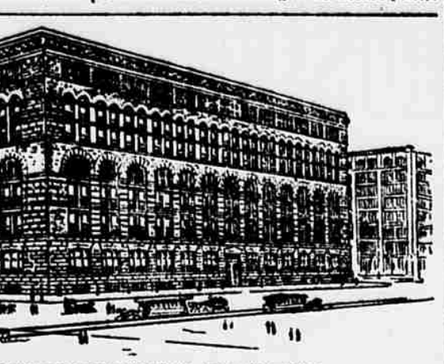
OUR GREATEST MERCHANT.

HE IS MARSHALL FIELD OF CHICAGO.

Beginning Life as a Farmer's Boy in Massachusetts, Trying a Clerkship in a Country Store, Then Going to Chicago and Growing Up With the Town, Marshall Field Finally Becomes the Head of the Greatest Mercantile Establishment in the World—His Characteristics and Business Methods—He Never Borrows and Never Gives a Note—Doing a Business of$25,000,000 Annually, and Prospering.

Next to experience, example is the best teacher. The lessons of example are of equal or greater value, but they are ill learned because the schoolmaster's rod which experience uses relentlessly does not compel the student's attention. Moreover, the text books of example are in small variety and unpopular editions. The newspaper is the only exponent of personal achievements universally recognized and studied; but the newspaper is more a chronicle of results than a record of methods. It happens, therefore, that the most valuable guides which example furnishes in the rush of nineteenth century life are available only in circles limited by personal association. It is true, furthermore, that the qualities most worthy of emulation are usually combined in a successful man with a shrinking from personal fame or notoriety which discourages even friendly attempts to uncover the secrets of success in an honorable career.

There are three classes of rich men—the born rich, the rich by speculation or trickery, and the rich by honest brains and industry. Of those in the two classes first named the world hears much. Of those in the third category it hears far too little. Many masquerade there who have no right to be ranked with honest winners of great fortunes. What wonder is it, then, that on the whole there is a good deal of misconception in the picture of the average man of millions which fills the popular mind? It needs an occasional vivid portrayal of the sterling qualities and practical methods which have carved out a career of honest success to



THE LARGEST MERCANTILE ESTABLISHMENT IN THE WORLD.

correct the popular misapprehension and to furnish an example for general emulation.

The American merchant who in point of wealth and vastness of business dealings must be ranked first among "the rich by honest brains and industry" is a man whose name is unfamiliar to most of the readers of THE SUN. His home is not in New York but in Chicago, and even there he is personally little known in comparison with the prominence to which his position in the business and social world entitles him. He is Marshall Field, the head of the great house of Marshall Field & Co., general merchants. The career of no great leader in commercial affairs furnishes an example of the wise application of sound principles and safe conservatism so striking as does that of Mr. Field. The story of his success is short and simple. It contains no exciting chapters, but in its very dullness lies one of the most valuable secrets of the almost boundless prosperity which it records. But the career of a man, who, starting with no capital save brains and energy, accumulates many millions and builds up the greatest mercantile house in the world, is pregnant with interest, no matter how lacking it may be in dramatic action. Its most encouraging feature, indeed, is the fact that it contains nothing extraordinary, that there is nothing in it which any man of the same natural equipment may not hope to accomplish.

The secret of Marshall Field's success lies partly in his business methods and partly in his environment. The ordinary biographical features of his career may almost be described in a paragraph. Like many another of the men who have been foremost in creating the mighty West, Mr. Field is a New England farmer's son. He was born fifty-five years ago among the hills of Conway, one of the most charming of little western Massachusetts towns. His early years were those of most farmer lads. He received a good education in the public schools and the local academy of his native town; but his tastes were mercantile rather than agricultural. In 1852, at the age of 17, he began his business career. He went to Pittsfield, then as now the largest town in the Berkshire hills, and obtained employment as clerk in a general store. He remained there four years. In that time he had outgrown the business and the town. There were no opportunities in sight for a young man of large capacity and ambition.

He went straight to Chicago, and there he has been ever since. There was no guarantee at that time that the lake town would ever become the Western metropolis. The town had plenty of ambition and pluck, but the possibilities of its greatness were scarcely visible. Then and for a long time afterward the prospects of St. Louis were by many considered the brightest. Mr. Field became a Chicagoan heart and soul, and has done much for Chicago and Chicago has done much for him. The story of his success is a wonderfully close index of the history of the city's marvellous growth. An almost exact parallel may be drawn during almost any of the thirty-five years between the career of the individual and the history of the town. Man and city are of the same age, the city being one year his senior, it was born in 1855, the year of Mr. Field's birth. Her first census, showing some 4,000 inhabitants, was taken two years later. The lusty young town became a full-fledged city of 60,000 or 80,000 people at just the time when Mr. Field having reached his majority in 1856, cast in his lot with the other builders of a metropolis.

Mr. Field secured employment as a clerk in the wholesale dry goods house of Cooley, Farwell & Co. His equipment at the outset in his new field of labor was health, brains, sound principles, and ambition. Genuine worth did not long have to wait for demand before it secure recognition in the broader field in which the young man found himself. His good qualities were promptly discovered by his employers and availed of to mutual advantage. Mr. Field remained in the wholesale dry goods house of Cooley, Farwell & Co. for only four years. In 1860 he was made a partner. In 1865 there was a partial reorganization, the new firm consisting of Mr. Field, L. Z. Leiter, and Potter Palmer, under the firm name of Field, Palmer & Leiter. Two years later Mr. Palmer withdrew, and until 1881 the style of the firm was Field, Leiter & Co. Mr. Leiter retired in the latter year, and since that time the firm has been Marshall Field & Co.

The early break in the unexampled growth of what has become the greatest mercantile house in the world was that made by the fire of 1871. In that great calamity Mr. Field suffered proportionately with the city itself. His firm had its business at State and Washington streets, the present site of the retail house of Marshall Field & Co. Everything was swept away by the flames, involving a loss of $2,500,000. The firm eventually recovered $2,500,000 insurance. The disaster was met with characteristic energy and indomitable pluck. While the ruins still smoked new quarters were opened by the firm in the street car barns at State and Twentieth streets, and rebuilding was at once begun on the old site. The firm also began the erection of a separate wholesale house at Madison and Market streets. Their new buildings were among the first of the permanent structures erected after the fire. The retail establishment was taken possession of in 1872, and it still ranks as one of the largest and best appointed structures for retail trade in the country.

Within a dozen years the new wholesale quarters proved inadequate to the tremendous growth of business, and the erection of the present great structure was begun in 1885. It was completed in 1887, and it comprises probably the largest and best arranged building for mercantile purposes in the world. It occupies an entire block, bounded by Adams, Franklin, and Quincy streets and Fifth avenue, in the heart of the business section. It is of granite and sandstone, plain and substantial. Chicago smoke has turned it almost black, and it looks somewhat like one of London's old and massive Government buildings. The unadorned structure bears no external indication of its use. There is no announcement or sign upon it save a brass plate bearing the firm name at the main entrance on Adams street. The interior is divided by two thick party-walls into three sections, with communication on each floor through double doors of heavy iron. The ground floor of the middle section is occupied in part by the counting room, where scores of clerks, seated at a vast array of desks, keep the books of the great establishment. In the other sections and floors are the goods, systematically arranged for wholesale trade. Probably under no one roof is gathered so vast a quantity of material designed to meet the general wants of mankind. The greater part would be included under the general term dry goods, but the variety is almost without limit, and it includes carpets, curtain goods, and, in fact, about everything within the domain of house and personal equipment; and even now the great establishment is crowded so that this broadest expansion possible under one roof is likely before long to prove too small for the demands of trade.

The business of Marshall Field & Co. has increased from $8,000,000 twenty years ago to $35,000,000 annually. No other house can approach these figures. The field covered by the vast trade of Marshall Field & Co. is the West to the Pacific coast and the South to the Gulf. New York houses control the Eastern market. This great volume of business has yielded in the aggregate a fair profit. Fully $10,000,000 of unencumbered real estate in the heart of the city is owned by him, and he is among the largest individual holders in the West of railroad, palace car, and steel and iron stocks.

But this article is not designed to be a mere chronicle of Mr. Field's wonderful success as a merchant. A point of greater interest is suggested by the inquiry: In what respects do Mr. Field's business methods and general policy differ from those of ordinary business men? They do differ in two or three important particulars.

Marshall Field never gives a note.

He never bought a share of stock on margin.

He never borrows.

There is not a dollar's mortgage upon any piece of real estate or other property which he owns.

He does business on a cash basis.

He buys for cash and sells on shorter time than any of his competitors.

He holds his customers to a strict enforcement of their contracts.

Many merchants would find it difficult, if not impossible, to do a successful business governed by Mr. Field's maxims. Their application would involve a sharp contraction of their volume of trade and the sacrifice of many pet projects of investment or speculation. No one can question the absolute solvency of a business conducted according to Mr. Field's policy. No panic can shake it, few bad debts can swell the profit and loss account. It follows that goods can be sold at a smaller margin for profit than any dealer using the long credit system can afford.

No man has had such great and salutary influence upon the business methods of the West as has Mr. Field. He is unyielding, even rebellious, in the enforcement of contracts, but many a retail dealer has subsequently thanked him for compelling him to meet an obligation when due. His customers throughout the great West number thousands. Every one of them knows that Marshall Field & Co. will insist on prompt payment when the thirty or sixty days' accommodation for which it contracts, but the result is they keep their own collections well in hand, and allow no risky accounts to get upon their books. As a friend of Mr. Field who has watched the operation of his system, recently observed—he has prevented more small failures and done more to keep the methods of his trade in the closest touch up to sound business principles than any other man. Of course one effect of the operation of his system has been to give him the very best class of trade. Dealers of shiftless methods know they cannot trade with him. If one attempts it and seeks to get an extension of credit beyond the maximum of sixty days, he is promptly informed that his trade is not wanted by Marshall Field & Co.

A feature of Mr. Field's business methods, which his associates say has borne the most valuable fruit, is the inflexible integrity of his representations. No employee of his firm is allowed to misrepresent in any degree the quality of their wares. An enviable reputation has been built up on the strength of this rule. The firm's advertisements are relied upon by public, the statements of its salesmen are accepted in full faith by purchasers. It is said to be Mr. Field's policy to do business on small margins of profit, preferring to do a large trade with rapid turning over of his capital rather than a smaller volume of business with proportionately larger returns.

One rare trait Mr. Field has which has enabled him to take the fullest advantage of his business opportunities. He has an almost instinctive power to correctly estimate individual capacity. He is quick and sure in recognizing business talent among his employees. His selections of men always prove them to be especially adapted to the duties assigned them. It follows that in order to exercise his rare judgment of men to best advantage, Mr. Field must be closely associated with his great army of employees. He has no less than 3,500 persons upon his pay roll. No employer in Chicago commands more loyal service and inspires a set ouger personal regard, in many cases amounting to genuine affection, than exists among the employees of Marshall Field. There is not a cash boy in his great store who cannot gain Mr. Field's considerate attention at any time. He is on all occasions as considerate of the feelings of his subordinates as of those of his equals. While his great corps of servants is thoroughly disciplined they are treated as men and women of refinement. In fact, Mr. Field is regarded by his own employees as an ideal employer, and there are few, far too few, men in similar situation who can command such voluntary tribute from those most likely to know their failings.

Mr. Field has always been a hard worker. He devotes about as many hours to business as do his employees. His interests have become so vast that he has, of course, surrounded the supervision of details to others, though he keens himself remarkably well informed regarding all branches of his great establishments. Every morning he visits the retail store on State street, remaining there for an hour or two. The rest of the day he spends in his office in the wholesale building. His sanctum is in one corner of the middle division of the first floor, upon the Adams street front. It is a small, but comfortable room, separated from the rest of the great counting room only by a partition eight or ten feet high. His private secretary sits within a railed enclosure just outside. Most of the time entrance is free to any one having business with Mr. Field. A plain rolltop desk, a table, and chair or two, with a neat carpet, furnish this unpretentious office.

The visitor finds seated at the desk a man of rather spare figure and medium height. When he looks up the face is kindly, and the clear gray eyes, under bushy brows, while keenly observant, invite confidence. The gray hair is almost white, and the heavy mustache has also lost its original color. Mr. Field will not allow a photographer Mkoness to appear in public print. Two or three poor sketches of his face have been printed, but they do not correctly represent him. He is, in fact, a man of impressive presence; dignified, but not severe; alert, but with a trace of sadness about him; strong, but with a ready sympathy for and consideration to the last degree of another's sensibilities. The visitor instantly understands, without perhaps being able to put the thought in words, how true it is that Marshall Field's word is as good as his bond. He gets at the meat of every subject brought before him with two or three incisive questions, studying the while the visitor's face if he be a stranger, and in a few moments he is ready for whatever decision from him the matter may call for. Then a promise from him is a matter, however trivial, is as sure of fulfilment as though guaranteed with all manner of formality.

Of Mr. Field's social life little need be said. His tastes are extremely modest. He lives in quiet luxury. He goes little into society, and he has never been in public life. His charities are generous but unostentatious. He takes an intense interest in the good name of his adopted city. No man does so much as he in his contributions in the interest of good local government. He never appears publicly in these efforts, neither does he allow his name to appear, but his hearty support is always enlisted. His gift of a large tract of land for the erection of the proposed buildings of the Baptist college gave the impression that Mr. Field was a member of that denomination. He is, in fact, a Presbyterian. Mr. Field is married, and he has a son and daughter, both married. He is a member of the principal clubs, and occasionally visits one of them.

No man possesses a greater share of his friends than does Marshall Field. No active figure in this busy nineteenth century civilization offers a truer type of manhood and intelligent, successful endeavor.

STAMPING OUT DISEASE.

NO MORE PLEURO-PNEUMONIA AMONG AMERICAN CATTLE.

Long Island Was the Last Seat of the Plague—The System of Inspection—No Longer Any Reason for Shutting Out Our Cattle From Great Britain.

The Government has almost completed the work of exterminating pleuro-pneumonia, the most fatal and contagious disease of which cattle are the victims. So thorough and successful has been the war of extermination waged during the past three or four years that the dread disease is now practically extinct, and it will be necessary to guard against its reappearance only for a short time longer and in a single spot of not more than four or five square miles area. England's prohibition of the importation of American live cattle on account of the alleged prevalence of pleuro-pneumonia in this country is no longer warranted by any possible danger.

So strict is the quarantine in the district where the disease last appeared that it is impossible for any animal, healthy or not, to carry the infection to other localities. The quarantined district comprises Kings and Queens counties, Long Island. No bovine which once enters the district is permitted to leave it again alive, and as there is no method of leaving except by ferry or Brooklyn Bridge, it is easy to enforce the ironclad regulation.

A large force of inspectors, under the auspices of both the national and State Governments, is engaged in the work of stamping out the disease. The work is in charge of Dr. A. K. Robertson, Chief Inspector of the Bureau of Animal Industry, who is an officer of the Department of Agriculture. His office is at Greene avenue and Broadway, Brooklyn, and his jurisdiction includes New York, Kings and Queens counties. Every head of cattle owned and kept in those three counties is registered at his office, and is inspected regularly once a week or once a month as the case may require. Each animal wears fastened to one ear a brass tag bearing its number in Dr. Robertson's record. So strict are the regulations regarding cattle in the three counties that no owner of cattle is allowed to transfer an animal from one stable to another within the district without a permit from Dr. Robertson's office. The sale of a live animal in Kings or Queens county for removal elsewhere is, as has been said, absolutely prohibited.

The moment a case of pleuro-pneumonia is discovered by an inspector the measures resorted to are prompt and effective. The disease manifests itself by a cough and difficulty in breathing. It is not, however, of the nature of pneumonia in man, though the lungs are the organs affected. The disease is as infectious as small-pox and as distinctly specific and poisonous. Among cattle in districts where the disease has been more or less prevalent it is not so fatal as in newly infected districts. The mortality ranges from 40 to 90 per cent. When an inspector detects a case, another expert is sent at once to confirm the diagnosis, and within twelve hours of its discovery the victim is slaughtered by the Government and killed. The same day the entire herd of which the animal was a member is appraised at full market value, paid for by Uncle Sam, and promptly slaughtered. Not more than twenty-four hours are allowed to elapse before every animal known to have been exposed to the disease is dead. The stable in which they were quartered is then thoroughly disinfected, and the further spread of the disease is rendered almost impossible. In case the disease appears two or three times in the same stable, the Government resorts to still more radical measures. It buys the stable, razes the building, thoroughly disinfects the soil on which it stood, and then buries it beneath four feet more of earth.

The infected district on Long Island is really limited to a portion of Kings and a very small part of Queens counties. It includes much of East New York, and a narrow belt from Newtown Creek along Long Island sound almost to Greenpoint. In this district the Government has bought and killed thousands of cattle since the quarantine was established in December, 1887. Since early last fall the disease has rapidly disappeared. There were no cases in November, and one in December was the last on record. The system of inspection will be kept up at least six months after the last case has been disposed of. By that time all danger of the reappearance of the disease it is believed will be passed. The distemper cannot be propagated in any other manner than by contagion, for it is never produced spontaneously in this country. This has been abundantly proved by the experience in dealing with the disease in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Illinois, Missouri, and other places.

The inspectors have little difficulty with the owners of cattle in prosecuting their duties. There was some trouble for a time in enforcing the law against turning cattle loose in roads or commons to feed. The inspectors insist on bovine being pastured by themselves in quarantined districts. One cattle owner in Queens county last summer persisted in violating the rule, and finally the inspectors confiscated the animals. Then it was found that two of them were suffering with the dread distemper. So it became necessary to search out and kill all cattle which had had access to the infected herd. The Government purchased no less than 500 head of cattle and sent them to the slaughter house because of this violation of law.

Since November last the system of inspection of cattle for export has been very strict. No bovine is now allowed to leave the county unless it wears a little brass tag fastened to it by a wire which passes through a hole in one ear.

THE TAG—ACTUAL SIZE.

The tag is placed there by a Government inspector, and it is a guarantee of the good health of the animal at the time of embarkation. To further guard against the shipment of unhealthy cattle, the law now provides that no vessel having cattle on board can obtain clearance papers at the Custom House unless the Government inspector's certificate of inspection is produced by the Captain.

These precautions are taken in deference to the British fear of the spread of pleuro-pneumonia. England now compels the slaughter of every American animal at the dock when landed. The American cattle exporters secured the aid of the Government to prove that pleuro-pneumonia no longer exists in this country, with a view of securing before long the rescinding of the obnoxious regulation. Through the courtesy of the British Government an American inspector of arriving cattle has for several months been located at Liverpool, Glasgow, and Manchester. There is no record of any animal infected with pleuro-pneumonia having been landed in England from America during the eleven months that these inspectors have been on duty.

Dr. Charles B. Michener is the veterinary inspector at this port, and he has a force of eight or ten men under him who attend to the detailed work of inspection at the cattle docks on the North River and in Jersey. Dr. Michener says that not a single case of pleuro-pneumonia has been found among the thousands of cattle inspected since the bureau was established. About 5,000 head of cattle on the average are shipped from this port every week. Almost as many go from Boston, and Philadelphia and Baltimore are the other cattle shipping ports of importance.

Dr. Michener says the dreaded disease has been completely stamped out in the West, where the cattle for export come from. He believes it is practically extinct in the whole country. The only possible lurking place for it remaining is in Kings and Queens counties. The disease has existed there since 1848, the earliest date of its appearance in America. It is impossible for the disease to appear spontaneously, says Dr. Michener, for it is not indigenous to the soil. It is propagated by direct contagion, and in the face of the stringent measures adopted for its eradication he is sure it must soon entirely disappear. It it has not already done so.

The battle against the disease has been waged systematically and relentlessly. Whenever it has appeared in the West the Government has marched into the county in which it has manifested itself. Every head of cattle in a herd where one or more animals shows symptoms of the malady is taken possession of by the Government inspector. All the infected animals are promptly killed. The healthy animals are sold to a butcher for immediate slaughter after being appraised, and the owner is reimbursed for his entire herd. This system has completely exterminated the disease in the West.

The present system of inspecting export cattle is very thorough. Cattle are inspected by the Government at the great Western cattle marts, usually Kansas City and Chicago. They are inspected at those points. The record is so carefully kept that if an animal should manifest any infectious disease after reaching Europe it would be possible by the tag in its ear to trace it direct to the ranch from which it came on the Western plains. It is also happened several times that a ship which has suffered disaster at sea has been identified by the numbers on the tags of the cattle found floating in the water.

The inspection of cattle before embarkation is done at the Union yards, Sixtieth street and North River, at the Jersey City cattle yards, and at the Oak City yards, Weehawken. Cattle are usually allowed to rest two or three days after leaving the cars, and then the inspectors examine them. Sometimes the animals are hurried direct from the cars aboard ship, a bad practice, which will probably be forbidden by law before long. Ships carrying cattle are also inspected and disinfected, and so are the cars. Accommodations for cattle aboard ship are often far worse than should be allowed to exist, and efforts will soon be made to compel ship owners to comply with certain wholesome regulations in this respect. Inspection of vessels which have brought cattle to this country is very strict. England has far more pleuro-pneumonia among her native cattle than ever existed in this country, so that careful precautions against its importation are necessary. All imported cattle are quarantined for ninety days at the Government yard in New Jersey.

The inspectors of export cattle inspect sheep as well as bovines. The disease among the muttons most guarded against is the scab. The owners of sheep for export are very glad to avail themselves of the inspector's services, for his certificate of good health is a very valuable document to send with the bill of lading.

A CHAPTER ON LYMPH.

Mickey Finn Shows the Wonderful Properties of Dr. Koch's Discovery.

"We are but children in the night,
But children crying for the light."

The second meeting of the Irish Salon in Cooney Island was largely attended. The wonderful acquirements of Mickey Finn as a scholar had been talked about so freely that the kitchen was scarcely large enough to hold all who came. Mrs. Crosby persuaded her neighbor's daughter to take care of the babe, so that she might enjoy the pleasure of listening to some of the pearls of wisdom which dropped from the scholar's lips. Paddy Clancy forsook the saloon for the salon; Mrs. O'Brien brought her patchwork; Jack Brady was present with his bulldog, while pretty Mary Costello sat near the stove and cast sly admiring glances at little Mike. In fact, all the chairs were occupied, and the cover of the wooden coal box cracked under its weight of listeners. The subject for discussion came up incidentally. It happened to be the recent discovery by Dr. Koch of Berlin of an alleged cure for consumption.

"I do be hearin' thim sayin' in the quarry that a Dootchman has invintid a cure for dis'ase!" said Mike Welsh from a cloud of tobacco smoke, "and there'll be no more funerals. Is that thrue, Mickey?"

"So I do be readin' in the Pouckhookie *Blather*," replied the boy, assuming the manner of a professor at a clinic. "They call the invention the limp."

"And how much is it a bottle?" said Mrs. McFaddon, who had a slight cough.

"Oh, ye can't buy it; they give it away," replied Mickey.

"Give it away!" exclaimed the listeners in chorus. "Where can ye get it?"

"Arrah! ye'll have to go to the Dootchman's house to get it, and thin he won't give it to ye until he pounds on your chist and listen's till he sees if yo are breathin' quare like a wind-broken horse."

"Phwat's his name?" asked Judy Flannigan.

"Docther Cotch," replied little Mike.

"And phwat's he like?"

"Well, I niver seen him, but they say he's a little ould man, wid galways and a chin whisker, and that he tries all his invintions on his dog, which the same he has for that purpose intirely. If the invention kills the dog he throws it away, but if the dog can shtand it, begorra, he says it's good enough for min and women and childer."

"Do ye take it wid a spoon or how?" asked Mrs. O'Brien anxiously.

"No," said the demonstrator gravely, "ye take it wid a squirt gun."

This remark excited a howl of derision. Even the bulldog growled.

"Yez can laugh," said Mickey in a nettled tone, "but it's jist as thrue as the squint in your eye, Mike Welsh, and you're lookin' both ways for Sunday. Faith, if yez won't believe me, I'll not tell ye wan more word about it at all, at all."

Little Mike lapsed into silence, but by means of soothing words and gestures they persuaded him to resume his talk.

"Well," he said, "ye musht know that the doctors say that there's wurrums in iverything that's alive and manny things that are not alive. If ye were to be lookin' in a dhrop o' wather wid a tillscope phwat w'ud ye see but t'ousands and t'ousands o' weeny wurrums swimmin' around and atin' aich other like cannibals atin' min. Well, wan day whin Dr. Cotch was afther atin' his sour cabbidge and drinkin' his beer he was sittin' before the fire thinkin' phwat a dignacious man he was altogether, and says he to himself, says he, 'Begorra, I'll invint an invintion for to be curin' dis'ase,' says he, 'and there'll be no more nade for Yankee patent medicines,' says he. And widout makin' anny fuss about it he invinted the limp. Shure, no wan knows how he med the invintion, for he was not like you, Jack Brady. When he had a good thing he knew enough to kape a shill tongue in his head and his mouth closed like a jail gate. But he didn't mind tellin' a part o' the sayoret, that the invintion was nothin' more nor less nor hungry wurrums bo invintid and put in a bottle to be atin' up dis'ase. But, all the same, he was too foxy to be tellin' exactly how he med the wurrums."

Mickey stopped to take breath and to clear his throat, while his audience sat impatiently waiting for him to resume.

"While he had four bottles full o' limp med he tried the new invintion on the dog, and the dog, from bein' thin and wake like a washboard, got fat in two days, and his skhin stretchin' on his back like a fiddle string. Dr. Cotch was that plazed with his good luck that he jumped up in the air and cracked his heels together twice."

"How about the squirt gun?" inquired Jack Brady, who had no admiration for science.

"I'm coin' to that it ye'll give me time," replied Mickey.

"When Docther Cotch had the limp invented and corked up in the bottles wid nitro-glycerane for the limp to feed on, fur ye musht know that the invention was alive, he says to himself, says he, 'Begorra, I musht go down to Flannigan's blacksmith shop and make a squirt gun, wid a handle in the end and a hole through the nadle.' So off he goes widout so much as sayin' a word to Mrs. Cotch, and wid his own hands he med a squirt-gun no bigger nor a putty-blower. When he had it all done, he went to the Dootch hospital wid the squirt gun in wan hand and a bottle o' limp in the other hand. And says he to a poor divil that had dis'ase:

"'Lay over on yer face,' says he.

"'Fur phwat?' says the man.

"'Till I see will ye sthand the limp as well as the dog?' says he.

"And with that the poor divil rowled over on his face, and the doctor sthuck the nadle o' the squirt gun under his shoulder blade and squirted him full o' the limp. The man was afeard, but Dr. Cotch says to him:

"'Lie aisy, ye blaggard. The limp I'm afther givin' to ye by way of your circulation will ate up the dis'ase like a cat atin' milk, and thin ye'll be cured.'

"Did it cure him?" asked the lecturer's mother.

"No, I think he died, but that was bekase he took too big a dose."

Mickey stopped to look about him and see what effect his remarkable statement had made upon his listeners. The bulldog was gasping for breath in the tobacco-laden air.

"The dog can't sthand it, I'll have to be takin' him out in the yard," said Jack Brady, rising and leaving the room with his open-faced pet.

"Don't mind him, acushla," said Mrs. O'Brien, soothingly to Mickey. "Go wan wid yez sthory."

There was an angry flush upon the boy's face and a glitter in his eye as he continued:

"By hokey, I'll not tell ye anything more about things. I'm not going to be med fun of by thim as hasn't oddecashun. But as I'm almost through I may as well tell you about the loopus."

"The phwat?" asked Mrs. Finn.

"The loopus, a quare dis'ase that killed many a dacint man that said his prayers every night. Ye'll be gettin' up in the mornin', afther goin' to bed airly, like a dacint man should, and ye'll be findin' yer neck wid red patches on it, and on yer legs and yer arms. If yon have the loopus raio bad ye're like to die wid it; but if you take a squirtgun full o' limp when yer first kot-h wid the dis'ase ye'll be all right. That's all I can tell ye to-night, bekase I have to go out and see has the goat anny straw in his barrel."

The neighbors filed slowly out of the shanty and walked home in groups discussing the marvels of the wonderful lymph.

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The next morning when Mr. Finn arose at 6 o'clock and washed himself in the little tin hand basin, he looked in the cracked mirror before the washstand. In the truthful quicksilver he saw a red patch on his neck a large red spot, which seemed to grow as he looked at it, until it apparently covered the side of his face. With a howl of fear he ran into the bedroom and covered himself with the quilt.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" he groaned. "I have the loopus! I'm dyin' I am. Oh, Biddy, dear, send for Docther Cotch and the squirt gun! Quick! quick! I feel quare in me bones. Where's Mickey, till I kiss him good-by!"

Mickey came running into the bedroom. In Mr. Finn's fear he had exposed his feet, and they also were flushed as vivid a red as the spot on his neck. Mickey was alarmed. He ran for Dr. Cotcher. The latter examined his patient, and, with a solemn face, said:

"I'm afraid, Mike, that it's a case o' dye!"

"Arrah, don't say that, don't say that, Docther dear. I'm not fit to go. I didn't go to mass lasht Sunda'. Don't touch it," he shrieked, as the Doctor took one of the discolored arms in his hands. "I won'll catch it!"

"There's hope for you, Michael, if you'll be quiet," said the Doctor, as he wrote out the following prescription:

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Saponis Mollis	oz. xii.
Aqua pura ad	gall. ij.

Sig. Lavate cum. spongi mani.

E. F. CROSSER, M. D.

When little Mike threw the remarkable paper down upon the counter he was panting and eager. The druggist smiled and said:

"Sonny, this prescription reads 'twelve ounces of soft soap and two gallons of cistern water, to be applied with a big sponge.'"

Mr. Finn had been tossing around all night under a newly dyed red quilt, and the perspiration from his body had loosened the color.

TOWN AND COUNTRY FLIRTS.

GREENVILLE NOT THE ONLY PLACE WHERE CUPID GOES TO CHURCH.

Church Boys and Town Boys who Wait at Meeting House Doors—Station Flirts in Country Places—Flirting in New York.

The minister and the deacons in the Greenville church in Jersey City acted as if they knew very little of human nature when they stirred their congregation to its nervous centre over the flirting of some boys and girls in meeting a few Sundays ago. The minister, in particular, exhibited a strange ignorance of mundane affairs when he took the matter so seriously to heart as to compare his congregation unfavorably with meetings of outcasts and hard characters that he had addressed in his time. The fact is, that except for the giggling of the girls there was nothing very extraordinary or calling for extreme measures in what went on in Greenville.

Flirting can hardly be a more popular diversion anywhere than in the smaller towns and villages of this country. The mania or pastime, or whatever it may be called is one of the prime institutions among the young of the masses, and yet it lacks historians, novelists, poets—even reporters. The reason is, of course, that it interests and is indulged in by boys and girls and half-grown men and women, and is abandoned and apparently forgotten by those mature folks who work the lesser impulses and situations of humanity into literature, basing novels on the far less common forms of expression that love or license takes, and threshing finer than spun gold a thousand less interesting results of the contact of the sexes.

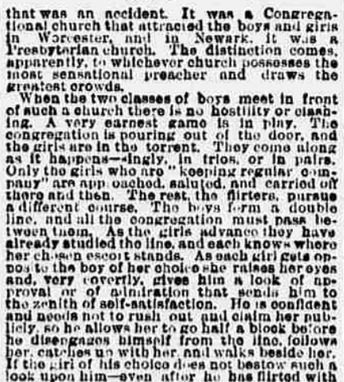
It is reported that in the Greenville church two young men in one seat began flirting with two young girls in another seat during the services. The boys winked and telegraphed with their handkerchiefs; the girls giggled and smiled and shook their heads. To any one who has lived in a little country town or who has travelled hither and thither about the United States, this seems like an unfinished story. "Is that all they did at Greenville?" is the natural question, because all who are observant students of the subject know perfectly

well that this is not a tithe of what the boys and girls were doing at other churches and places of public gathering all over the land.

At other such places of resort many boys and young men, who made no outward show of misbehavior, were scanning the congregation all over—each sex to see what members of the other sex were present, and each girl and boy to settle in his or her mind which other girl or boy was to be his or her companion homeward after the meeting. When a boy caught the eye of the girl of his plans, if the opportunity was ripe, he telegraphed a glance or muscular movement of his face which said: "I'll wait for you. I want to go home with you. Don't let any one else carry you off."

If it was in church, at the earliest moment for leaving all the boys of that active and susceptible age moved for the doors as quickly and as quietly as possible, flung themselves down the gallery stairs or out across the front lobby, and took their places at the gates or on the sidewalk in front of the door. They expected to see what they called "the town boys" there ahead of them, and there they were, taking a last whiff at cigars and cigarettes and tossing on the pavement to keep warm. This happened in no one knows how many towns and villages all over the country last Sunday night, when the two boys and the two girls winked and giggled in Greenville. Doubtless it happened in Greenville also, but it did not disturb the preacher or fall under his notice. The so-called town boys, who were ahead of the church boys, are the youths who had been in other churches, and some were boys not so strictly disciplined, who had been where they pleased and not to church at all. But they knew the girls in that particular church, and they knew it to be the flirting church of the place; doubtless they called it "the eelpot." There is an eelpot in every town. The term is applied to the church that is most attractive to the young people of the place. The staid and sober worshippers in such a place lament the fact and grieve over the eelpot, but apparently it must be one such church; there is no help for it. We have had churches thus distinguished in New York city. The war time saw the last of them. Allen Street Methodist Church and Fourth Street Methodist Church, near Washington square, used to be our eelpots. It happened that both were Methodist churches, but that was an accident. It was a Congregational church that attracted the boys and girls in Worcester, and in Newark, it was a Presbyterian church. The distinction comes, apparently, to whichever church possesses the most sensational preacher and draws the greatest crowds.

When the two classes of boys meet in front of such a church there is no hostility or clashing. A very earnest game is in play. The congregation is pouring out of the door, and the girls are in the torrent. They come along as it happens—singly, in trios, or in pairs. Only the girls who are "keeping regular company" are approached, saluted, and carried off to their homes. The rest, the flirters, pursue a different course. The boys form a double line, and all the congregation must pass between them. As the girls advance they have already studied the line, and each knows where her chosen escort stands. As each girl gets opposite the boy of her choice she raises her eyes and, very coyly, gives him a look of approval or of admiration that sends him to the zenith of self-satisfaction. He is confident and needs not to rush out and claim her publicly, so he allows her to go half a block before he disengages himself from the line, follows her, catches up with her and walks beside her. If he cares to show off with her he will find that she is merely postponing his triumph, for she will say, "Excuse me, I have company, thank you," and on the minute the luckier fellow will walk up to and off with her.



It is not the purpose to follow any of these couples in order to see what this form of flirting leads to, but, as a matter of fact, in nineteen cases out of twenty, the couples go more or less directly to the home of the maiden, who either invites the young man in or lingers with him at the gate, according as her parents have encouraged or discouraged her previous efforts to make herself the arbiter of her own matrimonial fate, as to the innocence or harmfulness of the entire custom, it is like human nature itself, variable and uncertain; but the bulk of these Sunday night adventures are not demoralizing, because they are an institution of the time among a large class, and the institution is recognized without protest in the communities where it exists.

It is a strange thought, to those who obtain their introductions to friends in the regular way, that it is possible for young women to take up the acquaintance of a youth or boy merely because he is well dressed, good-looking, and flatters the girl by singling her out and smiling at her. But it is human, and it is not so entirely outrageous as it looks. As a matter of fact, both the girl and the boy know a great deal about one another before they go into such an adventure. In those little towns and little church circles gossip furnishes the man facts about each new comer, and when it looks to an outsider that two strangers are scraping an acquaintance the fact is that the boy has said: "Hello! there's that pretty girl who lives around the corner whom I see four times a week." And to herself the girl says: "There's that good-looking Tom Masterson, who works at the railroad station whom Tilly Reynolds is so proud to know. I'd like to cut her out." With more formality and regard for the proprieties the same impulses result in the same thing in the more guarded circles of society. The giggling and winking that the Greenville pastor complains of and that he should have rebuked with dignified and calmly studied language are evidences of extreme youth rather than of hardened disregard for order.

A queer form that country flirting assumes in the smaller towns is that in which the young women take the initiative, which they practise at the railroad stations. There is some mysterious law governing this phase of the amusement, because if two towns of the same size in the same region are compared, it will often be found that the practice is pursued in the one and not in the other. Any young commercial traveller will be able to name scores of villages and cities at which he is certain to step off the cars into the thick of a lot of well-dressed, idle girls, who have come, and always do come, to see the evening train arrive. And the same drummer will name as many more settlements where he never sees any women assembled, except those who are there for the business of travelling.

The liveliest flirtation stations are always those in mill or factory towns, but it is not safe to lay down the rule that the fact is peculiar to such places, for there are hundreds of flirtation depots where there are no factories. What comes of these meetings between the men who travel and the girls who wait the writer cannot say. His knowledge is confined to distant observation. His knows it to be a fact, however, that as a rule the girls who go to the stations do so at a great risk to their social standing in the places where they live. They may meet their admirers at church doors habitually without losing caste, but a girl who goes to the railroad station to flirt is a girl who "gets talked about." Jealousy may enter into the gossip, because she seems to prefer non-residents to those who live around her, but, whatever be the reason, and however innocent her life may be, the station flirt pays heavily for her habit. One other curious fact about the station flirts may be mentioned, and that is they are always well dressed. They evidently put on their best beshines to enhance their attractions, and dress for the station as a society woman does for a reception.

We have flirting in New York city—this same country kind of flirting. It is confined to certain distinct classes, but those who indulge in it form a great army. The girls are well-meaning, and fancy themselves circumspect; to no other kind of persons does this article refer. They are scattered all over the city, in the parks, and in such places as attract persons of leisurely inclination, like the public museums and galleries and the ferry houses.

But the flirtations of the many parts of the city where their pastime has for years been a fixed institution, and where it has great proportions and is reduced to a science. Their parade is the lower part of Second avenue, and in fine weather—especially on summer Sunday evenings—they all but monopolize several blocks of that important thoroughfare. The boys and girls and young men and women are all from the crowded tenement district to the east of the avenue, and are mainly employed in east side factories. The girls go in couples and so do the boys. Their custom is to march up and down until each couple has seen all the other couples, and then the boys have had chances to decide which of each other the most attractive persons of the other sex. This very necessary inspection having taken place, the flirting begins in earnest. It has been going on in a half-hearted series of smiles and head turnings all the while, of course, but after each person has decided upon the one of opposite sex who is most agreeable to him or her, the fun waxes earnest. You would suppose that it was a simple and straightforward performance like that of meeting one another at a church door and going on together. It is not. The cou