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The Old Mill.

One hundred years the mill has stood;
One hundred years the dashing flood
Has turned the wheel with roaring sound,
Through foaming waters, round and round

One hundred years: and overhead
The same broad roof of blue is spread
And in the meadows, bright and green,
The miller's children still are seen.

And thus the world is still the same;
The sunset clouds are turned to flame;
And while we live, and while we die,
The lark still carols in the sky.

And others rise to fill our place;
We sleep, and others run the race;
And earth beneath and skies above
Are still the same; and God is love.

The Absent One.

Oh, silence of the night, whose voice alone is sweet,
When hers is lost to me—
Mysterious ray that falls about the mossy feet
Of yonder shading tree—
Tell me if that her eye, when others soundly sleep,
Rekindles soft its sun,
And if my darling friend, while I my vigil keep,
Recalls the absent one!
When in the blue aloft the moon floods with her light
The forest and the sky—
What time the bells that to the vesper prayer invite,
Chime and vibrate and die—
Tell me if that her soul to their sweet harmony
Responds in unison,
And if to her that chime of peaceful melody
Recalls the absent one!

JOHN'S PROMISE.

An Incident of Western Pioneer Life.

Sumner was a mushroom city which had sprung up on the banks of a ravine that cut through the western bluffs of the Missouri. In a thicket of oak saplings, high up on the side of one of those bluffs, stood a hastily built house, sided with rough, upright cottonwood boards, a rusty stovepipe sticking through the roof; a small window, curtained by a scollop edged newspaper; and a white door taken from a sunken steamboat, whose nicely finished panels contrasted strangely with its surroundings, complicting the exterior.

One pleasant May evening, just as the shrill whistle of a steamboat echoed among the hills, this door was opened by a pleasant young woman, who was followed by a crying child.

"Oh, Sammy, quit your noise; that's pappy's little man; see the great boat way yonder;" lifting him up; "don't you see? look right sharp now, close ag'in' the bank. Does Sammy want to go down town and see the big boat, and see pappy?" The willing feet toddled down the path; but the mother called: "Wait a bit, and mammy 'll pack Sammy;" and, tying on a pink sunbonnet, she took him in her arms and started down the crooked path.

She reached the steep main street to find it filled with wagons that had been turned crosswise of the street, to rest the teams. But, edging her way close to the clay bank, she reached the river just as the steamer was leaving the wharf. The snorting of the engine and the shouting of the deck hands, together with the puffing of the mill near by, was too much for baby bravery, and Sammy's lip begun to quiver. Catching him in her arms, his mother sat down on a sawlog, saying: "There, there, honey, don't be afeared, be pappy's man, now."

The tide waves of the receding boat sunk lower and lower on the sand; the gay crowds that leaned over the guards grew indistinct, and she peered more and more eagerly in among the tall cottonwood trees on the opposite shore. At length four men came out of the woods, and, entering a skiff, started across the river. She watched the skiff anxiously, for it frequently disappeared between the waves which were raised by the strong south wind.

Four rough looking men, in red woolen shirts—for lumbermen did not pretend to wear coats except in the coldest weather—jumped out of the skiff, and, with boisterous laughter and rude jests, entered the mill. Presently one of them spies her and came toward her saying, boisterously: "Hoorah for you, Nancy! Whatever brought you'un down 'ere this time of evenin'! Mighty fine doin's, when you oughter be to home gettin' your old man a bite o' supper! Packed that young 'un down, too, I'll bet! Reckon you'd as well get back right quick, now!" She snatched the baby from her and tossed him on his shoulder, shouting: "Hoorah for pappy's man! Peertest boy in this 'ere town! Mighty proud to see his pap!" Poor Nancy! Her husband was drunk again.

She hurried up the street, pinning her deep sunbonnet more closely about her face, that the passers might not see the tears that would come. He had kept sober so long that she had hoped he would come home sober again. She had anticipated so much pleasure of meeting him, after his week's absence. How often she had thought of it in those long, lonely nights, when she had only her child and her thoughts for company.

It took but a few minutes to put supper on the table. Then she sat down on the doorstep to watch for her husband, worrying all the time lest he let something happen to Sammy. When at last he came the effects of the liquor were wearing off, and he ate his supper and smoked his pipe in sullen silence. She could not eat a mouthful, but she dared not let the tears come, for she knew that it would make him angry. So she fed Sammy, laying her face on his little head once in a while, to force back the choking lump that kept rising in her throat. Then she hastened to rock him to sleep, lest his fretfulness should disturb his father.

The first peep of dawn found her busily preparing breakfast, for she knew that John wanted an early start. The sound of the coffeemill woke him from his heavy sleep, and he lay quietly watching her by the light of the dim lamp, as she moved quickly back and forth from table to stove; from thence to the little row of shelves, in lieu of a cupboard, setting on the dishes, watching the bacon, and taking the crisp corn dodger from the oven. "She is a dear, good wife," thought he; "what a scoundrel I was to make her feel so badly." He knew that he had been rough to her the night before. He wished that he could remember what he said. Of course he never got dead drunk, but he wished that he could forever let whisky alone.

His breakfast was just to his liking, and his wife as cheerful as if he was the best man in the world. He wanted to say something pleasant to break the awkward silence, but he did not know how to begin. He had an uncomfortable feeling that he ought to beg her pardon; but, being a man, of course he did not condescend to that. At length he begun by saying: "You was right peart about your breakfast this mornin', Nancy."

"Oh, I allowed most likely you'd want to get off soon," she answered.

"Yes, Jones wants us there ag'in sun-up. It's only a fifty-log raft; reckon we can get it down to Leavenworth ag'in the night train starts, and I'll get right on, and be back to Atchison afore day. Don't catch me foolin' away another day 'round that old fort."

"Oh, John! I'm so proud!"—she paused abruptly, for his eyes dropped with a look of conscious shame. What mood was he in? Would it do to speak then? He had shoved back from the table, and there was a serious, far-away look in his eyes, but nothing sullen or forbidding.

She went around, and dropping on her knees beside him, slipped her arms out his neck, saying: "Oh, John, I wish you'd promise me you'd never drink any more whisky."

"That's most too hard on a fellow; but I'll promise not to—not drink too much ag'in," he answered.

"But I'm afeard that wouldn't do any good."

"You talk like you thought I hadn't sense enough to stop when I've got enough, if I try," he exclaimed.

"Oh, John, don't talk so; you know you promised me that nigh onto a year ago; but you think you'll just take one dram, and then just one more, and afore you know it, it's too much. If you'd only promise me now that you'd never taste nary drop ag'in."

Still he kept his eyes steadily turned away from hers.

"Don't you mind, now," she went on, "how your mother said one time: 'I reckon, Nancy, you count John a mighty rough chap, but he's all right at the core'? and don't you mind how she used to pray for you in them old times? Don't you mind the evenin' we heard her prayin' down by the old spring? If she's watching you among the stars, how proud she'd be to hear you promise. And John," she continued, dropping her voice to a whisper, "I pray, too, sometimes. I have never told you, but I've been feeling right serious here of late. I've taken to readin' my Bible, and I've just made up my mind to live better'n I used to; and pray for you, too, and it seems like God hears me." And she laid her head on his shoulder to hide her tears.

His arms slipped around her, but he still kept his eyes turned stubbornly away from hers. At last, laying his face against hers, he spoke earnestly: "Yes, Nancy, I promise."

Presently, starting up, he exclaimed: "If I haven't stayed till plum daylight!"

"Oh, John! come and kiss baby afore you go, he looks so sweet. Sammy! Sammy! wake up, honey, and kiss pappy!"

"Bless his sleepy eyes! Pappy's little man! I'll bring him some candy when I come home ag'in."

All day Nancy went about with such a light, cheery heart as she had not carried in her bosom for many a day; singing snatches of old hymns, and thinking happy, hopeful thoughts of him who, all those long hours, was working his rudder against the strong current of the Missouri.

That evening the stars shone brightly down upon her, when she knelt by the little window, and asked God's blessing on her husband and his good resolutions.

But she was awakened, a few hours afterward, by a rush and confusion, a shower of glass and hail across her bed; and, catching her baby in her arms, she sprung up, frightened and bewildered. It was a terrible storm; one long to be remembered by all who felt its terrors. The deafening roar of the wind and hail almost drowned the loud thunder. A blinding flash of lightning showed the trees almost bent to the ground, and the house rocked to and fro like a cradle.

She suddenly felt a new, strange feeling, as if she was flying, floating, through the air. She thought that she was dizzy, and caught hold of the bed.

A terrible crash—she never knew how it all happened! Her baby's cries aroused her. The wind and rain chilled her through. She started to spring up, but something held her down. A shock of pain darted over her, and, putting out her hand, she felt a great beam lying heavily across her limbs. It seemed as though it was crushing her. Something struck her, then another, and another. How they stung? Oh! was her child unsheltered from that pitiless storm? His screams grew louder. Oh! she must reach him! She could see nothing through the thick darkness, but she knew that he was not far off. What if he, too, was fastened, crippled! She stretched her arms; every movement made her pain more excruciating. She strained every nerve, she could almost reach him. What if he was free and could come to her? "Oh, Sammy! Sammy!" she called, "come to mammy." The child ceased crying. She heard him move. His warm body touched her hands, that were groping in the darkness. She caught him in her arms and hugged him to her breast. She felt of his head, his arms, his feet; sound and whole. How thankful she was for that. But how those cruel nailstones must have bruised him. She rested him on the ground and crouched over him; she could move just enough for that. The frightened child ceased crying, and put his arms about her neck. If she could only find something to cover them from the storm. She reached around, but could touch only cold mud.

Oh! that terrible pain! She had almost forgotten it in her anxiety for her child. It grew more and more intolerable. It seemed as though the hailstones struck through into her brain. What if they killed her! Was she afraid to die? Visions of eternity, of the heaven of her faith, rose before her. Should she dwell with God and the angels forever? Was it possible that there would never be an end? No, she was not afraid of death. But her child, her husband—how could she leave them? Not yet! No, no, when life opened before her! She must live to help John keep his promise. God would spare her for that. How long would it be until morning? How could she bear the pain so long? Oh, it would be terrible if John should come and find her lying there, cold and stiff. John did love her, oh! so well. He had loved her so long. It seemed so many years since he first told her that he loved her; it was on the mountain side, in dear old Tennessee. How far away it seemed. How the sun shone and the birds sung. How dreamy and bewildered her thoughts were. How still the baby was. Yes, she could feel his heart beat. She no longer felt the pelting of the storm; had it ceased?

Her thought was answered by a rush of wind from a new direction. She felt the great weight lifting off from her. She was free. Then—something struck her.

* * * * * * *

The train went snorting into Winthrop just at daylight. John jumped off, and was the first to reach the ferry. He had never seen Atchison so quiet. With the exception of those who had crossed on the ferry, and a few early risers who were hurrying up the street, the town seemed asleep; but as he passed up the street he saw a man who was riding a mule coming down in great haste, who cried out: "How d'ye, John?"

"Why, Jake!" he replied, "is that you? I allowed you was half way to Denver afore now."

"We started yesterday, but we had a powerful storm on the prairie out here last night. We chanced to be right near to a house and they let us in; but it sent our old wagons rolling over and over across the prairie, and our oxen all stampeded; I'm on the hunt of them now."

"It don't look like it had reached Atchison."

"No; I reckon it just took a streak."

John hurried on down the river. The road ran so near the bank that the steady swash of the water seemed under his feet. The birds were singing in the trees, and the sunshine came creeping down the bluffs overhead. How eager he was to get home that morning. His heart was full of new plans and new purposes. He could keep his promise, and he would; he would never make Nancy's heart ache again by breaking that promise. He stopped suddenly—had the storm reached Sumner? The tall buildings along the wharf were leaning roofless, one this way, another that, as if the wind, coming over the bluffs, had reached just low enough to unroof them. He hastened around the foot of the hill; there lay the brick hotel, the boast of the town, in scattered fragments on the ground, like a wasps' nest scattered by the housekeeper's broom. He looked around; three-fourths of the town lay in ruins. How was it with his home? He ran up the street until he could see where it stood. Gone! Not a vestige of it left. And his family? Perhaps they had escaped before the storm; perhaps. Scarce knowing what he did, he hurried to the nearest house that was yet standing, and without ceremony opened the door. There was no one in the room, but on a couch in one corner a white sheet "sunk to the still proportions" of two silent forms. Moved by some strange impulse, he turned back the covering that shrouded the faces—Nancy and the baby!

Shocked, stunned, he sunk on his knees and laid his face on that dear form. Who can describe, who can comprehend, the utter desolation of that hour? None but those who have felt it. Oh, the thoughts and memories that crowded upon him—many of them bitter, regretful thoughts. But there was one memory for which he was thankful: that he had not listened to the tempter which whispered to him yestermora, that it would be weak and unmanly to yield to her request.

They found him there an hour afterward, but he asked no questions, made no reply to their attempts at consolation, and they left him alone with his dead.

Cost of Making a President.

"The American people," said an English writer on our politics, "is perpetually voting for some election or other." Somebody, it might be added, has to bear the expense of these perpetual elections. Just what the expense is, in a general canvass like that which has just drawn to a close, it is difficult to estimate with any approach to accuracy; for there are no statistics extant upon the subject, and the politicians who plan and conduct campaigns are naturally reticent upon such matters. It is plain, however, that there must be a heavy outlay of money. The printing and distribution of campaign documents, the rental of public halls, the pay of stump speakers, the purchase of banners, torches, uniforms and other paraphernalia; the expense of postage and telegraphing—all these are necessary outlays, and when the extent to which they are carried throughout the country is borne in mind it becomes very apparent that the aggregate must be enormous. A paragraph has lately been going the rounds of the press, to the effect that the strenuous campaign in Indiana preparatory to the recent State election consumed ten million dollars. This is, of course, wild exaggeration, based upon a mere random guess. An estimate that seems to us not far from the truth places the average cost of a Presidential election at about one million five hundred thousand dollars for each of the great opposing parties, or a total of three million dollars. Accepting this as within the bounds of probability, it would seem that the expense of putting a President into the White House is fifteen times greater than the whole amount of salary paid to the incumbent during his term of four years. Calling the population of the country about forty millions this would be equivalent to a tax of seven and one-half cents a head for every man, woman and child in the United States. The maintenance of the court of France for the first year of the second empire was less than two cents per head of the population. It appears that the cost of making a President may be greater than that of keeping a prince.

The expense of our elections, however, are borne mainly by voluntary contribution. The burden falls chiefly on wealthy partisans who expect to share in some way the benefits ensuing from the election of their candidate. It takes the form of a tax only in the case of office holders, who are assessed for election expenses by the party in power. The burden touches the people remotely and indirectly, if at all, while in reality they derive an actual and immediate benefit. The various devices by which their sympathy and support are solicited awaken a more active interest in public affairs, and the masses thereby acquire the rudiments of political education, instead of remaining in apathy and ignorance of the condition of the country and the administration of the government. Great as the costs of our elections may be, they cannot be lamented as an unmitigated burden upon the people.—*New York Herald.*

A Town Inundated.

Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, was inundated on the night of the third and the morning of the fourth of October. On the third of October dark clouds begun to gather over the doomed city, followed by a furious wind, accompanied by a deluge of rain. Toward the dawn of the fourth the downpour begun to abate, and there was some prospect of its cessation; but at about eight A. M. the rain recommenced, without causing much alarm at first; but suddenly, from the direction of the Sierras, a dull, rumbling sound was heard, approaching every moment nearer, till at last an overwhelming flood of muddy waters, sweeping along in their headlong course great trees and masses of rock, burst upon the hapless city, penetrating into its inmost recesses.

The people of the city were at breakfast when the flood burst in upon them, rising almost instantaneously to a height of one or two yards in the houses. Don Florencio Arce, a comfortable merchant, tried to save his daughter, who was ill. He ran to the yard, but stuck fast in the mud; a wall fell and killed him on the spot, breaking both the legs of his daughter, who was rescued with great difficulty, but she died. The wife of Don Jesus Trinidad, another well-to-do merchant, trusted her life to a rope that had been tied across the street. But the rope gave way, and she was swept off by the flood, drowned before the eyes of her own husband and sons, who were helpless to save her.

On the morning of the fifth of October the flood had subsided, and the streets of Managua were once more, though not without some danger, passable. The victims are six men and women, and five or six children in the city, and seven big and little of both sexes in the Sierras.

A Wonderful Horse.

Startle, one of Robert Bonner's horses, recently trotted a quarter of a mile in thirty-two and one-half seconds. A noted horseman who witnessed the feat says: When all the facts are considered, the performance was certainly the most wonderful ever made. Startle accomplished the feat so easily, and finished so well within himself, that I was convinced that, great as was the performance, he was capable of readily accomplishing a still greater. Startle, in his physical conformation, is a marvel of power, and the fact that a horse of his size could draw a wagon a 2:10 gait under such unfavorable circumstances, and without any special preparation, stamps him as the most wonderful horse of the age.

THE HORRORS OF WAR.

The Battle of Djanis—3,000 Servians Deserted—How the Wounded Prisoners Were Treated.

A correspondent of the London *Telegraph* writes: Thus they came on, and presently opened so fearful a rifle fire that the bullets fell around us all like hail. As yet our infantry were quiet; not a rifle was heard, and the foe was coming nearer to the semi-circular trenches of which I have before spoken. Suddenly there is a movement in the bushes, a sharp note from the Bugle, a rattle of bayonets and steel barrels, and then a little cheer. Our men are moving, the supports are taking the empty trenches, and the rest of each battalion is in the reserve lines. All at once such a fire pours forth as envelops you in smoke, and makes that still advancing column stagger. Yet only for a minute; there is a counter cheer and a rapid rush. Whirr! how the bullets fly past them; with what shrieks do the shells bound in! See, the Servians are standing still for a moment, firing yet, but coming no nearer to the mountain. Their line is gradually being fed, too, and they are extending every moment. It is only the fear of the shells and the bullets which makes them hesitate. Perhaps not only the fear, but rather the effect, for now they are falling fast, and without the aid even of a glass we can see that they are strewing the ground by hundreds or staggering away to die. Harder than ever is our fire, as theirs weakens, and more determined, too, are our men, for they now quit the outpost trenches and are advancing upon the bewildered enemy. Volley after volley from the foe fails to stop them; they leave many a comrade on the ground, but on they go, till at length the Servians, seeing their red fezes coming nearer and nearer, turn and fly, deserting 3,000 of their number, who will never see home in Russia or on the banks of the Danube any more. * * * Not one was there but might have been the hardy father of a numerous family. I did not see a boy among them. One in particular I noticed—and he was but a type of the rest—a tall, well made, broad shouldered warrior, who, having fought to his uttermost and received a wound in the stomach, had lain down upon the road to Derbent in hope of succor. Unhappily for him, friends were far away, and his comrades had hung in fantastic fashion, on a tree hard by, a Turkish spy, having fallen into their hands, had been first tortured and put to death. I was looking at him as I rode by, wondering if he were yet alive, when, horrible to relate, there came upon the scene four Chirkessoes. They, too, had seen their hanging comrade, and they thirsted for blood. At this moment the wounded Servian raised his head and rolled his glassy eyes round in hope of descrying help. Down sprung a Circassian, and with a little dagger pierced the dying man through and through, cut off his right hand, and ripped him up as he lay upon the ground. Fortunately his end was near, and he expired; but even in death he was a handsome giant, this victim to the barbarous war which Russia has caused and waged.

Desecration of Lincoln's Tomb.

The attempted desecration of the tomb of the late President Lincoln is one of those stories which would seem to belong to imaginative rather than real crime. It is difficult to believe that even the worst of criminals would plan and endeavor to execute such a project. Had it succeeded the whole world would have regarded it with horror, and we may well believe that the expectation of a ransom with which the crime was planned would have led to the final detection of the criminals, even if they had succeeded in concealing their purpose until its accomplishment. The later developments in regard to the attempted desecration, says a letter from Springfield, Ill., shows that it was the consummation of a most determined and deep laid conspiracy, in which no novices in the criminal art were engaged. The community were at first so horrified by the discovery of the midnight attempt that they hastily jumped to a conclusion that something of either political or sectional significance attached to the crime; but it is now definitely known that the sole motive or object was the obtaining of a great ransom for restitution of the remains. The Lincoln Monument Association, composed of leading citizens of the State, have raised a large amount of money and erected a splendid monument which, with its fine surroundings, is the point of interest to all visitors here. It was conjectured by the would-be robbers that the association, the citizens of Springfield and the people of Illinois, as of the Union, would pay an immense sum to recover the body. It was to be another "Charley Ross" outrage, with much larger possibilities in the way of rewards.

Ex-Chief Elmer Washburn was called in to aid in the capture, which would have been complete, with conclusive evidence, while all were in the crypt, but for an unfortunate accident. As the detectives emerged from their hiding place, one hundred feet from the vault entrance, one of them in examining his pistol accidentally discharged it. The robbers instantly fled and disappeared in the wood, which is but a few rods distant. The names of the parties engaged are all withheld by the officers, who say they can be had when wanted, but they are alleged to be among the shrewdest managers of gigantic crimes on this side of the water. The first inkling of the affair was known in June last, the details having been overheard in a house in a Northern city, and was soon reported to parties interested here. Since that time Robert Lincoln and Hon. Leonard Swett, of Chicago, have constantly been on the alert, and by means of several fortuitous circumstances were able to prevent what certainly would have been a most horrible sacrilege. The monument is now closely guarded.

Did She Mistake.

She led Lim to a sofa, and in a deep bass voice called him her soul's idol, and inquired what his monthly income was. Seeing his gaze fixed on her boa constrictor-like mouth, she remarked: "Darling, I see you notice my large and beautiful potato trap; let me explain to you the reason of its unusual size. When I was quite a child I was playing on pappy's cellar door; it gave way; I was precipitated down into the basement, and caught by the mouth on a projecting meat hook, which ripped up my face and extended my mouth several inches." With his eyes full of sympathetic tears he rose from the sofa, and replied, as he made toward the door: "My angel, you are perhaps mistaken. Probably, in the excitement of that awful moment, you left your mouth down in the basement, and accidentally brought up the cellar. We shall meet again in a better world. Adieu."

STOPPED FOOLING.—At the opera house in Cincinnati, one of the attendants at a menagerie played a trick upon the elephant. He offered the animal a quid of tobacco, which was thankfully received. Within a quarter of an hour the young gentleman fell a victim to retributive justice. While he was standing in the center of a small group the elephant's trunk wound about him and tossed him into the air.

Tweed as a Fireman.

It is known that Wm. M. Tweed, whose case is now attracting so much attention, commenced his political career in New York as foreman of a fire company. "Big Six" was the name of the company and "Big Six" has been attached to Tweed's name ever since. A New York paper gives some incidents of this company, and of Tweed's connection with it. It says: Upon the occurrence of the Hague street explosion, at an early hour in the day, Tweed and his company were among the first to reach the scene of the catastrophe, and to them was committed the task of extricating the living and dead from the ruins. Faithfully and laboriously did they toil, remaining upon the ground all that day and night until three o'clock in the morning of the next, while the members of other companies retired after several hours of labor.

The term "Big Six," applied to the American engine, originated from the fact that at the time of the reorganization of No. 6 the city had caused to be constructed four engines of the Philadelphia pattern, two of the largest of which were assigned to reorganized companies, assuming the prefix "big" to distinguish them from their predecessors. Niagara company thus became known among firemen as "Big Four," and American as "Big Six." In this connection it is interesting to note the gradual and successive changes time and circumstances have wrought in the size and fashion of the engines used by our volunteer fire department during the last half century of its existence. Originally companies employed the primitive style of fire engine, destitute of the power of suction, yet furnished with a "goose neck," which term denotes a species of universal joint attached to the tube running down into the fire chambers, to which joint could be screwed the discharge pipe, rendering it capable of being turned in any direction by the pipeman, who played directly on the fire from his station on top of the case containing the air chambers. To supply water for this machine the citizens were pressed into service, each house being by law compelled to keep hanging in the hall near the street a number of leathern buckets, inscribed with the owner's name. Upon an alarm of fire in the neighborhood, each householder tossed his collection of buckets into the street, to be picked up by passers-by hurrying to the conflagration. At the fire the bucket holders were formed into two lines, extending from the engine to the various town pumps in the vicinity, the one line to pass the buckets when filled to the engine, which had a box at the rear end to receive the water, and the second line to return the empty ones to the pumpers. After the fire was extinguished, the buckets were piled in a huge pyramid in front of the city hall, and on the morrow the park swarmed with colored servants in search of the property of their respective masters.

As the fire department had for many years exercised strong local political influence, and even claimed the office of register as a reward for the faithful service of a popular chief engineer, the foreman of "Big Six" naturally aspired to municipal representation of the ward in which he dwelt. Consequently he ran for the aldermanship of the Fourth ward, but was defeated. Chagrined at this untoward result, the company persuaded their foreman to remove from Vandewater to Rutgers street, and he was there placed in nomination for assistant alderman of the Seventh ward. His election laid the foundation of a prolonged political career, his influence speedily extending over the Congressional district, proven through his election as representative over Conrad Swackhamer, a prominent political leader, and editor of the *Democratic Review*. Only once was he defeated, and then in a contest for the aldermanship.

The Nail District of Birmingham.

On a murk winter's night, in the olden time, when the fires from the blast furnaces, and the lurid flames of some ignited pit mound, were all aglow, the music of the nailing hammers of Birmingham, England, might be heard all the country round. From the little huts or sheds, dotted here and there upon the broken landscape, with an utter absence of order or convenience, as though the mighty geological operations underneath had shaken them into the most unlikely places, the gleam of the hearth fires would shine from the open shutters, and the merry songs of the workers, male and female, sung at the very topmost pitch of their voices, might be heard a mile away. Up to ten or eleven o'clock at night would these sounds continue—no unusual circumstance in a district where labor never seems to rest, but where the roaring furnaces and the great rolling wheels go on unceasingly day and night. Through the open loophole, the whole art and mystery of nail making could be witnessed by any passer-by. The nailer would have the ends of three or four rods in the fire, and taking out the one which had been in longest, after a pull or two at the bellows to bring it to a welding heat, he would taper down the point upon his anvil, at the same time making a shoulder for the head. He would then hold it over a chisel or cutting punch, stuck upright at the side of his anvil, and, giving it one tap with his hammer, cut it halfway through, an iron stop in front of the punch giving him the exact guage for the length. He would then turn down the point of the half-severed nail into a steel instrument called a *bore* (the top of which formed a mold for the head), and twist it off, and then, with a few smart blows, he would beat it down until the head was spread out sufficiently, and assumed the required shape, the nail just turning from red to black as he gave it the finishing tap. As his rods got too short, he would weld or "shut" two of them together, and put a new rod in the fire; and so on, with the regularity of clockwork, probably, in a thousand nails, not one varying the number of blows upon each.

English Statistics.

The returns for 1874 show that sixty-nine of the 526,632 persons whose deaths were registered in England in that year were stated to be one hundred years old, or upward. These centenarians comprised sixteen men and fifty-three women; and the oldest were six widows, described as being 104 years old. Of the fifty-three women all but eight are registered as being widows. Among the whole sixty-nine there is only one who is styled a gentleman; one of the men is described as a pensioner, one woman as an annuitant, and another woman (one hundred years old) as a "ward in Chancery."

A Bright Omen.

Just as the long procession of people who had attended the last day of the Exhibition were slowly and reluctantly wending their way toward the exit gates of the Centennial grounds, the leaden clouds which had veiled the sky during the whole of the day were parted in the west and a glorious glow of sunset overspread the inclosure. The grand towers of the Main building were illuminated with golden light. Auspicious omen! May it bring in its train all the bright anticipations which it started instinctively in the minds of those who beheld it!

The Heat of the Sun.

At a meeting of the academy of sciences, Prof. Rose's naval experiments were discussed. A paper was read as follows: On no one of the unsettled questions of science is there so wide a discrepancy as in respect to the values set on the actual heat of the surface of the sun. Estimates have been furnished by Herschel and Secchi that place it at 10,000,000 deg.; by Ericsson at 4,000,000; and on the other hand, by French physicists of repute at a point a little over that of a blast furnace—say 1,500 degrees centigrade. This is a monstrous discrepancy for skilled experimenters. The difference in results depends upon the mode of working the problem, and the assumption involved. The large estimates come from following Newton's law that temperature increases as radiation does. The smaller estimates come from applying Dulong and Petit's law, in which temperature is a function of radiation; a function that reaches its practical extreme when it is pushed beyond a temperature of two thousand degrees.

Strange to say, the direct and simultaneous comparison of the sun's heat and that from terrestrial sources has not yet been made. As an approximate mode of inquiry, Prof. S. P. Langley determined to compare the light of the sun with that from the molten iron poured out of the Bessemer converter. The experiments were made at the Edgar Thomson steel works, where every facility was given. The galvanometer could not be used for measuring comparative heats, because that instrument is at once affected by the movement of large masses of iron in its vicinity. The Ritchie type of photometer was employed; Prof. Langley described its construction and merits. In using it he was placed under great disadvantage from the continuous changes in the position of the Bessemer converter. The heliostat arrangement to give a beam of the sun for comparison, had to be as continually shifted; the observer sat on a window sill in uncomfortable proximity to the furnace operations. The details of the experiment need not be given here. The first conclusion reached was that the sun's light, which turns the light from the molten steel into a black spot, must be at least fifty times the greater. Then the spectroscope was employed and the two rays compared. The steel rays were again blotted out. Hence the sun's rays must have been at least sixty-four times brighter. Next Prof. Langley made comparisons of the sun's rays with those from the flame above the converter, when the latter were at their brightest. This was a less difficult proceeding, and furnished more specific results. The photometric comparison could be made directly. It is admitted, however, that the flame light may not be quite so bright as that of the molten steel. The arrangement was somewhat like that of a camera obscura. It gave the image of the sun so accurately that sun spots could be easily examined; it also gave an exact representation of the furnace flame. Each was alternately superposed on the other. The conclusion is that the sunlight is at least 2,168 times brighter than the furnace flame. As the heat is presumably of the same relative order, the result is adverse to the law of Dulong and Petit. The actual heat of the sun is probably among the higher values that have been suggested.

Novelties in Millinery.

Glove kid is coming into use for bonnets, says Harper's *Bazar*. A very few have been imported, but they are preferred by Parisiennes to the finest felts or even velvet. One of pale rose pink has the fine rose kid drawn smoothly over the frame and trimmed with ostrich tips and gros grain of the same shade.

The Benoiton, or scarf of silk passed under the chin, is another novelty. This is a long width of soft twilled silk, either cardinal red, cream, or other shade of the trimming of the bonnet, and is in many cases bordered with fur. It is sewed to the back of the bonnet low down on the crown, is passed around to the front, muffling the neck, and is fastened on the left side. Silver fox fur or else marabout feathers trim the handsomest Benoitons. The square figured basket woven silks are also used for this purpose.

Some of the newest French hats, especially those of plush or felt, have an edge of fur that borders the face; gray and black furs are most used.

White plush, velvet, or soft felt hats chosen for dress by young ladies who dress richly. They have broad crowns, high but not pointed, are very short behind, and are trimmed around the crown with a plaited scarf. For face trimming is dark velvet of some becoming shade, or else a fringe of ostrich feathers very much curled. The newest French felts are of the *tilleul* shade, a greenish cream tint, trimmed with the same color, and contrasted with pale blue or with dark damask red. Cream colored felts have cardinal puffings under the brim, with many upturned loops of ribbon outside; the ends of the ribbon are also turned upward, and are cut into five or six sawtooth points. The pointed Mother Goose crowns and one sided bonnets have become so commonly worn that fashionable milliners are furnishing their customers with more quiet looking bonnets with broader crowns, or else regular capotes. Felt bonnets are very popular, notwithstanding the outcry against them made at the beginning of the season.

The Life of a Reporter.

I reported on a morning newspaper three years, says Mark Twain, and it was pretty hard work. But I enjoyed its attractions. Reporting is the best school in the world to get a knowledge of human beings, human nature and human ways. A nice, gentlemanly reporter—I make no differences—is well treated by everybody. Just think of the wide range of his acquaintanceship, his experience of life and society. No other occupation brings a man into such familiar social relations with all the grades and classes of people. The last thing at night—midnight—he goes browsing around after items among the police and jailbirds in the lockup, questioning the prisoners and making pleasant and lasting friendships among some of the worst people in the world. And the very next evening he gets himself up regardless of expense, puts on all the good clothes his friends have got, goes and takes dinner with the governor or commander-in-chief of the district, the United States senator and some of the upper crust of society. He is on good terms with all of them, and is present at every gathering, and has easy access to every variety of people. Why, I breakfasted almost every morning with the governor, dined with the principal clergyman and slept in the station house.

A reporter has to lie a little, of course, or they would discharge him. That is why I left it. I am different from Washington. I have a grander and higher standard of principle. Washington could not lie. I can lie, but I won't. Reporting is fascinating, but then it is so distressing to have to lie so. Lying is bad—lying is very bad. Every individual knows that by experience. I think that for a man to tell a lie—when he cannot make anything by it—is wrong.

Counting the Votes.

In 1865 Congress adopted a joint rule that if any member of either House should object to the certificate of the result of the Presidential election in any State, both Houses should withdraw and vote upon the question without delay, and unless both Houses concurred, the certificate should be rejected. But this rule has been repealed, and there is now no provision for the settlement of such a question, should it be raised. The result of the present election is so close, and the probability of some such question is so evident, that the first duty of Congress upon re-assembling will be to make provision for the contingency. The differing political sentiment of the Houses may make such action more difficult, but it should not seriously embarrass it. At present, if one House should protest against the result as declared, and withdraw, the validity of the election that might be announced would be questioned. The Constitution provides that the president of the Senate shall open the certificates, count the votes in the presence of the Senate and the House, and declare the result. This seems to imply the assent and acquiescence of both Houses, and the protest and non-concurrence of either might lead to confusion and trouble.

The rule of 1865 certainly exposed the country to some risks. If, for instance, the result in any election had depended upon New York, and objection were made upon the ground of fraud, but really for a mere party purpose, and it were sustained by a party majority in either House, the temptation would be very strong to raise a similar objection in the other House upon similar party grounds, and to sustain it in the same way and for the same purpose. The reception of the whole electoral vote was thus exposed to the whim of party spirit. It is assumed, however, by our system of government, that there are good sense and patriotism enough in the American people to curb the perils of unbridled party spirit, and the action of Congress, we have no doubt, will justify that faith. Some method might be suggested under which, if objection be made to any State return, the ground should be stated, and the question referred to a committee of equal numbers from both Houses. They should make a speedy report, and, in case of disagreement, they might call in the chief justice as arbitrator. The decision should be final. Any plan that could be devised would be open to objection. But friction and inconvenience and compromise would be very much better than any failure to determine.

The problem is not in itself difficult. Its solution demands only honest patriotism and loyalty in Congress; and if they do not exist there, the country is much more unfortunate than we believe. It is foolish for either party to insist at this time that the other is not willing to abide by the decision of the majority. If, for instance, the result of the election depends upon the vote of Louisiana, the sole question is, For whom were the majority of the votes in that State cast? Fraud can be assumed upon either side, and the assumption proves nothing. The previous action of the present returning board has indeed laid it under suspicion. But a careful survey of the canvass of votes by prominent representatives will satisfy the country. The declarations of the President were most admirable, and worthy of the chief magistrate. All that honorable Republicans and Democrats wish to know is the fact as it is.—*Harper's Weekly.*

Yankee vs. Jap.

Looking at the pottery in the Japanese bazaar, says a Centennial letter writer, I espied a flower pot which struck my fancy, and I inquired the price.

"Four dollaire," was the response of the youthful Jap.

The price smiting as well as the article, I determined to take it on my way out, and in the afternoon again approached the bazaar with that object. This time there was a leathery old Oriental in attendance, with a face like that of a wrinkled old monkey, who, being asked the price, answered:

"Eight dollaire!"

"No," I said, throwing up four fingers, "it was four dollars this morning."

The old heathen opened a mouth like a slit in a side of sole leather, and displaying a row of yellow fangs, ejaculated:

"Oh, noa, he is eight dollaire."

As I retreated, I noticed in the little garden which surrounds the bazaar the same kind of flower pot, in some of which were plants, and I tried the custodian of these, a sober, chestnut complexioned Jap.

"How much are those?"

"Six dollaire."

Again I explained they were four dollars in the morning, but was only answered by a quiet grin, and—

"Six dollaire."

Approaching the bazaar once more, I waited until the withered old swindler was called away for a few minutes, and then hailing the youngest and most amiable faced Jap I could select, I touched the flower pot and asked:

"How much?"

The youthful son of Japan picked it up, looked at it, trying to estimate its value, and then turning to me said, evidently at hazard:

"Four dollaire an half."

And I carried it off at the fourth price at which it had been offered me during the day.

A French Love Story.

Marie Gauthier, a rich heiress, between fifteen and sixteen years of age, who lived with her parents at St. Medard, was the object of many hopes among the eligible young men of the neighborhood. In addition to these, one especially ineligible sighed for the gilded beauty. His name was Theophile Parceau, his age eighteen, and his parents were humble cultivators of a small farm. His education had been good, but feeling that he could not hope to obtain the consent of the girl's father, he entered his household as a servant, with a view of daily being seen and heard by her. Within a month the heiress received his declaration and warmly responded to it, and the couple eloped.

Theophile had made a confidant of a young man, Jules Gatinaud, who was engaged to marry his sister, and seeking the couple in their retreat, he told them that the police were searching for them, and that there was no alternative but a temporary separation. He advised Theophile to escape, and offered to carry Mlle. Gauthier back to her father. Theophile acted upon his advice, but Gatinaud, instead of performing his promise, took the young lady to a wayside tavern, and thence, on the next day, to his father's house, and requested the latter to call on Mons. Gauthier and offer to find his daughter if he would promise to give her hand to his son. But Gauthier refused.

Mlle. Gauthier was, however, soon discovered and taken home. Theophile was also found, and both he and Gatinaud were arrested. The parents of Gatinaud were likewise arrested, but they were acquitted. Theophile was condemned to two years' imprisonment, and Gatinaud to three years.

On the Situation.

The London *Times* has a strong pro-Russian leading editorial article on the Eastern question. It first notices the slow progress toward an agreement about a conference and its basis, facts which are clearly not promising for its success, but declares that the worst symptom is a disposition to prescribe beforehand conditions incompatible with ideas of negotiation and compromise.