THE BILL POSTER SAYS

HE IS NO CHAMPION, BUT HE HAS A LITTLE PROPOSITION.

Bill Posting Now and in the Good Old Times when Actors and Bill Posters were Well Acquainted—Politics in Bill Posting.

A reporter the other day mounted to the top floor of an east side lodging house. He entered a small square room, the walls of which were hung with all sorts of gay-colored play bills. The room contained two cots, a bureau, a table, several chairs, two men, and a cat. The cat was asleep by the fireside. The men were playing euchre at the table. The reporter asked one of the men, who was small, wiry, blue-eyed, sandy-haired, and middle-aged, if he had issued a challenge printed in a paper which the reporter showed him. The challenge set forth that George Cabbott, corner of Duane and William streets, could run further and post more "stands" than any other bill poster, that he was the champion, that he defied all who unjustly claimed that title, and that man and money were ready any time at the place specified, day or night.

The man laughed after he read it, and said:

"That challenge, sir, is a fraud. I don't know just who done that little job for me, but I can guess pretty near. It's some of these young chaps that ain't posted bills as many months as I have years. They're all the time making sport of me, but I don't care. I'll post bills with any of 'em any day."

"Then you are not the champion bill poster," said the reporter.

"No, I ain't," said the man, "and I don't believe there is such a thing. They jest put that in the paper for sport. But, by George, sir, I can lay out any one of 'em on the posting, an' they know it. That is, sir, to cover any specified distance and post so many bills as you go. No, I ain't no champion, but I'll jest tell you who I am. My name ain't Cabbott, it's Abbott—George G. Abbott, veteran bill poster. Yes, and war veteran, too, sir. I entered the Fifty-seventh New York Volunteers at the beginning of the war, and I stuck the war out. I went in the navy a while, long enough to have a record on file in Washington, sir, and then I finished up the war in the old Fifty-seventh. Yes, sir, I am originator and senior Vice-Commodore of Naval Post 516, the only New York city naval post in the G. A. R. That's who I am, sir. What! You a veteran's son? Then put a shake on that, an' a good one.

"But to go back to bill postin'. I never made no challenge. But I will now, though. I'll challenge any of these young chaps who have been havin' fun out o' me, or any other bill poster in the country, to post with me from here to Philadelphia, putting up one bill in a prominent place in every town we pass through, the whole thing to be done afoot, and in less than twenty-four hours. There's the challenge, an' I'll stick to it, though I am getting old. I'll have to specify that we wait for warmer weather, for I can't stand these cold spells like I used to. I'll try an' put some money up, but, by George, if we can't get money I'll go 'em just to see who's best man."

"Bill posting is a pretty hard life, I imagine," said the reporter.

"It ain't what it used to be," replied the bill poster. "We used to all be more or less our own bosses years ago. Now a few big firms have the monopoly, and the best we can do is to hire to 'em regularly at $12 a week, or take jobs at $1.50 a day. In the old days we were independent. Well do I remember old Capt. George Smith. He was one of the first boss posters, back in '48. I used to do a little business then myself. Now I'm hiring out, an' he's a City Marshal up here in Chambers street. That's the way life goes, you know.

"Oh, it's a hard life, of course, but then we don't none of us have it easy. We've got to work, an' those that's got sense takes the work along with the fun. We get more fun than you think in this life, and a smart bit of excitement now and then, you bet your life. Take 'lection times, for instance. I tell ye, the bill poster's got to keep his eye skinned. In the old times when we made our own contracts, we had to size up these politicians pretty straight. I found you had to look out sharp for politicians with lots o' collateral, but no cash. However the 'lection turned out they're very apt to have a headache next morning and forget things. Nowadays the big firms take those risks, but we've got to keep our eyes skinned just the same. Take your political bills where there ain't room to paste except over the other feller's posters—hi, then, you want to look out for that chap with a brick across the street. Then if you don't paste 'em over the other feller's posters you catch Hell Columbia from the feller you're workin' for. When Tommy Shiels was running for Alderman there was music for me. He wanted me to paste his bills right over Fitzpatrick's, who was running regular Democratic. That was all right, but I had Fitzpatrick's, too, and he came round and wanted me to past over Shiels's. Then there was the devil to pay. It was the Kilkenny cats' business, might o' been following both instructions without movin' from one spot, so I gave Fitzpatrick's over to another poster, an' then he and I went round covering up each other's work till there wasn't any bills left. You've got to lay in with all the posters in the ward 'lection time, or you'll get hurt. Then, too, when you have your district fixed, long for one side with the bills for another side you're just as likely to get a brick as not. People see a man postin' Democratic bills and they think he's a Democrat sure, whereas mebbe he ain't, but does it in the line o' business. So it is with all sorts of things. You post an unpopular bill somewhere in the slums and they think you're one o' that crowd that gets up the bills, and they try to do you.

"Perhaps you don't remember the man that said the world was comin' to an end on a certain day an' got out a lot o' bills warnin' people to get ready. Well, he came to me an' gave me $47 right down in good an' says to put up the bills. Well I daresn't show them to anybody or I'd have got hooted and mobbed for a crank. So I had to do it at night.

"Now, here comes along Fulton—that fellow that's preachin' against the Catholics. I put up his bills, but do you think I dare put 'em up in the Italian part of the town? Not much. I'm no chicken in this business. They'd have thought I was in with Fulton, and—well, good-by. The hardest job I ever had was puttin' up the bills against Johnny O'Hearn in the Seventh ward. He voted against the Five-cent bill in the Legislature, you know, and his enemies got out a bill all framed in black, as much as to say he was dead. Well, his backers jest rallied to tear them down. I put 'em up as fast as they was torn down. Things got so blessed exciting after a bit that, by George! I had to take two men out to guard the pastin' while I stood in front with a revolver. Oh, you folks that gets your excitements out of the newspapers and seen bills after they're up don't know all the ins an' outs in this city, I tell you. You think a bill poster's life's a tame one. If you was a poster yourself I tell you you'd see times you'd wish you was a little tamer instead. The bill poster, sir, is an important item in the politician's calculations. Now, in that case o' Johnny O'Hearn, I told his friends that I was doin' my duty, but I advised 'em to paste over the whole thing with other bills afterward. They did a good many, though, and Johnny got badly left next 'lection. Times is things count now, I tell ye, specially on the east side."

"Are things more exciting now than in the old times?" asked the reporter.

"Lord, no," replied the bill poster. "There wasn't so much law then as now. Why, it's only back a dozen years when the elevated road was first building that old King Paulden pasted up the whole business one night with bills. Then another poster got the job of cleaning the bills all off. You couldn't do that now. But further back'n that things was a good deal worse. It was everybody's object then to post right over the rival folks' bills. And they could do it, too, and did it. Why, in those times, we had all the work we could do, and more too. Paulden was great at that. We called him king—King of Bill Posters. Some firms just hired us to keep other firms' bills pasted over with their own. We'd get half a dozen bills sometimes stuck on one place. One man would put his up, you know, an' the other would come round and paste it over. Then the first would come again an' paste the last over with the original bill, and so on. It always used to be a fight to paste the billboard of a theatre with the play bill of a rival theatre. It was hard, because they watched 'em so close. I once pasted one over right in front of the theatre jest before a performance, but I didn't dare to go anywhere near that theatre for a week. Those were gay times—good old times, with more money, more fun, and more independence."

The bill poster paused in his rambling story and drew his fist across his mouth. He was silent for a little while and then said:

"You like to hear about the old times. People don't much, and I get rusty on 'em. But blessed if I don't think that remembrin' old times is about the biggest pleasure there is in this world after all. Would you like to see some old-time bills, sir? I've got a few here in this old bureau—bills I pasted myself way back before the war. They're theatre bills mostly. I never look at 'em but what I sigh a bit. Times is changed since then. Now, look at this."

The bill he showed was tattered and discolored. It bore date July 9, 1859, and started this way:

NIBLO'S GARDEN.
Manager, TOODLES. Mr. E. Eddy.
TOODLES!
MR. BURTON,
The above distinguished artiste is nightly received in the most flattering manner by
CROWDED AND DELIGHTED AUDIENCES,
by universally pronounce him the
GREAT AUTHOR OF THE AGE.
He will appear by desire of hundreds who were unable to obtain admission on Thursday evening, in his great and original character of
TOODLES, &c.

"Poor Burton!" said the bill poster sadly. "He was a great player and a great gentleman, too. I tell you, you don't see the men on the stage nowadays that make you laugh and cry in the same breath as he did. I used to love that man. I knew his *Toodles* by heart once. And then his *Mr. Sudden* in "Breach of Promise," and *Toby Tramp* in "Mummy." And the "Serious Family," and "Blessed Baby," and *Jem Baggs*—ah, those old days is gone, sir, and poor Burton is under the sod. Then look at his people, too. Most of them's gone. There was Bland, and Clarke and Leesson, and McCloskey and Pike. They were all rare actors—and most of 'em's dead, sir.

"Now here's another bill of '68, Butler's American Theatre, Broadway, near Houston. I guess you never knew that one. Bobby Butler was a rare fellow, I tell you—a real gentleman, and free handed, too. Dave Braham used to run the orchestra there, and Charley Pettingill and Jack Meyer were prime actors. They had the good ballets there in these days. I'll never forget the way Patty Stewart played *Sammy Slap* in 'The Bill Poster's Dream.' It was great.

"Do you know actors ain't now what they used to be? Socially, I mean. There was fewer actors and managers then than now. Everybody's gone in for it nowadays. And they were more generous and courtly then. There was Colville of the old Fourteenth Street Theatre, and Eddy of Niblo's—both dead. They used to know all us bill posters, and speak to us when they'd meet us, and give us tickets to the play. G. L. Fox of the old Olympic, the clown, was another one of 'em, and his brother, C. K. Fox, the harlequin, too. They both died, one right after the other. They were two of the kindest-hearted gentlemen I ever knew. And Conway of the Brooklyn Theatre—he was another big-hearted gentleman that knew us all. He's dead, too. Billy Florence is one of the very few of this sort that's living now. We don't get tickets no more, and the theatres let us paste a part of a bill poster's life either as it used to be. We pay our own way in now, or get tickets through our bosses. No one knows us in the theatres, and we feel kind o' lonesome there—as if we didn't know anybody and didn't belong there."

After a long silence, during which the bill poster sucked his clay pipe and stroked an old play bill fondly, he said:

"It kind o' makes me blue to think o' the old times. But I love to do it. You come down some Sunday and I'll get my old trunk over. It's jest stuffed with old bills and programmes. If you like to talk about old times, by George, I'll go over the whole thing with you. I ain't touched it for ten years. It'll make me a bit blue, but I'd like to do it all the same."

CHEESE IS WHAT WE NEED.

The State Dairy Commissioner Reports that it is Better than Beef for Food.

ALBANY, Feb. 21.—The annual report of State Dairy Commissioner Josiah K. Brown will deal largely with the cheese question. The palpable conclusions from the mass of evidence contained in the report are that the cheese of New York is pretty good, but might be better; that there is less fraud in it than there might be, and that the great trouble with the people of this State is that they do not eat enough cheese. From reports from the managers of 370 public institutions Commissioner Brown learns that a daily average of 45,939.01 inmates consume only 106,777.36 pounds of cheese in a year, which is but one-tenth of an ounce per day for each.

At the stage of investigation the cheese question was referred to Dr. Clark for a professional opinion, and he, after due investigation, reports that full-cream cheese contains one and five-eighths times as much nutrition as ordinary beef does; and if quantity of nutrition was the only thing to be considered it would be the cheapest article of food that can be had. One pound of cheese and two large potatoes would be all the food an adult person would ever need, no matter what his occupation, in twenty-four hours. The processes of digestion require, however, a greater variety of food than the cheese and potatoes proposed furnish. Dr. Clark enlarges on the anatomy of digestion to show why we cannot live alone by cheese, or beef, or bread, or any one of the articles we ordinarily eat, on the relation of rennet to the digestive qualities of cheese, and on the relish which the appetite has for that article. The reason why many people believe cheese to "disagree with them" is, he says, that they undertake to eat it, not as a substantial part of their meal, as they do beef and bread and vegetables generally, but because they take it on top of a full meal, as in some way a delicacy or palate ornament. When one has eaten enough any more of anything is apt to "set heavy on the stomach."

Having established in a scientific way the superior value of cheese as an article of food, Dr. Clark treats of its economic virtues. He finds that the average price of beef for the year 1887 was seven cents a pound wholesale, which, according to the authority of a prominent dealer, is the lowest average since the civil war. Losses from cooking, from bone waste, and from other causes inseparable from the preparation of the article for cooking, bring the price up to nine and three twenty-fifths cents a pound by the time it is served on the table. For the year 1887 the average price of cheese was ten cents a pound wholesale. As there is no waste to cheese between the purchase and the serving of it, the cost of the two articles differs by only twenty-two twenty-fifths of a cent per pound, while the cheese has one and five-eighths times the nutritive value of beef.

WILD CATTLE IN OREGON.

Queer Looking Herds that Graze in the Umpqua Mountains.

From the San Francisco Examiner.

"California sportsmen can now go up to Oregon and shoot wild cattle," said John Day, an Umpqua Mountain pioneer, yesterday, referring to the completion of the California and Oregon Railroad. "It is a fact that there are hundreds of wild cattle in the high hills skirting the Umpqua valley, and some of them are not more than a couple of miles from the railroad track. Some of these cattle, too, are twenty-five years old or more. In the mountains near Riddles and Roseburg they are probably the thickest, but they do not venture down in the valley much. They stay in the tops of the hills and get water from the living springs which rise there. For the most part they are concealed in the dense growth of oak and fir in these mountains. There is a heavy undergrowth, too, so that it is a hard matter to get at the cattle. They go in bands of six or eight usually, but at night a herd of forty or fifty get together and lie down in the same yard; that is, they sleep on the same spot, which is usually a secluded place among the trees. A band of wild cattle have been known to get together on a cleared place like this every night for a couple of years.

"When feeding there are always a few bulls to act as sentinels. While the cattle graze in bands of half a dozen or so, they are nevertheless close to other bands, so that at an alarm from any one of the herds feed on the higher ground, they all rush away together.

"The cattle are of all colors and wilder than deer. It is a hard matter to get a shot at them for the reason that their scent is so keen. They can smell a man a long distance off. They got wild in 1853, when the old man Riddles and two or three other early settlers came into the valley. Their cows wandered off and could not be found. After two or three years all the pioneers had to do when they wanted beef was to rig out two or three pack animals and go up into the mountains. The cattle had to be killed on sight, the same as deer or bear, for they could no more be driven out of them than deer could. Once killed, they were quartered, packed on the horses, and carried down. They have been hunted a good deal of late years, so that there are not as many as there used to be.

"Some of the cattle are very large and fat. I have caught glimpses of bulls in the top of the Umpqua hills that astonished me. A bull I saw in the fall of 1882 on the head of the Rogue River I am certain would weigh 1,400 pounds. There is good grazing in the mountains all the year round. A peculiarity about these cattle is that their eyes and horns are jet black. The retina, iris, and the whole apple of the eye are one mass of black. You can't distinguish any difference in any part of it. The horns, too, while being black as ink, are long and very sharp. Brought to bay the Oregon wild cattle are very wicked fighters."

An Elk's Battle with Wild Dogs.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

LANDER, Wy., Feb. 14.—A stockman just in from the Wind River range tells a story of a fierce and exciting battle between a courageous old elk and the wild dogs that infest the Wind River region. The river escapes from the mountains and hills into what is known as the basin district over high and beautiful falls named the Maiden Hair. While riding near these falls a few days ago the stockman's attention was attracted by a deep baying, and, at once recognizing the sounds as coming from the savage dogs, and realizing the necessity of getting out of their way, the horseman rode rapidly to the top of a neighboring high hill, which commanded an excellent view of the falls and also of the surrounding country.

He had scarcely reached the top of the hill when he saw, dashing along a high ridge running parallel to the river, a magnificent bull elk hotly chased by a dozen or more mountain dogs. The race had evidently been on for some time, for the elk appeared to be about exhausted, and the dogs were not in the best of condition. On swept the pursued and the pursuers, every bound bringing the dogs nearer the haunches of the tired elk. Suddenly the elk changed his course and plunged down the side of the ridge, making straight for the falls. Overhanging the edge of the river, and towering fifteen feet above the pool at the foot of the falls, was a huge rock. On to this rock the bull made his way, and, planting himself within a few feet of the edge and with lowered antlers, awaited the attack. He did not have to wait long. The dogs came with a rush, and hurled themselves at their prey. First one and then another dog was caught in the elk's antlers, and sent howling into the depths below.

Just when the fight was the hottest the rock or ledge upon which the battle was being fought suddenly gave way, and with a crash the combatants were dropped into the water and rocks at the foot of the falls, and their bruised and bleeding remains were swept on down the stream.

OBSERVING HUMAN NATURE.

PHASES OF ITS DEVELOPMENT SEEN BY SUPERINTENDENT BLAKE.

The Female Shylock—An Unhappy Mother's Love—He Wouldn't Go to Joliet—She Still Had Fine Eyes—Home Influences.

If Mr. William Blake, Superintendent of Outdoor Poor, had another pair of hands, another pair of ears, and just one more mouth as well trained and tireless as the one he has now he could much more easily get through the overwhelming mass of his daily business and at the same time tell a SUN reporter about the human nature that he sees.

"How can I tell you about human nature—No, Mrs. Maloney, there's no use in your waiting, for you're not entitled to coal—any more than you can see for yourself—'Cough medicine,' there ye are—if you'll sit here beside me and—Is it East or West?—look on at what will pass before you—Wie lange im Lande?—with may be something I may be able to—No, you go back to Castle Garden—point out to you—Mr. Hughes, ask the workhouse if they've got Peter Michael up there—as we go along—We'll send a visitor to see you—Take this man to Chris and find out what he wants—No; no passes on Sunday—you should have left your ticket at home, m'm. You see for yourself I haven't much time for philosophical disquisitions."

That is the way he works his noble, tireless jaw from 8 A. M. until 5 P. M. every week day, and while he talks he is listening to complaints, appeals, arguments, and inquiries, and his hands are busy signing papers, making memoranda, handing out bottles of cough mixture, putting his name to vouchers, opening letters, and various other occupations. By dint of doing three or four things at once when he is most rushed, he manages to get the average down to about nine things per minute that he gets through with all day long.

While the reporter sat watching him and waiting to hear more about his observations upon human nature, the dull brown tatter-festooned chain of misery that moved its human links along the front of his desk was suddenly broken by a very charming variation upon its monotony. An exceedingly pretty young woman, with pouting red lips, sparkling eyes, and rose-leaf complexion; a young woman prettily gloved, wearing rich furs and costly jewelry, and a marvellously handsome hat—altogether quite a patricianesque young woman—stopped before Mr. Blake and said:

"We have a tenant; we have got with us a child, who cannot pay her rent. We have dispossessed her, or at least served her with a notice of dispossession, but we can't put her out because her child is very sick. So I want you to send an ambulance and take the child away to some hospital."

"Do you want us to take the sick and perhaps dying child away from its mother, so that you can throw the mother into the street and let your room to a better paying tenant?"

"Yes, sir," replied the young woman stiffly, but with a little flush on her cheeks, as if she was just beginning to realize that her attitude might not be admired by people weak enough to be humane.

Mr. Blake's eyes projected themselves, and he seemed making an effort to swallow some words that would not have sounded prettily. After a brief but impressive silence he answered sternly:

"No, I shall do nothing of the sort. If the poor woman's mother brings her sick child and asks us to care for it, we will do the best we can, but we have no right to do what you ask. We never interfere between landlord and tenant."

The handsome young woman reddened angrily, and exclaimed argumentatively:

"I have told you that I can do nothing for you," replied Mr. Blake in a tone of disgust; "we do not interfere between landlord and tenant."

The pretty female Shylock gave her head an indignant toss, flashed a look of scorn upon the poor wretches surrounding her—who were listening and viewing her with expressions of loathing and contempt—and quickly went out.

"The law's defective," muttered Mr. Blake to the reporter; "it doesn't protect landlords sufficiently. They ought to have the right to flay tenants—especially poor widows with sick children—who cannot pay, and make shoes of their hides for the back rent. What do you think of that for a specimen of human nature?"

Rapidly again the links of the chain moved along. Kindly recognition, words of sympathy, quick but earnest, information, good advice, and fatherly reproof, to meet all cases, flowed ceaselessly from the Superintendent's lips. A poorly clad German woman, a widow, having made her petition for coal, put forward another widow, one that was quite young and very timid, and pressed her claim.

"Couldn't you, please, let her have some coal very soon?" she asked.

"Do you want her to get hers before you get yours?" asked Mr. Blake, with a smile.

"Oh, yes; because she has only a very little, and her room is colder than mine without a fire," answered the woman, earnestly.

"There's another sort of human nature for you," he interjected, aside, checking the machine for a moment. "Few but those brought face to face with it know the tenderness of the poor for those poorer than themselves. I know it is another said that wan hatred of the people, but I have failed to see it so in all my experience. It's out of the hand of poverty that the small help it can give comes quickest and freest, not from the rich."

"I won't go back to Joliet! D—d if I'll go to Joliet," broke in a sharp voice with a fine brogue in the background. A stubby, middle-aged Irishman, whose whiskers, moustache, and hairs all pointed forward like a stiff fringe on his red face, was energetically remonstrating with Dr. Hoyt, Secretary of the State Board of Charities, against being sent back to Illinois, where his pauper rights belong. Mr. Blake got up and took a hand in the discussion.

"Do 'z I tell yez, an' I'll get along well enough," argued the man. "Gimme a bed in Bellevue, an I'll get my meals from Father Drumgoole, an' I'll be all right."

"Well, you'll get no bed in Bellevue, and I'll take good care that Father Drumgoole, whom I know very well, will give you no meals. You'll go back to Joliet, where your brothers have farms, and where you belong," proclaimed Mr. Blake, authoritatively.

"D—d if I'll go back to Joliet!"

"Put him there behind the railing until it's time to send him to the train," ordered the Superintendent, and in a few seconds the good-looking policeman on duty before the desk had hived him. In a little while the fellow professed to assent to his perfunctory journey, but "would they just let him go down to Clary's to get his valise?" No, they wouldn't trust him out of sight. They would send for the valise. Whereat he swore bitterly.

A pale, thin, weary-looking young woman, still bearing traces of beauty, came up to the desk and said, with evident effort:

"My little boy is deaf, dumb, and paralyzed. I can no longer keep him. I have come to see if you will put him in some institution where he will be warm and taken care of."

"Are you a widow?"

"No, sir. I have a husband, but he can get little work to do. We are very poor, and have another child, which is all we can take care of."

"I will send your child to Randall's Island, where he will be very well cared for, if you desire it. Then we will you are ready to have the ambulance take him away?"

She seemed to hesitate, but nerving herself replied:

"Any time, sir."

"Very well, the ambulance will call for him to-morrow morning."

She turned very pale, her lips quivered, and her eyes filled with tears as she exclaimed impulsively:

"Oh! sir, make it Friday. Let me have him one more day."

Mr. Blake kindly told her how well her little afflicted boy would be cared for, which was the best consolation she could have had, and when she went away remarked to the reporter: "There's more human nature for you. I wonder if that young Shylock who was in here a while ago will ever have in her breast a mother's heart as tender as that of the woman who just went out."

The planking of the human chain that drags itself before Superintendent Blake's desk is almost wholly in a minor key. Now and then, however, there is a little relief to its monotony.

A young German stood confidently up, and in response to the question, asked in German, "How long have you been in this country?" replied placidly, "I arrived yesterday."

"My God!" ejaculated Blake. "And you've found this place already! Well, I've known of their being pretty soon before, but he is the freshest thing I've seen yet."

The recent arrival was sent back to Castle Garden. The State Board of Charities and our municipal Commissioners of Charities and Correction have plenty of business in shipping off paupers, the burden of whose support properly belongs upon other communities and even in other countries.

"The Swiss cantons," said Dr. Hoyt, "openly and boldly ship us their paupers, even claiming a right to do so, and consequently invite us to reciprocate by sending our paupers to them, if we can. But we cannot. Catch our paupers going to Switzerland! Not much. They know when they are well off. We also get great numbers of the most undesirable class of immigrants from the Austro-Polish, Italian, and German lowers and middles, the greater numbers and the worst the Austro-Polish. They come here to live by begging and crime, and if we do not succeed in catching them and turning them back they are a burden practically from the day they land."

A woman approaching the desk in the slowly moving throng of supplicants attracted attention. She seemed to be about 40 years old, was decently well dressed, and had evidently once been very pretty. Time had made her skin rather sallow and leathery, and had crinkled it a good deal in the spots where age tells; but one charm she still preserved and was fully conscious of. She had exceedingly large and very fine eyes, of the gazelle style—liquid, soft, tender. There did not seem to be in her manœuvres any unworthy ulterior purpose of fascinating anybody with a view to acquaintance, for she looked like, and probably was, a good woman. But she just could not help rolling those eyes so as to show them off to the best possible effect, turning them up to view the ceiling, flashing them suddenly upon the beholder, coyly casting them down, heaving into them expressions of gentle surprise, interest, languor, modesty, &c. She had the practice down to a very fine point. All she wanted was a pass to see somebody in an Island hospital, and when she got it she rolled her eyes at Mr. Blake and said "Thank you!" with such effusiveness that, as she disappeared, he leaned back in his chair, exclaiming, "My gracious!"

"Hive got a client in the 'ospital," explained a sporting-looking Englishman, whose most noticeable features were a big and excessively blond moustache, a corded velvet coat, and a stunning scarf pin, "for whom I'm bringing an action, and I'd like to get a pass in order to confer with 'im. Haw; thank you, sir. Awfully nobliged." And away he went with a half-dancing step.

A slender, serious youth presented a letter from the *Christian at Work* office asking that an ambulance be sent to take one of its old employees to a hospital, which was promised. "The Christian doesn't seem to have worked much in this direction for some time," remarked Mr. Blake, "as his letter is addressed to my predecessor, Superintendent Kellogg, who has been dead these ten years."

"I want to know where I can put my three children to board. I'm willing to pay their board," spoke up a young man, perceptibly under the influence of liquor.

"Is their mother dead?"

"No. She's lying drunk at home, and I want to put them out to board."

"The Five Points Mission will take them."

"All right," and away he went.

"He will not go there," remarked the Superintendent confidently. "He will threaten to do so, again and again, every time probably that he and his wife both get drunk at the same time and she happens to be a little the drunker of the two. Meanwhile the children will grow up as they best can, at home, if such surroundings constitute a home. Human nature is badly twisted sometimes when the bottle gets to work."

A stout German woman, past middle age, made her dolorous plaint. Her husband had gone off and got drunk, and she was sure he had been sent away to the workhouse. Would Mr. Blake find out for her?

"How old is he?"

"Sixty years."

"And how long have you been married to him?"

"Thirty years."

"And hasn't got him under control yet?"

"No, he gets worser and worser all the time when he gets older. I can't do something with him at all."

Inquiry demonstrated that the naughty old man had not been gathered into the workhouse fold, and the dame went away with tears in her eyes, wondering "what was become to him?"

A frightened-looking darky wanted to be sent to a hospital. So anxious was he to please the arbiter of his fate that he answered "Yes, sah," to every question asked him until he had seemingly destroyed every possible claim he might have had upon charity. Then, with a look of horror, when the results of the interrogation were summed up to him he protested earnestly that it was all wrong, and eventually was scared into telling a straight story that got him the shelter he wanted.

A tall, thin man, erect, bronzed by exposure to the elements, and wearing a sailor's hat, wanted to be sent to Boston.

"Have been discharged from the Trenton," he said, "and it seems pretty hard, for I've been in the service since 1861; but it was my own fault. I want now to go back to where I have friends and take a fresh start."

Whatever his fault had been, the poor fellow looked as if had repented of it, and his manly way of accepting the situation disarmed criticism and moralizing. He got his transportation.

"Where," said Mr. Blake, "I think you've got some specimens of human nature as I see it every day, and if they are not enough for you come again."

ROUNDING UP THE FOXES.

The Little Animals Driven to the Centre and Tackled with Sticks.

From the Globe-Democrat.

TOLONO, Ill., Feb. 18.—The signal to prepare for the fox hunt was given early this morning, and it was responded to by nearly all the people in the town. After the crowd moved out toward the Two-mile Slough, the place appeared like a deserted village.

When 9¾ arrived those who expected to participate in the drive were all in their places. The lines extending east and west were three miles long; those north and south three miles. It took a good many people to stretch out fourteen miles, but they were all on hand and eager for the sport. The north line was officered by Capts. Al and Ben Jordon, the east line by Abe Skinner and Hosea Stewart, the south by George W. B. Sadorus and Al Boyer, the west by George Cook and Thomas Cockrell. A mounted police, Chief Marshal, and all the captains were mounted on fast horses, and made a fine appearance as they rode about the field. The hunters were all on foot, and found it somewhat difficult to move through the mud, which, in many places, was six inches deep. The ice on the slough broke through early in the morning, and the south east line got a ducking. Will Skinner attempted to jump across over the opening, when his foot caught in a loop of tough grass and he went headlong into the water, but was rescued uninjured.

The advancing east line was already near the round-up without a living thing before it, when the west line flushed a fox out of the timber. Sir Reynard's appearance was greeted by a shout from the kids and the waving of the ladies' handkerchiefs. This one fox was the only thing, except the rabbits and squirrels, found in all the march through the Kaskaskia timber. The south line advanced to the round-up without a single startling incident, while the north line, as at the forming point, was flushed with success by driving out three foxes from the tall slough grass near the north border of the twelve sections, nine in Tolono township and three in Colfax. Of the four foxes kept within the lines two were gray and two were red. The gray ones are believed to be the same that got away last Saturday when the hounds were let loose with the hunters to-day, they again vanished. The red ones were more easily kept within the lines, and consequently the impression is now becoming very general that gray foxes are more sagacious and wily than red ones.

The round-up was indicated by a row of stakes driven into the ground, and occasioned no little amusement on the part of those who were in attendance at the drive. The fox hunt was a half west of this town. From its centre floated gracefully a huge flag on a tall staff. Just outside the round-up was a huge straw stack, upon which about thirty ladies were comfortably perched to view the sport.

As the lines closed in about the stakes the hunters stood shoulder to shoulder, and, although the foxes were fairly frenzied with fear, they made no effort to escape. The ring was about twenty rods across. The foxes skipped from one side to the other, and then circled around the lines repeatedly amid the wild shouts of the men and the enthusiastic applause of the ladies.

The only disagreeable feature was the heartless cruelty with which some of the men prodded the little brutes whenever they manifested an inclination to stop a moment for breath. At length the bruised and bleeding foxes became so exhausted that they were scarcely able to run at all. The men were now standing two or three feet deep about the entire circle. The order was given for the small boys to enter the ring and secure the game. Little Charley Potter was the first with his hands on them. Though hardly four feet tall he fearlessly tackled one of the animals, and was making a brave fight against it when Charley Huff of Prairieview, six feet high, wrested the struggling beast from his grasp and hastily retired with it across the field. In the mean time a lot of the older boys, contrary to the rules, jumped into the ring. Lou Miller secured the other fox. The excitement during the battle was the most intense ever known on any similar occasion hereabout. The boys who engaged in the combat had only sticks to fight the foxes, who used their teeth viciously in their desperate attempts to drive off their assailants. The victory of Miller was loudly applauded, and Potter's brave fight was faithfully observed. The foxes at length slain, an effort was made to induce the victors to dispose of their trophies at public auction, but Miller refused to do anything of the kind, and Huff walked off across the country with his thrown across his shoulder.

Babies for Crocodile Bait.

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

"Babies wanted for crocodile bait. Will be returned alive."

If newspapers abounded in Ceylon as much as crocodiles do, advertisements worded like the foregoing would be common in their want columns. As it is, the English crocodile hunter has to secure his baby by personal solicitation. He is often successful, for Ceylon parents, as a rule, have unbounded confidence in the hunters, and will rent their babies out to be used as crocodile bait for a small consideration.

Ceylon crocodiles suffer greatly from ennui. They prefer to lie quite still, soothed by the sun's glittering rays, and wile away their lazy lives in meditation. But when a dark-brown infant with curling toes sits on a bank and blinks its eyes at them they throw off their cloak of laziness and make their preparations for a delicate meal. Of Ceylonese baby humanity. When the crocodile gets about half way up the bank the hunter, concealed behind some reeds, opens up fire, and the hungry crocodile has his appetite and life taken away at the same time. The sportsman secures the skin and head of the crocodile and the rest of the carcass the native makes use of.

This way of securing crocodiles might be objected to by American mothers. The American infant imagination might be shattered by the devouring gaze of a healthy saurian who hasn't had his dinner; but we are creditably informed by certain English crocodile hunters that the average Ceylon infant displays a passive indifference to his advances, and that the only thing which frightens him is the report of the gun.

THE CONNECTICUT SHAD.

AN EPICUREAN DELIGHT THAT WILL SOON BE ON HAND

In the New York Market a Few Hours After it is Torn from its Element—Various Methods of Catching this Dainty Fish.

HARTFORD, Feb. 19.—With the advent of spring many farmers along the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound look forward to shad catching with great pleasure. From windy March until June 20 is the season for catching shad, and the acute Yankee is well aware of the profit to be gained by the capture and sale of this the choicest epicurean delicacy of the Nutmeg State. There has not been a time within the memory of man when Connecticut River shad were not in demand, and wherever offered for sale they command the highest price. It is common report that fine fish from less favored streams are frequently sold as from the Connecticut, but never have those of inferior quality been so labelled. It is by the epicure rather than the angler that the shad is held in the highest estimation, and when in the proper season it is considered by thousands the most palatable fish that can be placed over the coals or "planked" before the fire. It has, indeed, few rivals; among the masses it is the fish preëminent. So well did it tickle the palates of the hardy legislators who used annually to assemble at Hartford in May and June, that the euphonious title of "shad eaters" was applied to them; and even in these days of biennial sessions, held in the winter months, the old name clings. It is asserted upon good authority that the prolonging of sessions is due to two causes—free railroad passes and the tardiness of shad in entering the river—and the passage or defeat of many a bill in the closing days of a session has doubtless been influenced by a shad dinner.

Three methods of catching shad for commercial purposes are pursued in Connecticut. The first and most lucrative of these the pound fisheries, which are employed in the waters of the Sound. Summer sailors along the southern shore of the State, from a short distance beyond the Thimble Islands to the Government breakwater at the mouth of the river, cannot fail to have noticed long lines of stakes extending from the shore into deep water, and ending in each instance in circular enclosures made by similar stakes. These are for the most part shad pounds. In the technical terms of the fishermen the straight line of stakes is known as a "leader," and the enclosure at the seaward end the "bowl." The outline of a pound upon the water resembles that of a tennis racket with a very long handle. The length of a pound is limited by law, and cannot be over 100 rods in length. Upon the stakes of the leader and the pound is linen twine, with a mesh of two and a half inches, is hung. This netting stretches from the surface of the water to the bottom, and is fastened securely in place. In the bowl the net is purse or bag shaped, and extends all around and over the bottom of the enclosure. There is but one entrance, and the fish once inside can only escape by this. As it has no lead bulls or corks it seldom does so.

As the shad swim along the coast in search of the mouth of the large river, they rub their noses against the leaders net, as it is their custom, like ruffed grouse never until alarmed to turn back from an obstacle in their path, but to keep on and try to get around it, they swim along the leaders net, they find the entrance to the bowl and enter there. When the tide is "slack" the fishermen haul the pounds by taking in lines which extend to the bottom of the purse net. This raises the entire net within the bowl above water and the catch can be taken out.

Many varieties of fish besides shad are caught whenever a pound is hauled, and the assortment is sometimes very miscellaneous. Sometimes a shark or a porpoise gets into the net, and this generally results in a loss, as the net is broken by the flounderings of the large fish, and all escape. A curious risk in pound fishing is developed by a very warm and early spring. Should this occur the fishing is considerably obstructed, the warmer the temperature of the water the greater the abundance of jelly fish, which frequently get into the purse in such numbers as to break it down. The pound fisheries are the most successful, as is shown by the statistics of last year's total catch of shad in Connecticut waters. This amounted to 80,350 fish, of which 63,750 were taken in the pounds.

Once in the Connecticut River, from Saybrook Bar far up the stream into Massachusetts, shad are caught by seines and gill or drag nets. The latter is the most popular with the river fishermen, and as only two men are required to handle it it pays quite well. Travellers by foot up and down the Connecticut in the spring months will call to mind the long lines of wooden buoys stretching like mammoth rosaries upon the waters. These are the corks of the gill nets. The mesh of these nets is about five inches, and the snare extends from the surface of the water to a depth of twenty feet. It is held in an upright position by a line of lead sinkers at the bottom. These nets are not fixed in the water, but drift about with the tide. As every one knows, the shad is a fish of great abdominal development. As he swims up a river he encounters a floating net, and, thrusting his head between the four inner lines which make the mesh, he proceeds to pass through. In this he fails, his great girth preventing his advance. As he attempts to withdraw his gill flaps, distended in his excitement, catch in the net, and there he is, neither able to advance nor to retreat.

It is only by night, however, or upon days when the thick weather of the steam makes it difficult for the fish to see the net that this method can be successfully carried on. It is a very picturesque sight on a warm and pleasant May evening to see the broad river dotted over with the lights of the "gill net" men, and to hear the boat of their oars as they move over the water. The monotony broken frequently by the splashing of a floundering shad as he is taken from the net and cast into the bottom of the boat. This style of fishing is much like picking grapes or other fruit from a trellis, only the fisherman has to work much faster as he hauls his net over the side of his boat, else the eels, those scavengers of the sea, will take advantage of the fish so rewarded for his labors with only the head, instead of the entire body of a shad. Between Saybrook Bar and Chester thirty-five gill nets were in operation last year, and by them 12,700 shad were taken.

In former times the great bulk of the shad fishing was done by the hauling seines, but the introduction of the pound fisheries has almost driven them out of existence, and only four are now operated in the river. These seines are similar in construction to the gill nets, but are much longer, and are operated from the shore and from boats. The depth of the seines are from fifteen to twenty feet, and they are often over a half mile in length. In setting the seine a favorable "fishing place," consisting of a sandy beach, free from any obstruction which may tear the net, is chosen. In front there must be an open reach of the river, and this, too, must have a clean surface beneath the water. A suitable fishing place is a valuable property, and is protected by law for its owners or discoverers much as real estate is. It is a source of considerable revenue, and many good "reaches" have been oper