, Hollingworth?" he shouted.

"Only a bit—just to keep afloat—that's all," gurgled Flatt's enemy. "Can't hold up long."

"Hold up—hold up!" screamed Flatt. "There's a log here'll keep you afloat. Hold up!"

How Flatt dragged the heavy log to the edge of that murderous-looking pool he never knew. But at last he had it there and dived over the side. He shut his eyes as it split with a mighty splash into the water. Hollingworth's bulky form disappeared again, then his head came up once more and his long arms grasped the floating log. He looked up at Flatt and nodded.

"Going—for a rope—an—men!" panted Flatt, and turned crashing blindly through the undergrowth. Once clear, he ran, ran, ran in a straight line, panting, puffing, his head in a dazing and an ever-tightening cord pressing about his temples. Once he reeled and fell, but was up again in a second and running as hard as ever. And so he burst upon an astonished company on parade, throwing up his arms and jerking out his news between his sobs. And then, as a rope of men fled away pondering with ropes and salivation he suddenly fell down and fainted like a girl.

But when Private Flatt came round again he knew that the black fever in his heart was gone forever, and when they brought Hollingworth safely home the enmity was slain once and for all in his handshakes. And after that Flatt took the fox terrier home, and what he said to it on the way nobody ever shall hear.

short-sighted chroniclers have led us to expect from the inhabitants of the sixteenth century. In "When Knighthood Was in Flower" the characters "How-de-do" each other with the high handshake. We are introduced to "Lady Mary's" parlor, and we're only surprised not to find it equipped with upright piano and patent rocker. Only a great restraint on the part of the author, surely, keeps us from learning how the love went out automobiling together and how unreasonably jealous she was of his pretty typewriter.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.
Her Name.
Modern Society.
Jessamine—Why do you always call me Revere?
Jack—Because you are so sweet.

How He Came.
Brooklyn Life.
Morgan—They say he came from a very wealthy family.
Wright—Come? Huh, they drove him out.

Somewhat Large.
Puck.
First Fly—That's what they call the fly wheel.
Second Fly—Strikes me they should have named it after the elephant.

A Cheap Prescription.
Puck.
Mrs. Crabshaw—You seem pleased that my doctor recommended a five-mile walk.
Crabshaw—Yes, my dear; I was afraid he would recommend an automobile.

Delicate Irony.
Harper's Bazar.
"Gracious, little boy! You're not going to kill the dear little birds—are you?"
"No, dear lady; I'm merely going to let 'em off several salutes in dere honor. Dat's all!"

On the Contrary.
Vane Glory—I hope Swainston said nothing about me the other night, old chap?
Cecil Swainston—Not a word, old man; in fact, we had quite an interesting little chat.

How It Happened.
First Bunko Man—I sold ten gold bricks in one day last week.
Second Bunko Man—Conventy fair?
First Bunko Man—No, quantity of free silverites.

On Earth Now.
Life.
"I think I shall take Ruth to Niagara."
"Didn't you just go there on your wedding trip?"
"Yes, but now we want to go and see what it looks like."

What He Wanted.
Chicago Times-Herald.
"They say he married her because he felt that his children needed a mother."
"Yes. He has just bought her a \$25 toy dog and sent his children to live with his first wife's mother."

How to Receive.
Life.
Mr. Youngwife—I have at last discovered how to receive guests properly.
Mr. Youngwife—? ? ?
"I have everything ready, and then look awfully surprised to see them."

On the Inside.
Life.
Friend—How does it come, Pushington, that you who have so frantically denounced monopolies and combinations, have sold your factory to the trust?
Manufacturer—Well, I discovered that the best place to fight the octopus is from the inside.

Outrageous Him.
Somerville Journal.
First Workingman—Hodder is going to be married.
Second Workingman—Well, I don't care.
First Workingman—Don't you, though? He's going to marry a working girl, and she doesn't belong to the union.

A Bargain at \$40.70.
Catholic Standard.
"Speaking of singing," exclaimed the nightingale, sincerely, "of what earthly use are you? You couldn't touch a high note in a thousand years."
"Oh! I don't know," replied the bird of paradise; "I'm likely to be embalmied on a bonnet some day, and then I'll make a \$60 note look like \$3 cents."

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.
Silk dresses were worn in China 4,500 years ago.
No military parade or drill, except in case of war, riot, invasion or insurrection is law in the United States.
A chameleon, when blinded, loses the power to change its hues, and the entire body remains of a uniform color.
Common laborers in Spain get from \$0 to 40 cents a day in the rural towns and from 20 to 30 cents in the rural districts.

There are now in the United States about 20,000 miles of street railways, of which 600 miles are still operated by horses.
It was only one hundred years ago that we began exporting cotton in quantities adequate to the demands of England.
In 1890 the population of Arizona was placed at 88,000, and this year it is given as 123,212, an increase of 104.9 per cent. in the decade.
The regular army of the United States on Jan. 1, 1894, consisted of 3,287 men; on Jan. 1, 1894, of 8,573 men, and on Jan. 1, 1895, of 16,422.

The Hebrew population of London has more than doubled during the last twenty years. It is now estimated at between 100,000 and 120,000.
Cannon are known to have been used a thousand years before Christ. A five-hundred-year-old magazine rifle has recently been unearthed at Nuremberg.
Gallicies were imported from India before they were made in England. As soon as the looms were set working largely in Manchester laws and armies destroyed the Indian calico trade.
A few of the larger public libraries in the country have added music to their circulation departments, and with marked success. The idea is spreading now to the libraries in the smaller cities.

In the United States there is one church for every 37 people. Boston has one for every 1,000. Philadelphia has one for every 1,200. Twenty-four million people attend church in the United States every Sunday.
Arrangements have been made for the settlement of 450 Russian families near the new town of Ladysmith, Chippewa county, Wisconsin. The immigrants will come from the vicinity of Odessa, in southern Russia.
In 1848 the postage on a letter from New York to Wisconsin was 25 cents. People wrote long letters in those days in a fine copper-plate hand on thin paper—to get the worth of their money—but they wrote seldom.
There are about 3,500 miles of railroad in Russia, of which 2,500 miles are operated by the imperial government. Passenger cars are maintained for the employees of these roads. These funds amount to something like \$5,000,000.
Bees are excellent weather prophets. There is a common country saying that "a bee was never caught in a shower." When bees are flying about in the air, it carries a bad omen, but if they labor in the immediate neighborhood of their hives.
A New York woman has a unique manner of making a living. She goes from house to house of the fashionable of New York, and directly under the eye of her customers cleans the family jewels. She carries with her implements for cleaning in a little hand satchel and thus almost unincumbered goes her rounds.
At the birth of a Japanese baby a tree is planted that must remain untouched until the marriage day of the child. When the nuptial hour arrives the tree is cut down, and the wood is transformed into furniture, which is considered by the young people as the most beautiful of all the ornaments of the house.
The telescope, so far from being, as is generally averred, the outcome of the famous experiment of Galileo, was known at least three centuries before he cut down the tree. While the microscope certainly dates from the early part of the ninth century, although greatly improved in the sixteenth by Jansen and others.
When pins were first invented in the fourteenth century the maker was allowed to sell them on the lot and 24 of January only,



Midseason Sale

OF . . .

Fine Outer Garments

Warm weather is responsible for this. The phenomenal increase in our September and early October sales caused us to send in heavy orders. Most of these goods are here now, balance will arrive Monday or Tuesday and must be sold quick. The weather in the past two weeks has been unfavorable—too warm—trade consequently suffered. We now have to crowd six weeks' business into four. Of course we'll have cold weather—lots of it, too. We're getting it now, but we've got to make up for lost time, so won't take any chances. Here are inducements for you:

\$10.00 Buys a handsome Kersey Jacket, all wool, in tan, castor and black, full lined, lapels, cuffs and bottom beautifully stitched, the kind you generally pay \$13.50 for.

\$12.50 A nobby Box Jacket, fine all-wool kersey, tan, castor, black, navy, red, best satin lining, inlaid velvet collar, worth fully \$15.

\$17.50 New style Box Coat, all colors, best quality kersey, made with Medici or plain coat collar, bell sleeves, guaranteed satin lining, beautifully stitched, worth \$22.50.

Space limits us to quote more prices. We've too many different styles to attempt to describe them here. Everything, though, included in these reduced prices.

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1839 1900

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and upon these days the ladies flocked to buy them. They were so expensive that it necessary to give as a wedding present a certain sum of money to be used as "pin money," hence the term.

Overarmstrong has been casting up the accounts of the year's "Pastor's Play." There were 48 performances and 200,000 visitors who paid \$300,000 for admission. The proceeds of the village from ice-cream, the sale of trinkets and so forth were the \$75,000 and \$1,000,000. Munich and the Bavarian railroads have also profited, the latter showing a surplus of \$2,500,000.

The cotton crop of this country amounted to only 5,000,000 pounds in 1900. Last year it was about five billion, five hundred million pounds, representing three-fourths of the entire crop of the world and valued at \$550,000,000. It filled 9,500,000 bales, and the loss by waste incidental to the process of taking samples was not less than \$7,000,000.

Milliners who operate on a large scale are complaining of their inability to secure bright and capable young women with