THE WOMAN RICE PLANTER

AT LAST THE LONG WANTED WHITE HELP TURNS UP.

Prospects on the Plantation Brighter—A Mechanic Who Wants to Farm on Shares—His Wife Promises to Be Useful—He Confesses to a Bad Temper.

CHEROKEE, Nov. 27.—Rode on horseback to Peaceville to-day to get the mail and brought back a very heavy mail and two books which have been generously sent to the Book Club; and not content with that, saw some very nice salt fish at the store and bought two pounds and brought that home too.

I have given Ruth holiday since moving and am using Romola. She is a delightful saddle horse, so that I have been riding everywhere instead of driving, and I do enjoy it. Romola has a history.

One of my hands some years ago got into trouble and came to me in great distress to borrow quite a large sum of money. I lent it to him and two years passed without his making the least effort to pay it, though he had made good crops and shipped over a hundred bushels of rice of his own to market. So one spring I said to him

"As you will not pay your debt yourself, you had better make your horse pay it. I will rent her from you and use her until the debt is paid." He seemed very pleased at the idea and brought his mare the next day. I had often felt sorry for her; she struck me as having once been some one's pet and a pleasure horse—a dark chestnut, with a nice air about her. When I asked her name he gave the name of one dear to me, which I could not bear to use, so I said: "I will call her Romola, after you." This delighted him, his name being Romulus, pronounced by his friends Rambʼus.

I found to my dismay that Romola was too weak to do any work when she first came and I had the pleasure of feeding her for a month before she could be of any use. Romulus had only fed her, and that lightly, when he used her, which might be once a week or once a fortnight; the rest of the time she was turned loose in the woods to hunt her living.

After being well fed and groomed for a while she became quite useful, and at the end of nine months the debt was paid and I returned her to him. He brought her back, however, at once and said:

"Miss, she look so fine you kin keep um fu' she feed. I ain't got no co'n. I ain't got no pertickler use fur um."

So I kept her through that winter and in the spring he came to say he had received an offer of $45 for her and he was going to sell her. I told him I would give him $50 and so Romola became mine, and she is a delightful creature.

Having known evil days she appreciates her home and is always cheerful. Her gaits are very pleasant, easier than Ruth's, but she is a great jumper, no fence can hold her, she skims over like a bird. When I try to get her near enough to a gate for my short arms to reach the latch there is always a danger of her leaping it.

She comes up to it nicely and stops where a man's long arm could open it with ease, but for me it is hopeless. I ride off and bring her back two or three times with the same result, then she loses patience and prepares to jump.

Green has given me notice that he wishes to leave my service the end of this month, so I must find some one else. He milks the five cows and ploughs a quarter of an acre of oats a day and thinks he is overworked; told Chloe yesterday he was broken down with hard work!

Just at the end of the war, when things were being adjusted after the upheaval of the Emancipation Proclamation, my mother was trying to arrange a contract which would be just to all parties, so that the lands might be worked and the starvation and want which was threatening this region prevented. The intelligent negroes saw the necessity and gave what help they could, acquiescing in the terms of the contract. The inferior element among the negroes was very turbulent and rebellious and it was a very exciting scene.

At my mother's request a United States soldier had been detailed by the commandant in Gregory to be present, witness the contract and keep order. During the turmoil and uproar the soldier said:

"I should think you'd rather get white help."

From time to time it has recurred to me with renewed humor, and now I think the time has come when I really must try and "get white help."

November 28—Thanksgiving—I rose very early so as to make the long drive to Gregory in time for church. I sent Chloe and Dab out to collect holly and moss, for my thanksgiving service is always to lay some tokens of loving memory in the sacred spot where my loved ones lie.

The morning was beautiful, but very cold; as the sun gained power it got warmer and the air was delightful. I was detained getting off, so that I was late for church, but spent a long time in the churchyard placing the quantity of brilliant holly, the berries so red and the leaves so green, in beds of the solemn gray moss to my satisfaction.

When I finished I drove to Woodstock to spend the rest of the day and night. On my way I saw by the roadside two young people having a picnic *à deux*—a pretty woman, very fair in a Marie Louise blue shirtwaist. I thought what a charming way to pass their holiday, taking their lunch in the woods, the brown carpet of pine needles spread at their feet. As I came abreast of them the man crossed the road and said:

"I wish to speak to you, ma'am. I've been waiting for you. You may remember you passed us driving in a wagon this morning? The man whose wagon we were in and who was driving said: 'That's the lady for you; she's got plenty of land and money and you'd better see her.'"

I laughed and said, "He was right about the land, but much astray in the other statement. I have about a thousand acres of land, but not a cent of money."

"Well, ma'am, its the land I'm after. I want to farm. I've been working with a big company at my trade, steamfitting and carpenter's work, and they've laid off their hands in this tight spell, and I've took a notion to go back to farming for a while. I was raised on a farm an' was a-ploughin' cotton when I was 12 years old—I belong to this State. I come here last year for my wife's health. She loves the country, so I would like to take about thirty acres on shares."

I asked if he could manage that much alone. He pointed to his pretty wife and said:

"She's just the workin'est woman you ever see an' she'll do her share, I reckon."

I told him to come up to Cherokee as soon as he could and look over the land; that I had a cottage which used to be our schoolhouse when I was a child, which I thought would be very comfortable for him after a little work. I asked him what shares he proposed. He said:

"In course I don't know the way you works shares in this State, but at home I rents my farm to my brother-in-law an' I furnishes the team and feeds it and the land is under good fence an' we divides the cost of fertilizer an' he does all the work an' we shares the crop in half; he takes one half and gives me one half."

I told him that would suit me entirely. I had my land under good wire fencing and would furnish a team and feed it.

I drove on—I have always said I was the special child of Providence and here is an instance—waylaid on the road by the very person I was wanting to find and have been looking for in vain.

I was late for luncheon, but was forgiven in view of such unforeseen interruption. Ruth had been most reluctant to wait during the interview and Dab had all he could do to hold her.

November 29.—This morning it poured torrents, so I did not start until midday, when it was not raining so hard. I drove through the terrific neighborhood road to the ferry only to find the wire broken and the flat drifting down the river.

In the intense cold and wet discomfort, I had food for devout thanksgiving that I had not been a little earlier and so been in the drifting flat. I turned and drove three miles up the river to another ferry, so that I did not get home until very nearly dark.

When within a mile of Cherokee I met my farmer on his way back to town; he had hired a horse and gone up to look over the land, and though it was a most discouraging day and he was wet to the skin and very cold and very sore, for he said he had not ridden for years, he was delighted with the land. He said, however, he feared the repairs on the house would cost more than it would pay me to have a renter for only one year, and that was all that he now proposed to rent.

I told him I was willing to put the repairs in, and that while they were going on he could occupy two rooms that I had elsewhere, as he expressed great eagerness to come at once if he came at all. So there on the road in the rain it was agreed that he should come up on the boat next Wednesday.

I am so worn out with the long drive and the intense cold that I can scarcely make myself write, but apparently my "white help" is in sight and I must record it.

December 5—The boat blew very early yesterday morning. I had sent the two up to meet Mr. and Mrs. Z. and their belongings, and they arrived with very neatly packed clean new furniture, his fine tool chest being the most impressive thing.

Mr. Z. very soon got everything in position and the cooking stove up and going, and this morning he started work upon the cottage.

Fortunately I had some shingles on hand or I could not have undertaken it, but only 1,000 will have to be bought. The plastering is down, and that is the most serious consideration now. The sides are good, but the ceiling is much broken.

I drove Romola to the store to get the nails, &c., which were wanted, and then, feeling very much lulled and soothed by the thought of having some one who worked with such vim and needed no looking after, I spent a delightful restful evening reading the "Memoirs of Madame Vigée Le Brun." Most interesting and inspiring to read such a woman—such great gifts and above all such wonderful diligence—not an idle moment did she allow herself; her art and the social labors belonging thereto occupied every moment.

December 17—The Zs getting on finely. She is a wonderfully capable woman, and I think a very nice one. She seems so pleased to be in the country again and is eager to take the milking—wants me to send off Gibby and let her milk.

I told her that she could take the Guernsey cow up, that as soon as the calf got big Gibby said she was dry and he could not get any milk, but that I knew it was only because he was a poor milker, and I would be delighted if she would feed her well and milk her; I knew she could bring back the milk. She did not seem very pleased, but consented.

She is evidently not a strong woman, and if a bad spell of weather should come she could not go out to milk and I would just be left milkless. Better go slowly I think, and not upset things.

I told Chloe to give them a pint of milk every morning and every evening. The cows are not giving much, but then I am not feeding them as I usually do.

The stringency in the money market affects everything. There is no sale for anything—cotton, cattle, horses—I have tried to sell anything and everything, but in vain.

December 20—To-day I signed a contract with Mr. Z., which I got a lawyer to draw up. He has been very anxious about the signing before this, but I thought there was no great hurry.

He and his wife have been very diligent, working early and late, setting out a new strawberry bed and getting land ready for the things. She has planted celery very successfully and says this land is just suited for it and wants to try a quarter of an acre in it. They are charmed with the ever flowing artesian well and are arranging little ditches to irrigate in dry weather. Altogether I feel so peaceful and content that it is hard to write regularly.

Christmas Night—Had a peaceful, happy day, many loving tokens of the blessed season of good will. It is always a pleasure to make the darkies happy with small presents and I included the Zs in my offerings of good will.

Besides many little things to eat I presented them with a pair of Plymouth rocks, a beautiful pullet and cock, as they are anxious to start a poultry yard. This afternoon she came in with an offering for me, a necklace of fish scale flowers made by herself, which she had told me the other day she sold for 50 cents.

I was quite touched by it and by her happiness over the fowls. Altogether I feel very thankful that I have found such satisfactory people. He talked to me a great deal to-day and said he would give $1,000 if he could get rid of his evil temper. I told him a thousand prayers would perhaps accomplish his desire better than the same number of dollars. He went on:

"I've been a powerful wicked man. I've shot two men an' been shot twice myself and I've stabbed one man nine times and been all cut to pieces myself, but for two years now since I met this wife I've quit drinkin' an' I'm tryin' to live a good life."

I told him I felt quite sure if he earnestly tried he would succeed and that I would do all I could to help him. I felt a little disturbed for a moment, but a full confession of one's sin is often the beginning of a new life, and the idea of helping a man to a higher, better life adds a new interest to the experiment.

January 1—Mr. Z. came to me much discouraged over the ploughs and tackle, which have been much abused by the darkies, and so I bought everything new for him and gave him a house in the yard to lock up all his farm implements, so that no one but himself can use them.

PATIENCE PENNINGTON.

Nutmeg Poisoning.

From the Medical Record.

Cases of nutmeg poisoning, though rare, are known to have occurred. The death of a boy who had eaten two nutmegs is recorded. The poison is in the oil and the symptoms are giddiness, drowsiness and delirium.

BALLOONING IS A DELIGHT

DANGEROUS? NOT A BIT OF IT, SAYS MRS. LEO STEVENS.

Just as Soon as the Prejudice Wears Off New York Women Will Take to It, She Declares—It Is Somewhat Expensive—Balloon Picnics—Surprised Farmers.

In two years it won't be at all strange to see balloons passing over New York guided by women, and eventually women will own aerial craft just the same as they own motor cars to-day, if Mrs. Leo Stevens, wife of the aeronaut, prophesies correctly, for Mrs. Stevens is quite as enthusiastic over ballooning as her husband.

She will also tell you with laughing eyes and dimpling cheeks how foolishly fearful people are about balloon ascensions. For as a matter of fact it isn't alarming at all; quite the contrary.

Mrs. Stevens declares that more women are interested in the pastime now than most persons are aware. It is only their shrinking from the publicity of the thing that prevents them from coming out in the open and declaring themselves converts to the sport.

A number of New York women have made ascensions in Paris, where going up in a balloon is a common thing and entails no comment, but as yet they haven't had the courage to do it here. But just as soon as a sufficient number becomes interested there is no doubt that this prejudice will die away.

"In Paris," said Mrs. Stevens, "every pleasant day you will see anywhere from one to half a dozen balloons passing over the city, and they attract no more attention than a bird flying overhead. And it is such delightful sport! I know of nothing to compare with it.

"This is my basket," Mrs. Stevens went on, pulling out a small basket, just large enough for one person. "I haven't yet made an ascension alone, but I mean to this summer. I have made this balloon for the purpose.

"I shall be alone in the car, but will probably go with a party of balloonists. At least that is what we are planning now—to take trips, for instance, just for pleasure, not with the intention of covering great distances.

"It is a pity that we can't go up from here, but the gas isn't right for it. It is too heavy, so we are obliged to go to Pittsfield, Mass., or some place in that vicinity, to make ascents, where we can get gas that lifts about thirty pounds.

"Unfortunately this makes the trips expensive, for it isn't possible to make an ascent under $100, for there is the transportation, expressage, &c. If we only had aero grounds here, with a private gas plant, it wouldn't cost so much, but this will all come in time. Then it won't be an uncommon sight to see balloons sailing about every day.

"What is the necessary equipment for a short balloon trip? Why, not much more than is required for a motor excursion.

"I always wear a short tailor suit with a cap and take a coat along in case of necessity. I really seldom wear anything on my head, and don't bother about rain, for the balloon protects us pretty thoroughly unless it happens to be a driving storm; and as our trips are purely for pleasure, we are not apt to go up unless it's a fair day.

"Then we take this hamper along," pointing to a basket about twice as high as an automobile lunch box. "We generally take chicken sandwiches, coffee, a little brandy maybe, but plenty of water. Sometimes we never touch the food, preferring rather to get something to eat at a farmhouse en route, but of course we have to take the lunch in case of necessity.

"Usually we stop at a farmhouse, and you have no idea how delightfully we are treated. Why, the farmers can't do enough for you. It's a funny thing, too, for while they are death on motors they are simply crazy about balloons.

"You are royally entertained and fed on milk and honey, and it's next to impossible to get them to take any money for it. They seem to feel it is an honor conferred upon them, and the farmer in whose lot the balloon happens to land is the envy of the whole countryside. All the rest come from far and near to have a look at it and at us, whom they look upon as they would if we came from the moon.

"There is one thing that balloonists have discovered, and that is that it isn't safe to land on the edge of a big city. For it is generally a rough district and the boys are apt to damage the balloon. Each one wants a piece of it for a souvenir, and that doesn't help the balloon any."

"Have I any fear? Oh, mercy no," laughed Mrs. Stevens, and it was clear that she thoroughly enjoyed her aerial trips without being hampered by any thought of accident or danger. "Really there isn't a particle of danger.

"Everything is so well arranged and so perfectly worked out that unless one were to encounter a tornado there is nothing whatever to fear. I have made ascensions staying up for four or five hours at a time, and the experience is delightful.

"It is quite a wrong impression that people have of the flight. So many ask me what the sensation is. There isn't any sensation any more than that of riding in an automobile. It is even better than a motor, for there are no wheels going around, only a delightful feeling of sailing smoothly up and away from the noise and bustle of the city.

"The moment you get up about 100 feet above the average building everything is a picture to you. You soon lose track of the sounds, and outside of an occasional steamboat, ferry or train whistle, the noise of the city is tempered to a soothing drone like that of bees in summer.

"It is of course pleasanter to remain in sight of the earth, though one isn't cognizant of people living beneath; it just seems as if the whole world had faded away and there was no one in existence except those in the car and you were gazing at some wonderful panorama unfolding for your sole enjoyment.

"It is fascinating when the weather is fine to take a trip and let the trail line drag and call to the boys down below to catch it. They will tear over fields, jump fences and run like mad, and just when they almost reach the line, up we go again out of their reach.

"Sometimes we call out to the farmers and ask them how their crops are getting on and they are so amazed at the sight of us they can hardly speak. Just before we get out of sound they may get their wits enough to call out an invitation to come down and get a bite to eat. Sometimes we do it.

"Then it is so grand to think that on a fine day you can go out of the city a little way, fill your balloon and sail off to some sequestered nook where you can land and eat your lunch in picnic fashion. Oh, I really have no doubt that the time is very near when ballooning will have become a national sport both for men and women and we will think no more of sailing through the air than we think of going shopping nowadays. One only has to get a taste of it to get the fever."

A REBUKE.

The Harvard "Crimson" Calls Down the Note Paper Snipers.

The *Harvard Crimson*, which is a thunderer in its own way, the other day came out as follows: "At the risk of seeming trivial we desire to call attention to a peculiar manner in which certain ambitious students are endeavoring to secure a generous return on their investment for membership in the union. These thrifty individuals are consuming vast quantities of writing paper stamped with the union crest in writing theses and taking notes.

"Possibly these offenders are acting through ignorance, but we are quite sure that their own note paper would never be used for such a purpose. Is the slight saving in stationers' bills sufficient compensation for the loss of self-respect which can but accompany such a petty breach of good taste?"

KEATS'S ITALIAN ROMANCE.

Love Affair of the Poet in Rome Revealed by the Discovery of a Letter.

ROME, March 31.—The English cemetery in Rome is full of wild beauty and classical interest. From the outside it appears to be covered by innumerable cypresses and pine trees. Close to it rises the famous Pyramid of Caius Cestius, 116 feet high.

From time to time, owing to the winds and rain which have swept over this spot, pieces of the marble which coated the sides of the pyramid are detached and now tufts of weeds have taken root in the cracks and crannies, and as they wave to and fro in the wind they seem to mock the vanity of him who wished this huge pile of stone for his tomb.

In striking contrast, in a secluded spot overshadowed by two solitary pines and surrounded by many flowers, is the resting place of John Keats. Fresh interest is awakened in this grave by the discovery of a new romance in the poet's life.

In 1819, two years before his death, Keats fell desperately in love with Fanny Browne, who drove him to distraction with her caprices. After this unfortunate love affair he left England with his faithful friend Severn and took up his residence in Rome, where he chanced to meet the woman who filled his last days with happiness. It was only quite recently and as the result of researches by an Italian student that this heretofore ignored episode of Keats's life in Rome has been discovered.

As the poet was ascending the steps of the Trinita dei Monti one day he was struck by the marvellous beauty of a young Italian girl who was going in the same direction. The attraction was so strong that without a moment's reflection he offered her his arm, which she unhesitatingly accepted.

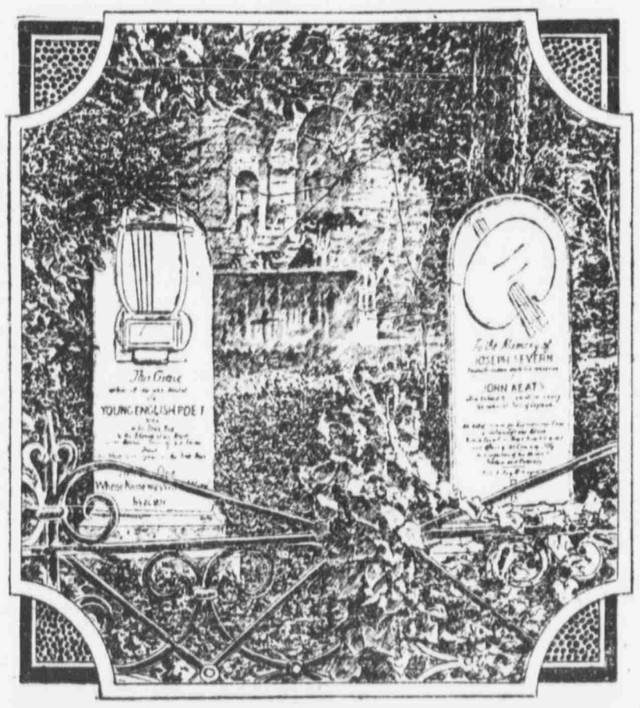
From this chance meeting a friendship grew up which soon ripened into love. Keats's love was so strong that he succeeded in hiding until the very last moment the illness which eventually carried him away, lest his Italian sweetheart, Maria Landi, should suffer pain.

After his death she disappeared, and no trace of this short but happy episode of Keats's life was found until the discovery of the following letter from Keats to Maria Landi, which is in the possession of one of her great grandnephews living in Rome:

MY DEAREST: Although I said I would not write to you, still I wish to talk a little more with you, my dream and my hope, my smile and my one and only joy. You do not know how much I love you, you do not know it and I cannot tell you how much.

But you are everything to me, as for you alone I smile amidst my tears and I put one sweet thought among many bitter ones, and I have many of them, love, many, a whole sorrowful crown, a most sorrowful crown of them. But when I am near you I forget them all because I love you with great, immense and infinite love, with a love that no words can express.

Oh, if you were here, if your dear face with its look which promises wonderful sweetness, would greet and comfort me! Oh, if you were only with me, my adored! If you knew how I long for your presence in certain moments. I wish for you suddenly at times in the peace of dawn, at others in the calmness of the night, and it seems as if your voice reached me in the silence, your silvery voice as musical as a waterfall.



GRAVES OF KEATS AND HIS FRIEND SEVERN IN THE ENGLISH CEMETERY IN ROME

ONE WOMAN MACARONI MAKER

YET THERE IS ROOM FOR MORE, MRS. EDGE THINKS.

She Learned the Trade in Italy and Practises It Here—Experience the Guide to Success in It—Mrs. Edge Uses Machinery and Cuts Down Running Expenses.

Mrs. Rachel S. Edge believes she is the only woman in the United States owning and managing a macaroni factory. Until recently macaroni, vermicelli, spaghetti and similar paste foods were manufactured chiefly in Italy and France and by hand. Now there are many factories in this country where the work is done almost entirely by machinery.

"The machine made paste food is just as good as if not better than that made by hand, provided the same wheat is used for both," declared Mrs. Edge when asked to tell the difference between the American and the foreign product. "Five years ago it was next to impossible to get wheat with sufficient gluten in America.

"Now that difficulty has in a great measure been obviated by the Western farmers growing wheat from seed imported from Sicily. Every grain of wheat used in my factory comes direct from North or South Dakota. The wheat grown in those States is in my opinion as good as any in the world for making paste foods.

"In the factory the first step after grinding the flour is dumping it into the mixing vats, usually by the sackful. Then hot water is added by the bucketful, and the machine begins its work.

"The stirring is done by means of revolving machinery in these vats until the mixture takes the consistency of dough. From those vats the dough goes to a flat surface, where it is rolled by a large stone or iron revolving weight.

"Stone weights have been longest in use, and many manufacturers still prefer them. I have just had the iron weights put in my kneading machine, and not only do I find them easier to keep clean, but furthermore they need less attention. The stone weights require constant care to keep the dough in position, while the metal weights have teeth that hold it in place. As these teeth do away with the wages of one workman to each kneading machine their economic value is easily recognized.

"The amount of water used is about the only difference in making the various kinds of paste, the vermicelli requiring less than any of the others. Paste of the highest grades is translucent and the shade of very light amber.

"Pure white macaroni may seem more attractive to the inexperienced purchaser, but as a rule it indicates the admixture of rice flour. The cheaper hard wheats always produce a dark dough and their color must be toned up to make them marketable.

"In case of macaroni of the first quality the whiteness is brought about by the kneading process. Ordinary paste is kneaded about thirty-five minutes, and the extension to fifty minutes produces a very superior article.

"Once the dough is of the required color it is removed to double cylinder presses, in which it is forced downward through copper dies. On the size of these dies depends the size and shape of the finished product.

"Vermicelli comes from these presses in mere strings and shreds. The macaroni is much larger and is in the form of a hollow tube. As macaroni comes from the press it is cut by an attendant with a large knife into lengths of four and five feet. Vermicelli is hardly ever more than six or eight inches long. The fancy shapes of paste foods are made by means of a horizontal press which has an automatic knife and needs almost no attention.

"After coming from the press the long strips of macaroni are placed evenly over racks which are hurried away to the drying or curing rooms. This curing process is the most delicate feature of the business.

"So far as my judgment goes it is absolutely impossible to establish cut and dried rules. Experience is the only safe guide, and that can be obtained only by the closest observation.

"Mechanical fans assist in all drying operations. To make the very best grades the macaroni strips should be allowed to lie for a short time between blankets to moisten them. This prevents cracking in the curing room.

"Macaroni should remain in the curing room nearly or quite a week, and if during that time it is allowed to take cold, in spite of the quality of the gluten and the duration of its kneading, it will lack the elasticity that perfect macaroni should have. When properly cured it should bend like a whip without breaking. The same macaroni improperly cured will break before cooking and be still more brittle after cooking.

"It is quite easy for a purchaser to judge the quality of macaroni. By holding a few lengths up to the light the best grade white macaroni may be distinguished from the equally white cheaper grade. The cheaper article will be found to be dull white, like a sheet of paper, while the better quality will be translucent.

"This difference is caused by the presence of rice flour in the cheap macaroni. The quality sought by all manufacturers is of a bright clear appearance with elasticity before cooking and sufficient force to retain the original form after being cooked. It is only the inferior grades that melt and run together like paste when cooked.

"Each stick of macaroni must be inspected before it is packed for shipment. If any cracked or warped pieces are found they are put aside and sold for less price. The perfect strips are packed in long boxes and shipped to jobbers unless the manufacturer believes, as I do, that it is better the sooner it is eaten after being cured and sells direct to retailers.

"It is generally claimed by manufacturers that macaroni when carefully packed will retain its excellence anywhere from six months to a year. That is a very good statement for the business, but when it comes to their own table I believe few of them practise what they preach. So far as my own use is concerned I prefer the macaroni to go direct from the drying room to the oven.

"I manage my macaroni business pretty much as the average bakery is run, making deliveries once a day to regular retail stores. Where it is possible even the poorest Italians prefer to have their macaroni fresh.

"The business of manufacturing macaroni in this country is steadily on the increase. I believe that there is at least three times as much manufactured in the United States to-day as there was five years ago. This increase does not come so much from the foreign population as from the native Americans who are learning to like paste foods.

"I learned the business in Italy and France. Believing that there was a better field in America I returned to this country and built and equipped my factory.

"While the majority of my workers are women, there are several positions requiring physical strength as well as skill that I think better suited to men. When beginning I thought it necessary to have only experienced Italians in charge of all the processes. Now I hire any nationality, only making sure that they are intelligent and trustworthy.

"I open and close my factory and keep a sharp lookout over every detail. I like the business and take great pride in making sure that only the best grade goes into boxes stamped with my name.

"To any one, man or woman, thinking of going into the business I would give the advice first to hire himself or herself out in any capacity in a macaroni factory. That is about the only way to get a correct knowledge of the different processes.

"There is no manual for teaching the art of making good paste foods. There are formulas telling you to use so much water to such an amount of flour for each variety, but that is about all. The rest has to be learned by experience.

"Even the amount of water varies with different manufacturers and with different wheats. While I began using the accepted amount of water for paste I now go entirely by rules acquired by my own experience. I test every lot of flour determine the amount of water to be used.

"It is utterly impossible for me to tell in words the difference between these flours. I take a handful from a sack, squeeze it, and the way it feels tells me what proportion of water will be necessary.

"Once in a while I get hold of a flour that has a new feel. When that is the case I start in as an experimenter, putting in a little water at a time and watching the dough.

"I have a young daughter whom I am training to step into my shoes, and although she has been in the factory less than a year I am beginning to think she is a better judge of flour than I am. She has learned by following me and feeling the difference in flours."

AT 10 A. M. ALL PRAY.

A New Universal Religion That Gets Along Without Churches.

The latest thing in religions is one the members of which go to church by mail. It is the newest thought of advanced new thoughters and believers in mental science of this city, and though the church has been established only three months its founders assure one that it has already over a thousand members enrolled, in all parts of the United States.

"The principle upon which our new church is conducted is very much on the order of that of the success circles among mental scientists everywhere," one of its founders explained. "The members of a success circle select a certain time each day when all will be able to sit down together, though each in his own home, and concentrate upon success. The idea is that the thought force of all being centred upon the one thing at the same time will create a vibration for success far more powerful than if each individual concentrated for it at a different hour.

"In the New Universal Church, as we call it, all the members, no matter how remote or far apart their homes may be, begin service at exactly the same moment, and imagine themselves part of a great congregation, stretching over the whole land. The service consists of reading a portion of the Scriptures, or perhaps a selection from Buddha, or some other great religious work.

"Then comes an oral prayer, which is sent to all the members, to be recited in unison, and which is followed by a silent prayer or contemplation for a given object. This is intended to create a great thought wave or appeal for that object all over the country. Then follows a sermon which is mailed to each member, and which may be read alone or aloud in the family circle.

"It was rather hard to determine upon an hour which would be satisfactory for the people at both ends of our continent, but finally we have arranged one which falls between 10 and 11 A. M., for the majority of our members. A table giving the moment at which service should commence in every locality is mailed to all the members. We have received applications for membership from London, France and Calcutta, and soon we hope to establish our service in those countries.

"We did think in the beginning that this new church would appeal most to persons living in isolated country homes. We thought that farmers who live miles away from the nearest meeting house and who have to hitch the team right after an early breakfast to drive their families to church and whose wives have to hurry to get dinner after they return from service would be our most eager members.

"But bless you! We've discovered that the city person is often further in the woods, so far as church going is concerned, than is the man or woman living a hundred miles from civilization. The majority of our members so far come from the great cities.

"Some of our members are those who object on principle to worshipping God in costly edifices which have to be maintained at great expense, and who believe with us that each man's home should be his church and sanctuary. Then there are others who find it impossible to accept everything which any one church teaches. We have a great many invalids and shut-ins too.

"One of our great beliefs is that the best way to make people better is to make them happier. Our prayers are for health, happiness and prosperity, and our sermons are either inspirations to healthy, simple, cheerful living or are scientific explanation of the Bible lesson of the day, which can offend no one.

"Our creed? Now, when we get down to that we find that there is absolutely nothing new under the sun after all. Our creed is exactly that expounded by Benjamin Franklin in 1732, when he thought of establishing a universal church not unlike ours. Franklin's creed was: There is one God who made all things, who governs the world and who should be worshipped by prayer. But that the most acceptable service to God is doing good to man. That the soul is immortal.

"That is the creed of the new church too. Every member may differ on other points of faith. They may be Christians, Buddhists or Mohammedans. They may think of God as a personality or not, just so that their belief is one which helps them to grow better and happier. We have members belonging to every Protestant creed already, besides Christian Scientists and mental scientists."

WOMAN TICKET AGENT'S WOE.

She's Out in a Brooklyn Suburb Where Nobody Has Any Change.

"This life would be pleasant enough were it not for the problem of keeping enough change on hand to supply the needs of the office," said the woman ticket agent at the far end of one of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit lines. "You see, the company only allows us $5 in change to begin the day's business with, and the very first man who comes through could wipe that out if I would allow him to.

"More than once I have defended my little pile of quarters, nickels and dimes by trusting the person for the carfare until the next morning, and that I never lost any money by it speaks well for the general honesty of folks out this way. Many persons who offer me bills of from $1 up have the necessary change in their pocket but think they are really doing me a favor by relieving me of the change so that I won't have so much trouble counting up at night.

"Were it not for the fact that I can't spare the change there would be a lot of truth in that view of the case. We have to itemize our receipts when we quit work at night and it is much easier to itemize the bills than the currency.

"The ticket agents downtown naturally are free from troubles such as mine, because they can send a porter down to the street and get all the change they want. The nearest store here is a quarter of a mile away, and the porter who takes care of my stove is fireman of half a dozen others along the line, so you can see what a chance I would have to send out for silver. Maybe some day all my customers will learn that it is much more convenient for all concerned to buy a dollar's worth of tickets at a time, and then we will all be happy."

Famous Diamond in Hiding.

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

If the Regent diamond, as shown in the Louvre, is only a model in paste, and the real stone is hidden away, it is a case of history repeating itself.

In 1792, when the Regent diamond was pawned for house furniture to Vandenberg, a banker of Amsterdam, and he was remonstrated with upon the danger of exhibiting it to the public, he replied: "The Regent that is in the glass case is a sham; the real Regent is in my wife's stays!"

FOR BRYAN AND A HAIR CUT

ROBERTSON HASN'T BEEN AT THE BARBER'S SINCE 1896.

That "Cross of Gold" Speech Inspired Him to Bet the Wrong Way—Anxious About His Chances for a Shave This Year, as They Depend on a Democratic Victory.

MACON, Mo., April 11.—If Bryan or some other Democrat is elected President of the United States this year Uncle Thomas Benton Robertson of this city will immediately hike to a barber shop for a shave and a hair cut. Then he will draw on a Quincy bank for $100 which has been lying there to his credit since 1896.

When Mr. Robertson read Bryan's "cross of gold" speech that stampeded the Democratic convention in Chicago in 1896 he threw his hat in the air and shouted "Glory!" His cousin, Charles Winfield of Quincy, Ill., suggested there might be a slip between the cup and the Nebraskan's lips.

"Don't you believe it," said Robertson. "That man's going to be President. I'm so sure of it that I will agree here and now never again to shave or cut my hair until he or some other Democrat is President."

"Pshaw!" said Winfield, "you're only talking, but I'll tell you what I'll do. If you keep that pledge I'll give you $200 the day a Democrat is elected and will deposit $100 to your credit at Quincy."

Robertson was only 56 then and was tall and a fine looking man. He was more than ordinarily careful about his personal appearance, and Winfield didn't think he would run the risk of becoming a freak.

But the Bryan admirer accepted the challenge, and has faithfully kept his compact through all the defeats of the "inspired son." He hopes Bryan may be elected this fall, but he looks rather wistful when he discusses his chances.

When Bryan was here a couple of years ago he learned about his martyr friend and made an earnest effort to have a chat

THOMAS BENTON ROBERTSON.

with him after the meeting, but Mr. Robertson had gone home and that pleasure was denied the perennial candidate.

Allowing one shave a week at 10 cents and eight hair cuts a year, Mr. Robertson figures he is $86.40 to the good for the twelve years, but he confesses he would greatly enjoy the luxury of lifting the boycott against the barbers. He keeps his hair from making him conspicuous by wearing it plaited on top of his head.

His widowed daughter, with whom he lives, earns 50 cents a week for attending to this feature of his makeup. The hair has grown out long and bright, like fine silken threads, and glistens over the patriot's shoulders like a silver sheen. He's as proud of it as a village belle over her golden tresses, and yet he hopes that he will soon be able to part with it and keep his vow.

"I've been a Democrat all my life, as my father was before me," said Mr. Robertson. "My first vote was cast for Stephen A. Douglas for President, and I don't recollect ever having scratched a Democratic ticket, municipal, county, State or national except once, when a good neighbor and friend ran for Sheriff on the Republican ticket. I voted for him and he was elected. With that solitary exception the record is absolutely clear.

"It was a little funny the way I came to make this pledge. The country was wild over the money question, and after that speech of Bryan's I thought he had a walkover. If I had been a betting man I would have put up a big sum on him, but I had enough sporting blood in me to back my judgment anyhow.

"Say, you read the papers pretty close. What's the chance for our getting our man in? About time, don't you think?"

Mr. Robertson was born near Quincy, Ill., in 1840. His parents moved to Missouri two years later and settled in Knox county. Since 1858 he has been the owner and operator of a portable sawmill, and is in that business now.

He is as strong as any of the stalwart fellows who work for him. A few years ago he had a wrestling bout in which he defeated one of the biggest and most powerful men of this town. He is inclined to imagine that his long locks have something to do with his strength.

"If you get this story up right, and don't stretch it too bad," said Mr. Robertson, "I'm going to send Mr. Bryan a copy of the paper and ask him if it isn't about time I cut my hair. I'm going to put it directly up to him."

Only Girl in 90 Miles.

From the Los Angeles Times.

Miss May Ferrington, now attending the Girls Collegiate School in Los Angeles, lives a part of each year on her father's great ranch near Crater, in Mono county, on the border of the Yosemite Park, and she is the only girl within a radius of ninety miles.

Hither every summer Uncle Sam sends a squadron of cavalry to guard the park, and the khaki clad scouts have voted this slim little maid the queen of the whole wide countryside. She has yellow hat cords, buttons and trophies galore. She has a spare did chain of tiny gold nuggets for beads, and the men of the squadron presented to her a uniform of their companies—blue, with yellow cavalry stripes on the jaunty skirt.

Her gentle sway over her soldier subjects included inspection at stated intervals, when the young commandant by brevet rode her prancing steed up and down the lines of mounted soldiers.