The Earlier Bird

By Charles Dwight Willard.

THERE WERE FOUR MEN IN the smoking compartment of a Pullman, in an overland train heading westward. They talked of California—of its gold and the '49-ers, of its fruits and wine, of its mountain scenery, and of the hospitality of the people. When the latter subject was reached, one of the travelers fetched a sigh so long and deep that it instantly attracted the notice of the others, and they asked its cause. He returned no answer. Then one of them demanded to know whether he had ever experienced the famous hospitality of the Californians, and to this question he made the following strange reply: "Yes, by proxy." Thereupon the others, burning with curiosity, besought him to make himself understood. This he did in the following tale:

"My first visit to the golden State took place a number of years ago, when I was an inexperienced young man of about 25. My home was in Cleveland, where my family had resided for many years. A trip to California, in those days, was looked upon as a great undertaking, and I began to talk it over with my numerous friends and relatives several weeks before I set out. Presently I made a remarkable discovery. It was that every one of these friends and relatives had some acquaintance on the Pacific coast, who would rejoice at the opportunity to welcome me afforded by a letter of introduction.

"Now, it happened that several years before, I had had a little experience with the practice of making friends by letter. When I went east to college I carried a note to some people in Boston. I presented it, and I am confident that no explorer of the Artic regions ever encountered a lower temperature than that which

In the Smoker.

enveloped my welcome. Now, as I understand a letter of introduction, it is a sort of a sight draft, friendship being the consideration, drawn by your friend on the stranger, which you are empowered to collect—if you can. Your success depends upon several things: your friend's credit with the stranger, for one; the stranger's general solvency—that is, his capacity for friendship—for another, and his opinion of you as a collector, for a third. The whole transaction seems to me loose and irregular, and the risk falls entirely on the unfortunate bearer of the letter, who usually takes the thing on its face value.

At first, I tried by various evasions to get out of accepting these letters. But it would not work. People seemed to think that they were conferring some enormous favor on me, which, with the natural modesty of youth, I was seeking to decline. The more I held off the greater was their zeal in my behalf, and in several instances, I am confident, it resulted in my having letters forced upon me which would otherwise have been forgotten. What could I do? Nobody ever heard of such a thing as declining a letter of introduction—it would be equivalent to saying: "I don't want to meet your friend; he may be good enough for you, but I have no use for him." So I accepted all that were offered and concealed my true sentiments under an expansive mask of gratitude.

The number of these epistles increased with surprising rapidity. For not only did all my friends and relatives write themselves, but many of them dementedly went about asking people, to whom I was an utter stranger, for letters which should make me known to their friends in California. Then there were some letters which came spontaneously from the most unexpected quarters. For example, a friend would meet me and say:

"You don't know Col. Jim Fairfax, do you?"

"No; I don't."

"Well, he told me the other day he had a friend out on the coast that he would like you to meet—he had heard somewhere of your California trip. So he gave me a letter of introduction—here it is. It's to the Hon. Patrick Casey, a member of the Legislature. I thanked him, knowing that you would feel grateful for the attention."

"Certainly," I answered, "but as I never met Col. Jim Fairfax, I hardly see how he"——

"Oh, that was all right. He just wrote the letter as if you were a friend of his. See?"

I opened the letter and saw. It was calculated to deceive the Hon. Patrick into the belief that Col. Jim and I were like Damon and Pythias. I shudderingly added the letter to the heap, and I mention it now only as a sample of its class."

At last, when I was ready to start, the bundle of letters had grown so large that it positively frightened me. Indeed, at times I was half resolved to abandon the trip, solely on account of the premonition of evil that swept over me whenever I contemplated that awful heap. But I had now gone too far to back out, and, depositing the letters in one corner of my trunk, I took my departure. There was a crowd at the station to see me off, and the last thing I heard, as the train started, was a general cry of:

"Be sure and present my letter to"——

Of course the request was superfluous—like most things said at partings—for the reason that I had already solemnly promised each one that I would deliver his letter.

In the quiet solitude of the first day's ride, I had nothing to do but think, and the bundle of letters provided me with subject-matter. They constituted a problem whose vexatious conditions drove me half distracted.

If I failed to deliver them—or to make at least an honest effort in behalf of each—I should break my promise to a number of people whose good opinion I held in high esteem. It would never do for me deliberately to admit, on my return, that I had scorned to make acquaintance with their friends, or that I had been insensible to their kindness in giving me the letters. On the other hand, I doubted whether I could manufacture excuses delicate enough to go around. Having been trained to truth from my boyhood, I lacked the imaginative power which is needed for artistic mendacity. In fact, I was likely to find myself in the same embarrassing situation that is said to have overcome the Father of his Country: I could not tell a lie—that would get me out of the scrape.

So I finally settled it in my own mind that I must present all the letters.

Then the other horn of the dilemma began to gore me. Here were a lot of people who knew nothing of me, nor I of them. I was expected to hunt them up, at a great expense of time and trouble, and deliver to them a letter apiece all around, after the fashion of a conscientious and impartial mailman. But that was not all. These letters practically involved a demand, on my part, for attentions, based on a je-ne-sais-quoi relationship between the sender and the recipient. Being a very young man, I was somewhat sensitive on the score of snubs, and I saw them looming up in unlimited numbers throughout the whole situation. The Boston experience was liable to be repeated on a magnificent scale.

The second day out I became acquainted with several of my fellow-passengers. One of them, a bright young New Yorker, by the name of Yelverton, seemed to take a special fancy to me, and we put in several hours conversing together. He had visited the coast before, and, although only a few years my senior, was evidently a man who had had a good deal of experience in the world. Naturally, after our acquaintance had progressed to a certain stage, I talked on the subject uppermost in my mind, and told him all about the letters.

I had hoped he would say something that would prove reassuring; on the contrary, he aggravated my woe.

"Why, my dear fellow," he said, "if you are going to undertake to deliver those epistles, you have my sympathy. Just now the very words 'letter of introduction' are to the average Californian like a red rag to a bull. They are a hospitable people, but their good nature has been so grossly imposed upon by the horde of impostors and mountebanks that has poured in since the building of the railroad that it is no longer easy for a stranger to get into their good graces. The letter-of-introduction device has been worked until it is threadbare, and the man who offers to present one risks an immediate arrest from the police, or even severer treatment at the hands of the vigilance committee."

"You frighten me," I said; "however, as my letters are all genuine, and bear the names of many of the most prominent people of Cleveland, I hardly expect to meet with difficulties of that sort."

"Probably not," said Yelverton; "but you may expect to be rather coldly treated."

"Well, blast the letters!" I exclaimed angrily; "I can see they are going to destroy half the pleasure of my visit to the coast."

My annoyance seemed to afford Yelverton no small amusement, and he recurred several times to the subject after I had allowed it to drop.

It was a part of my plan to stop over in Denver about a week to visit some friends. Yelverton, also, made a brief stay in that place, and we occupied adjoining apartments in the same hotel. Once, when he happened to be in my room, I had occasion to look for something in my trunk, and I came upon the hated bundle of letters.

"Here are those infernal documents," I remarked, tossing the bundle over to the table near where he stood. He picket it up, felt of its thickness, and then gave a sardonic laugh.

"You are certainly in for it, my boy," he said, and put the letters back on the table amid a pile of newspapers and magazines.

Before his departure, which took place the next day, Yelverton made me promise that I would telegraph him when I left Denver, so that he might meet me on my arrival at the coast. I promised it unhesitatingly, for I was satisfied that his friendship would bring opportunities not to be slighted.

Various circumstances which I need not detail lengthened my stay in Denver from a week to nearly a month, and in the course of that time I quite forgot about the letters of introduction. When I was ready to depart, however, I thought of them with a sudden and intense pang of discomfort.

I telegraphed to Yelverton, and proceeded to pack my trunk. Just as I was about to turn the key, it suddenly occurred to me that I had not noticed the bundle of letters in its customary place in the corner of the till. I opened the trunk and investigated. The letters were not to be found, either in the till or elsewhere. Then I remembered that shortly after my arrival at the hotel I had taken them out to show to Yelverton, and had put them on the table. However, they were not there now.

I made a thorough search of the room; the letters had plainly disappeared.

I went immediately to the clerk and told my story. He sent for the head chambermaid.

"Who takes care of Mr. Bonworthy's room?" he asked.

"Maggie," answered the head chambermaid; "but Clara had that room when he first came."

"I have lost a package of letters," said I.

The two exchanged significant glances.

"Do you think they were stolen?" I asked; "no one could have any possible object"——

"Oh, no," said the clerk. Then he asked me if the letters were valuable.

"N-no," I said; "not exactly."

"Well, I'll tell you," said the clerk, evidently much relieved; "we let that girl Clara go because she had a reckless way of burning up things that she found lying around in the rooms. If you have made a thorough search and you are sure the letters are not there, the chances are they are destroyed."

I found it difficult to repress my joy at this intelligence. It is to be doubted if the clerk and head chambermaid ever succeeded in explaining my strange conduct, in actually refusing to make a row when one was quite justifiable. I hastened back to the room and executed a fresh search so as to satisfy my conscience. When I was absolutely convinced that the letters were gone, I danced about the room in a transport of glee. The awful incubus which had been weighing down my spirits was suddenly removed, and I breathed again.

"What a blockhead I am," I said to myself; "why did it never occur to me to destroy the letters, and claim, on my return, that they had been lost?"

Chance had supplied the excuse which imagination had been unable to conjure up. I continued my journey, light-hearted as a prisoner who has just secured his freedom.

Yelverton had advised me to stop over at Sacramento—one of the historic cities of the State—and visit the capitol and other points of

'Here are the Infernal Documents."

interest. I adopted the suggestion. The train got into Sacramento in the morning, and I was driven right to a hotel.

I wrote my name on the register, and asked for a room for one day. The clerk whirled the book around, glanced at the name, and said:

"All right, Mr. Bon—why, are you Mr. Bonworthy? Elliot Bonworthy—of Cleveland?"

"Well," I said, with some dignity, "what did you imagine I wrote that name for—amusement?"

His tone and manner surprised and annoyed me. It was evident, however, that my cool answer had disconcerted him, for his hand shook as he penciled the number of a room after my name, and his voice trembled when he called up the bell-boy.

Ten minutes later, just as I was completing a hasty toilet, there was a knock at my door, and, in answer to a "come in," the clerk entered, followed by a tall, military-looking man. When the door was closed, the clerk motioned his hand toward me, and nodded.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Do I understand," said the military man, "that you acknowledge your name to be Elliot Bonworthy?"

"Of course I do," I answered somewhat angrily.

"Well, I like his nerve," said the military man to the clerk, and the clerk grinned at me.

"Say," continued the military man, "have you any friends in this town?"

"No," I said; "I had some letters of introduction to several"——

The clerk gave a loud, derisive laugh.

"That settles it, Bill," he said to his companion; "you had better run him in. You can take him down to the city on the afternoon train."

"What does all this mean?" I exclaimed.

Bill produced a paper from his pocket. "It means that you are under arrest," said he, "on a charge of obtaining money under false pretenses. We know all about your letter-of-introduction scheme; it may have worked all right in San Francisco, but it doesn't go here. Now, just come along quietly, and there won't be any trouble; otherwise"——

I glanced at the warrant. There was my name, Elliot Bonworthy, as plain as print. I don't need to remark that I was astonished and frightened. I had heard of men being mistaken for criminals and put to the necessity of proving their own identity, but here was I arrested under my own name, in a place where I had supposed myself utterly unknown. What could I do—or say? I asked a few questions, and learned that the crime that was charged had been committed in the city of San Francisco a week or two before. Of course I could prove an alibi at the trial, but in the meantime what was to be done to keep out of jail?

I accompanied Bill—"quietly," as he had suggested—to the Sheriff's office, and we waited there until the next train left for San Francisco.

Bill proved to be rather an entertaining companion. The first half of the trip he did his best to convince me that I ought to make a full confession to him of all my various crimes. He promised to "stand in" and get me off with a light sentence. When he found this undertaking hopeless, he began to talk about the country, answering the questions which I, a stranger to the scenes through which we were passing, very naturally asked. At length, however, as we were crossing the ferry from Oakland, when I expressed my satisfaction at beholding the Golden Gate for the first time, he turned on me with a sheepish grin and said:

"You'd better let up. It won't do no good. Of course you know the place as well as I do, and it's no use tryin' to fill me full of prunes."

When we arrived in the city we went directly to the Sheriff's office.

"We will take you to the jail later on," said Bill, apologetically.

The Sheriff dispatched a messenger after some of the complaining witnesses, and then proceeded to interview me. I told him my name and explained that I was a tourist from

"It Means that You Are Under Arrest."

Cleveland. He nodded his head and announced that the jig was up, and that I might as well confess, for they had a very good case against me.

Presently two well-dressed men were ushered into the room. Bill accompanied them.

"This is the man," said the Sheriff. "He acknowledges it—at least the name."

"He is not the man," said one of the newcomers, emphatically.

"He isn't!" exclaimed the Sheriff; and Bill made a hasty reference to the infernal regions.

"No!" cried the gentleman; "I told you the fellow had a blonde mustache, blue eyes, was thick-set, and wore his hair parted nearly in the middle."

"Yelverton!" I exclaimed, springing up.

"That's one of his names," said the Sheriff. "He went here under the name of Elliot Bonworthy, and he had an armful of letters of introduction with which he worked the town. What do know about him?"

"He stole those letters from me at Denver," I said.

"Oh, then you are the simon-pure Elliot Bonworthy?" said one of the gentlemen.

"I can prove it readily enough if necessary," I said.

"The Sheriff and Bill began to make profuse apologies, to which I paid little attention, as I was anxious to learn of Yelverton and his performances.

"He arrived here nearly a month ago," said one of the gentlemen, "and began immediately to make acquaintance by means of these letters—your letters, it appears. They were to many of the finest people in the city. So we took the man right in, for he talked and acted like a perfect gentleman. Well, sir, I don't suppose any man that ever came to this city got more elegant treatment than that fellow. Do you?" he asked, turning to his companion, who signified his entire agreement.

"Go on," I said, with an inward groan.

"The best private houses and the clubs were all open to him and he received every possible attention. Several men I know gave him wine suppers. There wasn't a social event of importance to which he failed to have an invitation. He gave it out that he was sizing things up for a syndicate of Cleveland capitalists that thought of investing largely in mines. Well, sir, I calculate that in the three weeks that he put in in this city he had probably one of the largest times that any man ever enjoyed. And he wound the thing up by getting the names of three or four good business men on spurious drafts and then suddenly disappeared from view."

"That was when I telegraphed him that I was coming," I said.

"Well," observed the speaker in conclusion, "if you have any more letters of introduction bearing that same name, I would not advise you to present them, for you are liable to get arrested every time you try one on."

I explained that Yelverton had captured the entire pack. The complaining witnesses then shook hands with me and departed. I imagine their experience with Yelverton discouraged them from any rash tenders of hospitality, for they did not suggest any improvement of our acquaintance. Indeed it was a cool stand-off on both sides, for I did not fancy their sarcastic flings on the subject of the letters.

"The next day the newspapers contained the whole story—the theft of the letters, Yelverton's performances, and my arrest. The account given of the brief but glorious career of my proxy—the spurious Mr. Elliot Bonworthy—convinced me that the gentlemen I had met at the Sheriff's office were quite right in saying he had enjoyed a "large time." As I read of suppers, dinners, fetes, balls, excursions, honors, attentions, etc., my senses fairly reeled with anguish. All this good time really belonged to me; I had been cheated out of it, partly through my own stupid misgivings and partly through the shrewdness and industry of this earlier bird.

"Now, then, gentlemen," concluded the passenger, who had been asked to tell what he knew of the hospitality of the Californians, "you understand what I mean by saying that I received my welcome on the coast by proxy.—*The Argonaut.*

Real Value of Social Position.

The editor of a London paper became involved in a discussion with an American resident of the English metropolis over the question of the venality of Englishmen where marriage is concerned, and the truth of the frequent assertion that women of title in London would undertake, for a money consideration, to launch anybody into society.

In order to test the matter an advertisement was published, asking for the services of such a person, and a great number of replies were received from people of unquestioned prominence socially, and of high rank in the peerage.

These letters have been published along with a few terse comments, but the names and titles of the writers have been suppressed. The result is a hullabaloo of extraordinary dimensions in the social world of London, and the whole performance is cuttingly referred to as "a contemptible Yankee trick."

Won and Lost.

James Francis Oswald, a new Queen's Counsel, was the junior who, on being told by Justice Kay that "although he could teach him law, he could not teach him manners," quietly remarked, "That is so, my lud." An encounter with Justice Chitty was hardly so successful. He had been addressing the court at great length in a bill-of-sale case, and at last said: "And now, my lud, I address myself to the furniture." "You have been doing that for some time past," said Justice Chitty.

All Open.

In the days of his management at the Winter Garden, Edwin Booth received a letter from a clergyman saying that he wished to see Booth in his principal parts, but desired, if possible, to be admitted into the theater by a side door, as he did not care to run any risk of being seen by his parishioners entering from the front. Edwin Booth made answer in these words: "Sir: There is no door in my theater through which God cannot see."

Ringing Noises

In the ears, sometimes a ringing, buzzing sound, or snapping like the report of a pistol, are caused by Catarrh in the Head. Loss of smell or hearing also result from Catarrh, which may develope into Bronchitis or Consumption. Hood's Sarsaparilla cures Catarrh by thoroughly purifying the blood and building up the entire system. Get Hood's, because

Hood's Sarsaparilla Cures

Hood's Pills cure liver ills, sick headache, jaundice, indigestion. 25c. Try a box.

BRIDES BY CAPTURE.

Curious Marriage Customs in Foreign Lands.

From remote time brides have been the prize of the most daring, and marriage by capture has more or less prevailed in some part of our little globe from the time when the artful Romans, ignoring the laws of hospitality, seized upon the ripe charms of their Sabine guests, nor waited for the decree nisi to be pronounced absolute before asserting their new prerogative, and from this enforced alliance sprang the conquerors of the world.

The Eskimo of to-day, says the New York *Journal*, having once established his manhood by killing a polar bear unaided, is sent forth by his kindred to seek a wife, and the first girl he can surprise unawares he seizes, and, in spite of her screams and struggles, endeavors to carry off. This proving no easy feat, owing to the substantial proportions of the Eskimo belle, together with the enormous weight of her clothing, an exciting race occurs.

The lady, darting among the aroused neighbors, dodges her suitor in the crowd, which eagerly assists her, and it is only after he has succeeded in catching her the third time that he is permitted to lead his blushing and excited bride to the hymeneal altar.

The Australian aborigine adopts a more summary process. When weary of a single life he looks about for a partner, and, finding one to his liking, stalks her, and watching his opportunity, stuns her with a heavy blow, and carries her off to her new home, where, it is to be hoped, on her return to consciousness, his after-tenderness makes some atonement for his somewhat rough-and-ready mode of wooing.

In parts of India the winning of the bride depends upon fleetness of foot, a circular course being marked out, half of which is traversed by the maiden (encumbered only by a waist-band) before the lover is allowed to start in pursuit, and if he does not succeed in capturing her before she has thrice completed the circuit he loses his prize.

In Saxon and early Norman times men purchased their wives from the father, his wealth being estimated by the number of his daughters, whose simple education was completed at a trivial cost, and whose labors contributed largely to augment the family pile, as they not only prepared all the food that the household consumed, but made from flax and wool their father's clothes and their own, from which they obtained the title of "spinster"; and it was an accepted axiom among our frugal forefathers that no young woman was fit to be a wife until she had spun for herself a set of body, table and bed linen.

It can be readily understood that the father of such daughters was in no hurry to part with them, and suitors vied with each other in their offers for their hands, writes Frank Shelley in *Lippincott's Magazine*. The father being satisfied, it was customary for him to hand the bridegroom a shoe, which symbolically constituted him the bride's owner.

With this he lightly tapped her over the head, to indicate his recently-acquired authority. The shoe thus given to the groom was carried to the bridal chamber and placed over the pillow upon which the newly-married couple rested their heads, the husband's side of the bed.

Occasionally, when the lady was accused of being somewhat tyrannical in temper, the "best man," whose duty it was to perform this delicate office, would by way of joke, slyly transfer the shoe to the other side.

From ancient times the shoe has been a common instrument for the infliction of domestic chastisement, both in Eastern and Western nations, and our own childish recollections of its substitute, the slipper, would seem to argue that this venerable custom is anything but obsolete.

The ready faculty with which this instrument of torture can be disengaged and administered to the culprit makes it doubtful whether its use will ever entirely go out of date.

The Anglo-Saxon was a great believer in domestic discipline and the efficacy of the stick to enforce obedience; no house of the period was considered furnished that did not have suspended from a convenient nail on the wall the stick with which he habitually chastised his wife.

An old Welsh law, until lately unrepealed, empowered the husband to punish his wife with three blows of a broomstick, on any part of the person except the head, which last clause was doubtless intended to prevent a plethora of widowers.

It sometimes happened that a case of true love was balked for the time by the avarice of the father or the poverty of the suitor, in which event the poor lover who could not afford the price demanded by the father, would gather his friends together, and, watching a favorable opportunity, would seize and carry off his mistress, in the hope that after asserting his natural title to her charms he would find it less difficult to make her father accept the proper equivalent for them.

By a law of Ethelbert it was ordained that the abductor should pay a fine of 50 shillings to the father and afterward buy the girl from him at a reasonable rate.

A century or two later, the custom of purchase fell into disrepute, and it became usual for neighbors and friends to betroth their children to each other at a very early age.

This bethrothal took place in the presence of witnesses, the youthful lover giving the girl a ring, which she thenceforth wore on her right hand, until it was transferred to her left at the subsequent marriage, the same ring doing duty for both the engagement and the wedding—"a custom more honored in the breach than in the observance," we fancy we hear our fair readers say.

The ring, however, was secondary to the mystic kiss, which was always given at the public bethrothal, and this again was followed by pledging each other in wine or other liquor out of what was called the "contracting cup." Doubtless this is the origin of the expression "wetting the bargain," as it is quite certain our ancestors were not partial to "dry deals," and even to this day, in the country parts of England, no man would dream of selling horse or land without having "a drink" to celebrate the transaction.

This was the ceremony of bethrothal before espousals fell under the dominion of the Church, which in later times blessed the drink, sanctified the kiss and consecrated the ring.

From the earliest times white was the uniform color for a virgin bride, and three ornaments were worn by her on her way to the altar. These were the ring on her finger, the brooch on her breast, and the garland on her head, the first being typical of the endlessness of matrimonial love, the brooch signifying maidenly innocence, while the garland was the reward accorded to her for having successfully resisted the temptations to evil that had beset her course from childhood to matrimony.

No widow on her remarriage might wear a garland, nor could any bride whose reputation had suffered from her own lightness of conduct.

The garlands were mostly composed of roses and myrtle, and the hair was usually worn in loose tresses to the altar, in token of her freedom, but on laying aside her virgin crown the newly-made bride bound up her hair, significant of her subjection to a husband.

After the marriage ceremony had been performed, it was customary for the bridal procession to walk round the less sacred part of the church before sitting down to the wedding feast, which was often held in the nave, this part being generally used in those days for the transaction of secular business and the enjoyment of social diversion.

The feast being over, the bride and bridegroom, accompanied by their guests, went in procession to take possession of their new home.

After a short interval of time the majority of the guests took their departure, leaving the bridesmaids and groomsmen to perform their last duty to the newly-married pair, which was to undress them and put them to bed preparatory to the arrival of the priest, whose duty it was to bless the bed and its occupants, while the acolytes, waving to and fro their burning censers, fumigated the room with hallowing incense.

These ceremonies being completed, the happy couple were left to their own reflections and the enjoyment of each other's society.

Pretty Valentines Free.

We are giving away a package of sweet, pretty valentines to all who would like to take our Prize Story Magazine, Comfort, on trial for the next three months. They are the regular *cupid darts* make up with Lithographic lace work. Send 6 cents to Comfort, Box 319, Augusta, Maine, for trial subscription and we will include an assortment of comics, postpaid.

AFTER BIG GAME.

Stirring Narrative of Old Jim Long in the Gila Country.

OLD Jim Long propped himself back in his chair and elevated his feet to a more convenient level against the cottonwood under which we were sitting in front of Billy Dawson's store at St. Marcial, in southern New Mexico, says a Chicago *Record* correspondent. Jim was an old-timer, having come into New Mexico with a bull team 30 years back, and what he didn't know about fighting Apaches and hunting bears wasn't worth knowing. "About five years ago," he said, "I had a bunch of cattle over in the Gila country, some 70 or 80 miles north of Silver City. During our first two months there we heard from various parties who had cattle near us that bears were very plentiful, and that one old grizzly had run three or four outfits, all of them having failed to kill her although they had shot her several times.

"They Were Busy Thrashing Around Gathering Nuts."

"One day two of my men and a boy had gone out to look for some steers that had strayed away. Their route led them through a rough foot-hill country, and took them farther from camp than usual. The boy, who was a little chap only about 12 years old, was the son of a friend, and had been brought into the mountains for his health. He was riding on a mule and was a little distance ahead of the men when he suddenly ran on to a big grizzly among the scrub-oak. The instant the mule sighted the bear he bolted down the slope to the left, throwing the boy off, and the animal started for him. The men had come up by this time, and while one opened fire on him with a six-shooter the other rushed in, and, stooping over, caught the boy up in front of him; none too soon, either, for the bear was within 10 feet of the boy.

"When I heard of it that night I said I would have that bear if it took a month, but as we were busy at that time I did not get started for nearly a week. I traveled through the foot-hills fully 12 miles, entirely past the place where the boy had fallen off, without seeing the sign of a bear. As I had gone along slowly it was noon by that time, so I picketed my horse to graze, ate my lunch and, after an hour's rest, started back for camp. The afternoon had turned cloudy, with the air chilly and damp—just the time for bear, as such an afternoon would likely bring them down to the lower ridges to feed on acorns, of which there was a large crop. The bear is very fond of acorns, and will wander a long way from his sleeping place to feed on them. The little spurs or foot-hills that jutted out from the range were covered with a heavy growth of this brush, and I felt pretty sure that I would find something on my way home.

"I had traveled nearly half the distance on my return trip, when, on starting down the further slope of the spur, I saw down a little grade four bears feeding in the brush. They were so busy thrashing around among the oaks gathering the nuts that they had not seen me. My horse was an old hunter, steady as a rock, and I knew there was no danger of his leaving me. Two large old fellows were feeding close together. Slipping gently from my horse, I let drive at one of them, aiming for the butt of his ear, ranging back. All this was, of course, in less time than I can tell it.

"When the bear received my shot, which was, unfortunately, too low, striking him in the shoulder, he evidently thought for a moment that the other bear had struck him, for he hauled off and gave it a most terrific blow, knocking it some 20 or 30 feet. A stroke from a full-grown grizzly's paw, let me tell you, is no joke, either, as a grizzly can crush a horse's skull at a single sweep of his paw. The bear scrambled to his feet in an instant and I let him have it again as he rose, breaking his neck.

"The other, which was an old she bear, started for me and I opened on her. My rifle is a 40-60, with chilled ball. With reloaded shells, as mine were, I used 65 grains of powder; but I let her have it three times in the throat and once in the mouth without stopping her, and she was within 40 feet of me when I heard a noise to my left. Glancing out of the corner of my eye I saw that one of the other bears was coming for me from that side. There was no time for thought; what was to be done must be done instantly.

"At dismounting I had dropped old Charlie's rein. In an instant I had gathered it up and slipped into my saddle. Old Charlie must have made about 20 feet at the first lunge. I gathered myself together, and as the horse circled around the last one I put three bullets into him at short range, but did not knock him down. The old she bear was following me up grunting like an enraged boar; I took another shot at her, putting a bullet right through her heart, but she still came on, with the bloody foam flying out of her mouth and the blood spurting in a stream from her last wound at every step.

"She followed me fully 200 yards, growing visibly weaker at every shamble. I had, in the meantime, taken a couple of shots at her over the horse's tail. At last she stopped and lay down, too sick to go further, but ready to fight still if the way she looked toward me was any indication.

"Seeing it was all up with her I began to look around for the second one I had shot. He had dragged himself up the slope, leaving a broad trail behind him. I soon overtook him and a shot behind the foreleg settled his case. The first lay where he dropped, quite dead.

"When I examined the old she bear I found more than a dozen old bullet wounds on her. It was doubtless the one my men had met and that had been the terror of the country. The fourth one I did not see after the first shot, it having, in all probability, struck up into the thick timber of the range."

Spiritual Authority.

Charles Dudley Warner lives in Hartford, next door to Mark Twain, upon whom he called one day and invited him to a walk. The humorist was inclined to refuse the invitation, whereupon Warner cited scriptural authority in support of his request, quoting Matthew, 5, 41: "And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him, Twain."

"Don't Tobacco Spit or Smoke Your Life Away."

Name of little book just received—tells about *Notobac*, the wonderful, harmless, economical cure for chewing, smoking, cigaret or snuff habit. You run no physical or financial risk, for *Notobac* is absolutely guaranteed to cure or money refunded. Your druggist's got it or will get it. Write for the book—mailed free. The Sterling Remedy Co., Box 3, Indiana Mineral Springs, Ind. Agents wanted.

Shirt Cuffs.

[*New Orleans Picayune.*]

A London laundryman says that the use of shirt cuffs for jotting down memoranda is more common than is, perhaps, commonly supposed. He related how one day a young fellow drove up in a cab and rushed into the office in great excitement, asking whether some shirts deposited in the name of L had been washed.

We found they had not, and as the owner turned them over in feverish heat he fairly yelled with joy, pointing to a little column of figures on the left cuff of one, which he explained were the numbers of eight £10 bank notes which had been lost or stolen, and had the shirts been washed all hopes of ever getting them back must have been abandoned.

They were, however, successfully traced and recovered a few days later. The cuffs of stock-exchange men are often covered with mysterious characters, presumably indications of the stock market, and the "tips" found on the wrist linen of racing men were actually taken advantage of by ironing girls on one or two occasions with success. It is not yet recorded, however, that the mannish young woman has taken to "cuff-jotting," as she has to cuff and shirt wearing.

Taylor's Preparation for Buena Vista.

[*Boston Evening Transcript.*]

"I refer to Zachary Taylor, whose record in the Mexican war was something phenomenal. He fought the battle of Buena Vista with only 5,000 men, although he was attacked by 25,000 men under the leadership of Santa Ana, who was the greatest military leader the Mexican people have ever known. Santa Ana went to the battle of Buena Vista with the avowed purpose of exterminating the entire army of the United States, and there was no doubt in the mind of Santa Ana that this great feat could be accomplished with comparative ease. Gen. Taylor, with his 5,000 men, prepared for the unequal contest, and not only defended himself successfully, but won a substantial victory from his aggressive antagonists and drove them from the battlefield of Buena Vista.

"Some time after the battle was fought and the Mexican war concluded, Gen. Taylor was criticized for having made no preparations for the retreat of his army in the event of defeat. Gen. Taylor promptly replied: 'I made every preparation necessary for the battle of Buena Vista. I wrote my will and so did nearly every man in my army. If we had not won that battle we would have needed no lines of retreat. It was, from our standpoint, victory or annihilation. The only preparation necessary for the contingency of defeat at Buena Vista was that we should write our wills.'"

Canada Would Be Ours.

Gen. Sir George Chesney, speaking in London the other day on the defense of the Empire, said he thought that none of the colonies were in danger of attack, except Canada, where the serious question must be considered of how a defense could be maintained along the great line of the American frontier.

"God forbid," he said, "that we should ever quarrel with the United States, but it is impossible to doubt that if such a quarrel should happen and the United States become aroused so as to carry the quarrel to the bitter end, the position would be extremely serious.

"The Americans in time of emergency are capable of great things, and in such a case I believe it would be quite impossible for us to give Canada such effective aid as would prevent the United States from occupying Canada. Happily, the attitude of Americans is essentially peaceful, and unless we were at war with the United States Canada is absolutely impregnable."

American Notes.

[*Puck.*]

The son of Albion stood gazing at the group of men in front of the "Bon Ton Temple of Bacchus" with deep interest. Excitement was running high at Red Dog. It was the day of election, and a reform ticket was in the field.

"Alkali Ike, ain't yer goin' ter vote fer Hank Bitters and moral methods?" cried a red-bearded enthusiast.

"The hull ticket 'll be beat," replied the party addressed; "I'll be hanged ef I do!"

And then the intelligent British tourist drew out his tablet and wrote—"Note: In America, after an election, the friends of the defeated candidate are taken out and lynched."

A New Rifle.

The Chief Surgeon of the Roumanian army has been making grewsome experiments with the new Mannlicher rifle, with which the forces are being equipped. He placed a number of human bodies in rows, like soldiers on the field of battle. At 600 metres, five bodies were placed a half-yard behind each other. A single bullet went through three bodies in succession. Upon the soft parts of the bodies the wounds were, perhaps, less serious than those inflicted by the old-fashioned rifles, the hole made by the bullet being smaller and more even; but, on the whole, the injuries are far more terrible. The range of the new rifles is about two and a half miles.

Only a Few.

It was Lord Morris's privilege to take Lady Aberdeen, when her husband was Lord-Lieutenant, to tea at a garden-party in Dublin. Lady Aberdeen, who had not long arrived in Ireland, asked, with her engaging smile: "Are there many Home-Rulers here to-day?" And the Judge, who succeeds in preserving his brogue in perfection, answered gruffly: "There's just yerself an' the waithers, me lady."

RETRIBUTION.

How well I remember last Fall at the rally,
I marched in the line with the workin' min, sure,
And felt just as proud as a king at behouldin'
The fall of the rich and the rise of the poor.

Sure, that's what they tould me was mint by the victory,
An' no wonder that I was elated that,
As I stipped to the music just like an old soger,
An' wore a big roosther on the top o' me hat.

I envied the boss wid his riches and comforts,
No share of the profits I'd git, if agin'
I voted to kape up the tariff, that only
Protected the bosses and burdened the min.

Ah, shure, I'll get even now wid ye, my honeys,
I'll vote, just as sure as my name it is Pat,
For Grover, and thin, at the ratification,
I'll wear a big roosther on top o' me hat.

I done it, bad luck to the day an' the hour,
I'd like to recall that same vote if I could,
And once again hear the old sthame whistle soundin'
That called me to work when the times they were good.

The boss he looks worried, the foreman is sour,
The old mill's deserted and gloomy at that,
An' all I have lift for my share of the glory
Is the ould bathered roosther I wore on me hat.

I mustered up courage one day, to spake to him,
An' ask him how long we'd be idle. You see
The mill has been closed for a month, and loafin'
Wid not a cent coomin' was tellin' on me.

He says to me, "Pat, you an' I will both suffer;
Me bizness is crippled, me credit is flat,
But if yez git hungry, yez know," he said slyly,
"Yez can ate the ould roosther yez wore on your hat."

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