IN THE STRAITS OF MAGELLAN.

TIP END OF LAND.

Life at the Southernmost Town on the Globe.

A CONVICT COLONY'S GROWTH

In the Straits of Magellan—Good-Bye to the Andes—How Punta Arenas Was Started, Its Struggles and Its Development—A Half and Half Island.

From the Star's Travelling Commissioner.

PUNTA, ARENAS, PATAGONIA.

WHEN WE ROUNDED CAPE FROWARD—which, as every school boy knows, is the southernmost point of the western hemisphere, Cape Horn being on a tiny island, two hundred miles further south—the usual snow storm prevailed, for we are months too early in these waters for a pleasure trip, which should only be made during their brief summer time, in December, January or February. On the right gleamed a stupendous blue-green glacier, shining like glass between snowy mountains; on the left a line of wonderful craggy peaks, snow-crested all, looked like stucco work against the wintry sky, or a series of gigantic images done in plaster. Just ahead a dark mass of rock loomed up from the water's edge to a height of twelve hundred feet, joined to the range by a low strip of land; and that black mass is Cape Froward, the tip end of the southern continent, a place familiar enough in school-day annals, but which few of us expected to behold with our mortal eyes.

Directly south of it Mount Sarmiento—the most striking island mountain of the whole archipelago—rears its almost perfect pyramid .000 feet into the blue. A little farther eastward is Mount Darwin, a peak as lofty if not so famous, and south of both runs Darwin sound, on whose southern shore, in an English mission station, a few devoted men and women are striving (but without pronounced success) to christianize the benighted Terra del Fuegoans.

THE LAST OF THE ANDES.

At dinner that day the captain happened to remark that this was our very last evening within sight of the Andes, for the ship's course would change during the night so that those mountains would no longer be visible. We felt as if he had said that some old-time friends were about to bid us a final adieu, and though snow was falling and a bitter wind coating everything with ice I stole out alone from the well warmed cabin, where others were waltzing to the music of zither and guitar, for a last half hour with those glorious heights, which for two years have been ever present companions—a perpetual delight and inspiration and an unfailing solace when dangers of homesickness assailed.

From sailing due southward we had turned to the northeast, so that the sun appeared to have sunk in our wake, while a halo of crimson and gold jet lingered on the distant Andes—transfigured mountains now, no longer barren and icy, but clothed in rosy tints like a true "land of the sky." But not for long. In less time than it takes to tell it the brilliant colors faded and they became mere ghosts of mountains, shadowy and pale, wrapped in misty shrouds. In the deepening twilight they seemed to be keeping tryst with one who loved them well, standing on tip-toe and peering one over the shoulders of another to return my mute farewell—till darkness hid them from view.

FAMILY OF TERRA DEL FUEGO INDIANS.

The following morning we found ourselves at anchor off the coast of the nineteenth province of Chile, opposite Punta Arenas, the southernmost city on the face of the earth; the home of the penguin, the sea lion and the guanaco, where wind and storm and cold prevail during the greater portion of the year. And here we disembark, armed and equipped with sundry letters of introduction to the consul, the governor and other persons in authority, purposing to spend three or four weeks (until the next steamer of the line comes along and picks us up) in exploring what we can of southern Patagonia and the Islands of Terra del Fuego.

THE SOUTHERNMOST CITY.

The site of Punta Arenas, which is Spanish for "Sandy Point," was certainly not chosen for its beauty. It occupies a long spit extending out into the strait, backed by mossy fields and low hills covered with charred timber, and behind these rises a range of loftier hills covered with perpetual snow, though their altitude is barely one thousand feet.

Looking on a map of the world you will see that the town is considerably near to the south pole than any other on the globe—nearer even than the Cape of Good Hope or any inhabited island—altogether too near for any sort of comfort, for when it is not snowing in the strait it is always raining, high winds never cease their howling and a raging surf in the shallow bay prevents boats from landing about five days out of seven. The captain's log book says that squalls off the land are so very strong here as "almost to lay ships on their beam ends," and are known to seamen by the Patagonian name of williwauas. Soon as the locality is approached sails are closely reefed and all light gear made secure, for the "williwauas" usually come on without the slightest warning and for the moment blow with the fury of a hurricane.

How did it happen that a town ever grew in so distant and desolate a spot? Nearly half a century ago (in 1843, I think) the Chilean government, looking around for the most forsaken and cheerless place where human beings could possibly exist, to which they might banish certain political offenders, chose this remote corner of Patagonia, because from it there seemed no way of escape but in speedy death; and immediately afterward the penal colony of Port Famine, which had long occupied the site of San Felipe, the old Spanish town which Sarmiento founded, was removed to this point. When the prisoners, most of whom were men of intelligence and education, were driven from their northern homes, a thousand miles away, they left behind all traces of civilization as well as all hopes of return. Here they had no neighbors but the wild and warlike tribes of Patagonia and the savages of Terra del Fuego, while on the west and south the dreary wastes of the Pacific stretched away half the width of the world, on the north a great untrodden wilderness, and on the east an impassable wall of snow-clad mountains.

EARLY HARDSHIPS AND STRUGGLES.

The history of their early hardships and struggles for existence will never be known. Nobody dreamed that they would survive generation after generation, much less that they could elbow their way through such a sea of discouragements and by and by compel the mother country to acknowledge her castaways as valued citizens. Naturally their first care was to construct homes of some sort, for many of them had been accompanied into exile by their tenderly reared wives and families. Except for the lack of tools they had no great difficulty in building houses from the trees of the surrounding forest. Shell fish are abundant hereabouts, and they found the finest celery and mushrooms growing spontaneously. By experimenting they soon ascertained that certain vegetables—notably potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce—can be profitably grown during the short summer time if given very careful attention.

Their earliest care was also to establish friendly relations with the Patagonian Indians, with whom they commenced the purchase of hides and furs to sell to passing vessels. In this way the desolate sand spit began to be known as a trading post and certain ships anchored regularly in the little harbor—the English and French being particularly anxious to secure supplies of celery and mushrooms, for which they paid good prices. From time to time other prisoners were added, and though the new arrivals were not always agreeable companions there is in numbers not only strength, but increased opportunities. Gold was discovered in paying quantities and in due time the convicts organized themselves into a town which they named Punta Arenas, under certain rules and regulations. Later on a large quantity of coal was found, and that discovery marked a new era in the life of the lonesome

WOMEN OF TERRA DEL FUEGO, BETTER DRESSED THAN USUAL.

colony. They lost no time in communicating the important fact to passing vessels—their only way of advertising. Some Peruvian war ships were the first to purchase the commodity, and before long Punta Arenas became known to all European and American vessels in these waters as a convenient place to obtain supplies.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLONY.

As the condition of the colony grew better and better the land east of the town, for a distance of several miles, was divided into farms for the raising of cattle, horses, poultry and such vegetables as will grow in this latitude. Wheat will not mature, but hardy grasses were introduced from Germany, and the cattle of the section became noted as among the finest in the world, fat, round and sleek, with peculiarly soft, velvety hair. A church was built costing three thousand hard-earned dollars, followed by a school house commodious enough to hold all the children. By this time Chile began to feel proud of her distant colony and to pay it so much unwelcome attention that the liberty of the exiles was more and more restricted. A rather handsome government building was erected by order of the president, also a new cuartel or jail, and the settlement was put under military control with forty additional soldiers in uniform, ostensibly to do police duty and be ready for attacks from the long-friendly Indians.

At length, in 1877, the injudicious severity of a federal governor of that day provoked revolt among the convicts, whose numbers had been so many times augmented by reinforcements of all classes of criminals from every prison in Chile that the respectable pioneers, to whom belonged all the credit of prosperity, were an unconsidered minority. The desperate revolters overcame their keepers, set fire to the houses and forced all the officials and peaceable inhabitants to fly to the forests. For a time pandemonium prevailed, until, by some fortunate accident, a Chilian war vessel reached Sandy Point while disorder was at its height, when the insurgents were speedily overpowered and the ringleaders executed. It happened that the weather continued unusually mild for this climate, so that the houseless refugees, among whom were many women and young children, suffered less than might have been expected while new homes were being constructed.

NO LONGER A CONVICT TOWN.

After this no more convicts were sent to Punta Arenas. Now that the mail steamers plying between Europe and the west coast of South America had adopted this route through the Strait of Magellan, bringing a rapid increase of traffic, the paternal government recognized its importance as a station of call and supply. In 1868 it made liberal grants of land to immigrants, and sent out a new governor, with 300 settlers. Timber for building purposes was taken along, and plenty of supplies to last until the immigrants could clear and cultivate farms for themselves. During the war with Peru, when Chile found herself in need of all the soldiers she could muster, the military guard was withdrawn from the old convict station, all the prisoners who would consent to fight the Peruvians got an honorable discharge and ticket of leave and marched gaily away with their late keepers to cut the throats of their neighbors. In 1868 the population of Punta Arenas was hardly 200; in 1888 it was 2,000, and now it is little more than half the latter number. In 1883 the district was organized into a province of Chile (its nineteenth), and now it is no disgrace, though somewhat inconvenient, to be a Punta Arenian.

WHY THE TOWN IS INTERESTING.

A well-known Washington newspaper man, who lately visited Sandy Point, says of it: "The town is interesting because it is the only settlement in Patagonia, and of course the only one in the strait. It is about 4,000 miles from the southernmost town on the west coast of South America to the first port on the eastern coast—a voyage which ordinarily requires fifteen days—and as Punta Arenas is about midway of course it possesses some attractions. There are a few decent people here—ship agents and traders, who came for business reasons, a consul or two, and among them an Irish physician, Dr. Fenton, who is the host and oracle sought for by every stranger who arrives. Occasionally some yachting party stops here on its voyage around the world, or a man-of-war cruising from one ocean to the other, and steamers bound from Europe to the Pacific ports pass every day or two, so that communication is kept up with the rest of the universe, and the people who live at this antipodes, where the sun is seen in the north and the Fourth of July comes in the depth of winter, are pretty well informed as to affairs at the other end of the globe. The emotions that come with the contemplation that you are about as far from anywhere as you can possibly go are novel, but in the midst of them you are comforted by the other fact that the world is not so large as it looks to be, for here is a man who used to live where you came from, and another who once worked in the office where you are employed. There is a news stand in Punta Arenas where you can purchase New York and London papers, often three or four months old, but still fresh to the long voyager, and shops in which Paris confectionery and other luxuries of life can be had at Patagonian prices."

HOW THE PLACE LOOKS.

How does the place look? Well, there is a sandy beach in front of a high ridge of hills, with some rising ground intervening. Three or four hundred houses are set in the mud and slush along this beach and on the rising ground behind it, mostly one-storied, built of wood, without regularity, yet disposed in lines so as to form streets and a miserable attempt at a plaza. There is a fort, a church, a custom house, and one or two other public buildings—not omitting the post office at which every traveler in this region drops letters to far-away friends, simply because they will bear the nearest possible postmarks to the south pole. The governor now resides in what was once the convict barracks, and horses are corralled in what used to be the stockade. Adjoining the town are desolate, wind-swept fields, covered with the wet, spongy moss peculiar to Patagonia; the low hills back of them are blackened by charred timber, and the range of mountains beyond, though not more than 1,000 feet high, are buried in perpetual snow. There is a long, rickety wharf in the foreground, over which you must pick your way with care to avoid a sudden plunge into the icy water beneath, and in the roadstead a number of vessels are always anchored—coal barges, Argentine and Chilean gun boats, French, German and Italian ships and perhaps a great English steamer or dispatch boat. As before remarked, it is always either snowing or raining at Punta Arenas, mud or slush is always ankle deep, and you might search the world over to find a more dreary, desolate and altogether uninviting place.

Among its thousand or more inhabitants it is said that an interpreter for every modern language of the world may be found. Certainly a more polyglot community was never gotten together. Though the place belongs to Chile, English is the language most generally spoken, and there are Chinamen, Germans, Poles, Swedes, French, Swiss, Italians, Americans, negroes, Portuguese, primeval Indians, Yankees—human flotsam and jetsam representing all sorts and conditions of men—deserters from all navies, convicts, fugitives from justice and shipwrecked mariners—many of whom would not be willing to tell you where they came from, what their true names were in some other part of the world, and most of whom would not remain another minute if they could help it. There are a few good women in the settlement, but as for most of the females here—poor things! drinking, fighting, swearing creatures of every nationality—the least said about them the better.

A HALF-AND-HALF ISLAND.

Directly opposite Punta Arenas, just across the narrow strait, is the largest island of the Terra del Fuego group, two-thirds of which (on the western side) now belongs to Chile, while the Argentine government claims the remainder. Only on the Australian coast could one find a settlement so completely isolated from neighbors. On the Chilean side the nearest permanent inhabitants are on the Island of Chiloe, fully 700 miles distant in a straight line and a good deal farther by the only practicable route. On the Argentine side there is a miserable little settlement at the mouth of the Santa Cruz river, where the government of that big republic has thought best to hoist their pretty blue-and-white banner in order to assert its sovereignty over the worthless wastes of southeastern Patagonia. It contains only half a dozen wooden sheds, where a few disconsolate soldiers pass their weary days in longing for the more genial climate of Buenos Ayres. It is 400 miles between that place and this and no communication is kept up between them.

Therefore, for all practicable purposes, the nearest civilized neighbors to the lonesome Punta Arenians are the English colonists on the Falkland Islands, where, in spite of the inhospitable soil and climate, a number of thrifty Britons have somehow managed to attain to tolerable prosperity, chiefly by sheep farming. But, with an interval between of five hundred miles of the stormiest ocean on the globe, mutual intercourse is neither frequent nor easy.

FANNIE B. WARD.

LOCK PICKING AS A SCIENCE.

An Expert Says That His Key is in Every Man's Watch.

From the Post-Express.

High up in the Wilder building, in a little corner room prettily furnished with rich carpets and hangings, more like a lady's boudoir than the office of a wide-awake business man, a reporter found James Sargent, the lock manufacturer.

"I suppose," the reporter began, "that you know all about Alfred C. Hobbs, the famous lock picker, who died a short time ago."

"Yes," said Mr. Sargent, "I knew of him. In fact, at one time every one had heard of him. In 1848 he opened the safe in the merchants' exchange in New York in less than an hour, although $500 was offered to any one who could do it within thirty days. Then he went to England and picked the lock in the vault door of Brown, Shipley & Co. It was supposed to be the strongest lock in England, but he worked with his back turned and his hands behind him. He picked a number of other famous locks, and the British Institution of Civil Engineers gave him the Telford medal, its highest honorary award. But you must remember that Mr. Hobbs was seventy-nine years old when he died, and lock picking was a much easier accomplishment forty years ago than now."

"It is not a very profitable business, I suppose, for an honest man?" the reporter inquired.

"Well, that depends," said Mr. Sargent. "Now and then a man will offer a thousand dollars to any one who can pick his lock, another will offer $750 and another $500. Then sometimes I make a bet that I can open a lock within a certain time, and if I succeed of course there is more money. Oh, honesty is a very good thing after all. I suppose I have earned upward of $6,000 in direct cash payments by opening locks."

"Do you ever fail?"

"No, sir! I can always tell whether or not I can pick a lock and never try or put up money on a doubtful case. I have broken into most of the strongest safes in the country, including the vault of the Treasury Department at Washington. That I did inside of an hour, to the utter horror of the officials.

"Once I went out to Des Moines. There is a bank out there that has some eighteen smaller country banks dependent on it. Once a month the presidents of these country banks all meet in the president's office of the mother bank, and at that time its safe is filled with thousands of dollars. I found out the day of the meeting, and when they had all assembled entered the room as a stranger and said: 'Gentlemen, do you know that you have thousands of dollars locked up here in a safe that a burglar could easily break in in a night? He could take your money, change the combination on the lock so that when you came down in the morning you could not get into the safe, so that you would have to send to the east for the maker, and by the time he had got all the way out here and opened the doors and you had discovered the loss of the money the burglar would be sailing over the ocean to Europe. Now, gentlemen, I have come here in broad daylight. You may go to your safe and put on a different combination, and when you get ready I will go to it and open it to prove that what I have said is true.' They were very much impressed by my statement, but having perfect confidence in their safe were quite willing that I should make the trial. The combination was changed, I set to work, and they returned to their room. Presently the lock was picked. Inside the money was piled high in bags of gold. I took one of the bags and went into the president's room. Holding it up I asked if that belonged to him. He and the others were dumbfounded. He made a grab at it, and then they all rushed out to view the safe. There it stood with doors wide open."

"What is the hardest lock that you ever tried to pick?"

"It was out in Cincinnati, but the trial was hardly a fair one. The makers tried to play a trick on me, and manufactured a lock which I doubt if they could pick themselves. The trial took place about eighteen years ago, and made a great stir in the papers at the time. The safe was put on a truck drawn by four horses, and taken to the place where I was to make the trial. The conditions were that I was to open the safe inside of 100 hours or forfeit $500, which I had deposited with the committee appointed to see that everything was square. For every hour that I worked over 100 I was to pay $5. Well, sir, that safe was open in twenty-eight hours. I worked pretty hard during the day, and by night had got the secret of the combination. Then I went with some friends to the theater. They tried to dissuade me from trying further. 'You'll kill yourself, Sargent,' they said; 'there is no use trying; the safe cannot be opened.' I kept mum, and the next morning sent for the committee and the lock makers. There was a great crowd in attendance, and of course all the newspaper reporters were on hand. 'Gentlemen,' I said, 'I am getting tired and feel indisposed to make further efforts. You see that the safe is utterly uninjured, according to our contract.' As I said this I turned the combination this way and that, as though to show them its perfect condition. Then I gave the knob a jerk, the bolts flew aside and the great door opened. The excitement was enormous and we had a big dinner at the hotel that evening."

"Have you a particular method of working, Mr. Sargent?"

"Yes, I have devoted a great many years of study to this subject, and am more or less familiar with all the locks made. The secret is one that I have never told, but I do not mind saying that you have, in your watch, a key to all the locks that I have picked."

Three Classes Keeley Can't Cure.

From a Chicago Interview.

"There are three classes now attending there who are not benefited. There is the wealthy class, who go down there and are cured, and then they find themselves out of business. They have no intellectual pursuits and no longer see the enjoyments of the race course or the club, so that in some instances they have resumed the old habits. Another class is composed of those afflicted with a sort of species of insanity. They are usually intellectually brilliant, or have been, but there is scarcely enough brain force left to build upon in an effort to change their mode of life. A third class is the thoughtless young man or boy, who usually belongs to the wealthy class and is there, as he says, to 'please the old man.' These look upon it as a vacation, and go away from Dwight in some instances only to return. 'I'm here again, doctor,' remarked one on his second visit. 'The boys said I could not drink, and I thought I would show them I could.' But the doctor told him to go home again; that he could not and would not waste his time on such patients."

NOVEMBER ROSES.

A STORY OF THANKSGIVING TIME.

Winfield S. Moody, Jr., in Harper's Bazar.

EVERYBODY SAID IT WAS THE MOST wonderful summer ever known in all the hill country. The reproach laid by scoffers upon New England weather had never been received or even heard of in the rocky little town of Harmony. The turning the year was an orderly procession in that simple place, and the winters came when they were due just as the darkness came down regularly, and all the people went to sleep in it, like the birds, leaving the moon to govern the night without watching. Things went along pretty peacefully in Harmony, and there were few surprises and no shocks.

So when this particular summer came and continued and ran clear past its proper bounds till October was still heavy with midsummer heat there was much speculation about it. Almost everybody in town was weather wise and had his own idea of how it had come about and what it boded. The only thing agreed upon was that something uncommon would come of it. The farmers in Harmony got in their late crops as with loins girded, watching each day for the expected change and reasonably thankful for every mow of hay or grain safely housed. The minister had made a notable preachment early in September upon the weather, likening the marvel of the enduring summer to divine patience with the impenitent, and it was called a master-good discourse. But as that month stretched out and still the sun shone July warm, certain light-minded ones said it was clear that there must be some very hardened sinners in Harmony to keep the season open so long. And this talk came to the minister's ears, and forthwith he preached a sermon to scoffers, which did him good to deliver and probably did somebody good to hear. Amid all this wonder and questioning somebody met the professor one day and asked him what he thought of the long warm spell, and he said, quite simply, that he thought the world was a very good place in summer time and that his flowers seemed to keep on blossoming just from pleasure in being alive in so kind an air, and so he was glad of the warmth without troubling to reason it out. And he who had asked the question turned away smiling because the professor talked so much like a child.

He was very like a child, too, in many ways—this gentle, simple, wise old man. For many years Professor Churchill had occupied the chair of English language and literature in Harmony College. That chair was not an imposing one, nor was the college itself a very ancient foundation, but among its faculty were some men of gentle scholarship, not bitten with the new learning nor fond of noisy enterprise. Notable among these was Professor Churchill, who stood, frank and unconscious, for simple culture and unworldly wisdom. Truly this is a delightful kind of man to be friends with, and one who is a monument of the "happier age of gold," but such a man is often heedless of passing years and of new fashions in thought and action. And so it was with the little professor. He had no knowledge of the New Criticism. He had never discovered that to be original one must needs be aboriginal or that imagination is a vain thing. He never even suspected that strong romantic fiction is not literature, and he kept up a cordial friendship with Herrick and Ben Johnson, while the writers of "teacup verse" were not even names to him. He was not at all up to date. He would not even have understood the phrase, it is likely. When he had learned the language people had said "up to the times," and entertained some dread of being in advance of them.

So Progress, inevitable and in fine new clothes, came and sat down in the seat of the scornful, opposite the professor. And one day he became conscious that there was something raw and unfamiliar in the air he was breathing, as if the east wind had suddenly blown into the chambers of his sensitive soul. And, following the forewarning, the hard thing came, and he understood, when the president called upon him one day in his shabby little house, and told him elaborately that the college remembered his long years of work gratefully, and feared that he would find the burden too heavy to carry longer, and that they begged he would accept the title of professor emeritus, and deliver an annual lecture to the graduating class, and permit the college to print it, and to keep the manuscript in the college library. The first words brought a flush to the withered face, and his old armchair rocked a little like a ship on troubled water, because it had never crossed his mind that his work and his way were not just as good and acceptable now as they had been thirty years before. He had kept company only with the saints in literature, and the saints are always the same.

But on that day when he was formally saluted as professor emeritus, and a big parchment was given to him, with wax seals on it, and speeches were made, and the young man from Oxford sat in his chair, he stood up straight as a soldier and as proudly, too, and at the end of the speech-making he saluted the president and all the others with the old-fashioned awkward bow which the students knew so well, and said, in his simple childlike way, that they did him too high an honor. He made little of his own work and magnified the office of his successor, and at the last he turned to the students and said, just as he had always done at the end of every lecture he delivered, that he begged leave to thank the gentlemen for their courteous attention and wished them a good morning.

The students cheered Prof. Churchill again and again and again, until the president fidgeted a little in his chair and coughed and adjusted his cap, and the little professor came from his corner once more and bowed low and lower with his own little jerky gestures of deprecation, while his eyes filled with tears. It made no difference to the students then that they had been wont to think and speak with a laughing indulgence of the little man and to raise all manner of mild disturbance in his lecture room. The professor had never seen it, nor would he have believed that any wilful disrespect had ever been shown to him or to his office. And the same boy who had oftenest made sport of the professor cheered longest, and finally subsided into half audible remarks to the effect that it was some sort of shame—he didn't speak very distinctly.

And so Prof. Churchill went home that day and sat down for a while in his old-fashioned chair among his old-fashioned books and thought it all over. He explained it carefully to himself, as to another child, until he was quite sure he understood it. And he had the cheering to remember, and the affectionate good will which had beamed out upon him from all the boys' faces, so he comforted himself. And nearly all the boys came to wish him good-bye before going home for the long vacation, insomuch that the door of the small brown house on the hill side was kept swinging all day long. The professor felt very proud of this. He had always been glad to believe that the boys had liked to listen to his lectures, but so strong a showing of personal regard touched him very much. He walked out through the garden to the gate with every one of his guests and made each of them a formal little speech of farewell. And when the last of them had come and gone he went wandering among his roses, half consoled in thinking that now he would have all the more time to care for them and to be among them.

They stood to him for wife and children—these flowers of his. They had been Mrs. Churchill's loving care at the first; and when, many years ago, she had been borne out of the cottage with her own white roses on her breast the childless man had come back to find his dearest comfort in the faces of the roses she had loved.

He used to hover around them like a queer gray moth, sometimes almost burying himself in a big bush, then slipping swiftly out and darting along the myrtle border of the path where his violets hid in the spring, then across to his rainbow of sweet pease, and to and fro between the tall ranks of hollyhocks, and so back again to his roses. Nobody else in Harmony had such flowers as these—not even Mrs. Denslow, whose garden lay down in the valley and was not nearly so exposed to the cold winds. She often accused the professor of being a wizard, who had power to make almost any rod bud and blossom. And when she spoke of the marvelous beauty of his roses, which she often did—for she was a gracious lady, and they were old friends—there would be exhibited the only known limit to the professor's courtesy. For then the little man would bow modestly, and admit that his roses were much finer than hers. But he would make haste to find reasons why his had been specially favored this season, and assure her that hers would probably be the finer next year. Then he would beg her to excuse him for not plucking off any of his own even to offer to her, because, as he said, "I have better heart to wound by own body, Mrs. Denslow, than to cut off one of these perfect flowers." And she would laugh gently, and beg him to keep them on the tree, for she understood him and honored his reluctance.

These two had been friends for many years—friends over the roses and friends over their books; friends, too, in sterner and sadder things. She had been his wife's friend and now she was his. It was even said in Harmony that Mrs. Denslow knew just how old the little man was. If that were true she was certainly the only one, for keeping the secret of his years was the one piece of craft the professor had ever been known to compass. He had never told his age and no amount of skillful interrogation and interpretation had ever been able to win it from him. He was over seventy; every one was sure of that, though he walked with the elasticity of a boy. He had never been seen to wear an overcoat, even in the severest weather, and only buttoned his little frock coat more closely about him as he darted out into the face of the north wind with simple audacity.

But to every one in Harmony Lucy Denslow's life was an open volume. Sixty years ago, in the great wide house down in the village, on the street which fronted the river, her mother had died and left her and the old judge alone, and here Lucy Ruggles had grown up from a slip of a girl to a slip of a woman, with dark hair and eyes and a wonderful way of her own. This way brought many lovers to her and she threw them each a ribbon and kept them all along chasing her feet. But one day Peter Denslow was moved to gather in the slack of his ribbon and, lo! with it came Lucy Ruggles. There was a fine wedding for those days and these two went away, full of youth and hope and the plans that come with both. But in less than a year the old house received her again, still a slip of a woman, but now gowned in black and going heavily enough for one who had fled away so blithely. The judge died after a few years and still she lived on in the old house and moved about the big rooms and kept the circulation of the old place healthy.

There was a goodish patch of lawn land sloping slightly from the road to the river, and back of the house were famous gardens full of old-fashioned flowers. There were quantities of phlox and verbenas and marigolds and lady slippers and a whole army of tiger lillies presenting arms along the walks. And she, too, had great clumps of rose bushes, and she stepped about among them with an animated face and the high manner of a princess playing soubrette. There was a wonderful vivacity and touch of youth about her, and even in these later days, when she wore little gray gowns and dainty white caps, she wore them with an air and didn't look in the least like other little old ladies, howsoever lovely they might be. Her black hair was now softly gray, but her eyes were as bright as of old, her wrists were still rounded and her hands were white and firm.

It was the 15th day of November in this year of summer when Mrs. Denslow looked out upon her shady lawn and over the sunshiny old hills, and was minded to go out to the edge of the town and see if she could spy the end of the summer coming up over the ridge. The sky over the hill country was so deeply blue that if one watched it for a while the great cup seemed to darken, and then keep turning inside out like a moving slide in a magic lantern, only it was always blue and deeper blue.

In ordinary years a grayer shade would have crept into the sky long before the middle of November, but so far it had not come. The leaves hung on bravely, though they were garmented with dust, for no showers had fallen for two weeks. The air had no suggestion of sharpness in it, but as Mrs. Denslow stepped away down the street she noticed a certain fresh motion among the leaves and found that the breeze was cooler than before. A little crooked road turned out of the main street near her house and went straggling up the hill to run along the ridge for some distance, and then turned back to join the turnpike again.

Mrs. Denslow went lightly along the path, for the slope was gradual. She stopped every little while to peer out between the trees and listen to the soft noises inside the woods. She was on terms of intimacy with a lot of chipmunks that used to scamper to and fro across the road before her when she went that way. Moreover, she had some distant acquaintance with a pair of gray squirrels who inhabited a big maple tree that stood well back in a fine park of elder bushes. She had never spoken to these gray squirrels, but the chipmunks and she were gossips. And then she had a saluting friendship with an old and reverend woodchuck, to whom passing years and the despite of man had left only three legs and a fraction. This patriarch lived among the rocks in a sugar camp nearly at the top of the hill, and whenever Mrs. Denslow passed his demesne she was pretty apt to see him sitting gravely around thinking about the weather. He wasn't progressive or neighborly, but he had always lived there and Mrs. Denslow was pleased to see him still above ground and thinking.

It was late in the afternoon when Mrs. Denslow stood on the crown of the ridge and looked eastward across the deeper valley. The slope was rich with many soft greens, and the rocky pasture land was warm in the sunshine. The colors were so softened and shaded together that the grass looked gray like the ledges where they cropped out into the sunlight, and then again reddish-brown to match the few cattle straying slowly along the slope. The bottom of the valley was already in shadow, and down in the midst of the mass of darkest green stood a maple tree, which waved toward her a single yellow bough.

Mrs. Denslow observed this manifestation of change with honest regret, tempered with a sudden complacency in that she was the first person in Harmony to see the signal of the end of the long summer. If it had to come, she reflected, it was worth something to have seen it, and not merely to have heard about it from anybody. And so she took a last look at the sweep of woodland and passed along the ridge, then turned into the main road again and down toward the village. The sun had dropped low, and the level beams came boldly into her shining eyes and made her raise her little black silk parasol. Mr. Abbey would have been very glad had he seen her beside the broad white road in her little gray gown and black lace shawl, her tiny feet condescending always a little lower as she came down the hill.

But Prof. Churchill looked up and saw her from his garden, where he stood by the rose trees. His face lighted up, for he had just conceived a new idea. He came out and stood by the road with hand outstretched to welcome her, and she came floating down to him as graciously as a fairy princess and as fine.

Some such thought sprang into his mind, for he made her one of his profoundest bows and said: "Is this Mrs. Denslow or the good goddess of the long summer come to smile upon a rose garden?"

"Why, Prof. Churchill," said the little lady, "did you ever see a goddess with an umbrella? Besides, I am not fit to pose as goddess of summer, for I have come as the voice crying in the woods before the north wind. The leaves are beginning to turn in the valley, professor."

"Oh, I am sorry," said he anxiously, "because I had hoped to see a wonderful thing. There are so many little buds on my largest red rose tree, and I believe that they will all come along in about two weeks if the cold does not kill them. And then, Mrs. Denslow, I should be able to walk here in my garden and see roses blooming on Thanksgiving day."

"What a delightful thing to think of! Do let me come in and see them," said Mrs. Denslow. "Your spells must have been more potent than usual this year, professor. I really believe it is you who have delayed the cold days, just that your roses might outdo themselves. But you must keep the sunshine here, enchanter, or your roses will fall apart into handfuls of leaves, like the magic money."

A queer little look of loneliness fell on the eager, thin face. "But I am not enchanter enough to hold the sunshine," he said; "it only visits me now and then."

Mrs. Denslow gave a swift, startled glance at the professor. "But the sunshine plays sad tricks with nature's ways," she said, "when it brings the red roses of the year's youth into its fading days."

Something new had come into the professor's face—something which she had never seen there before. It was flushed like one of his own red roses, and full of strange eloquence. He took one step nearer to her. "Are they tricks," he asked, "when they are nature's doings? Does not nature know her lessons, now she is grown so old? If the roses—and the red roses—bloom in November, who shall say that it is not a manifestation not of nature's trickery, but of her own sweet self, so rarely seen?"

Mrs. Denslow's eyes were cast down like that of a frightened child. She was startled out of all composure. And Prof. Churchill stood before her for an instant mute after his sudden outburst; and then, while she played nervously with her parasol, he made another grave bow, with the old quick gesture of deprecation, and stood aside. She went swiftly past him, saying, in a confused way, that it would soon be dark; and he followed her, silent, and stood at the gate while she slipped down the hill, under the high pointed shadow of the arching trees. And then he turned back and looked earnestly at the red rose bush for a little, and went into the shabby old house.

Little Mrs. Denslow had insomnia that night. Not for many years had she been so strangely disturbed. She thought and wondered and was perplexed, and she felt vaguely that it was hardly becoming in her to think so long and seriously of Prof. Churchill as she did, lying unquiet in the house where she had lived alone all these years. They had been frank friends so long that the glimmer of something different came like the unwelcome morning light into eyes resting in the twilight of a chamber. She fell into dismay lest she had in some way led him think that friendship was not enough between them; lest she had looked at him before he had first looked at her. What? had she already come to think of it as a question of who first had the thought? Besides, it was unfitting their years, and undignified to have been a discreet and sensible woman for sixty years, and then to set dignity and propriety at defiance in such a way as this! Why, all Harmony would buzz with disapprobation. Of what? She shut her eyes tightly, and wanted to cry out. What if the red roses should really bloom in late November!

The next morning Mrs. Denslow woke with a sudden little bound. It was early day and the sunshine had crept through the curtains and spattered upon the white matting upon the floor. She ran to the window and drew the curtain a little. The air was still soft and warm. There had been no frost in Harmony.

Toward nightfall a letter came to her door and her hands trembled like a girl's as she held it. "My dear and old friend," it said, "if I have o'erstepped myself and wounded you, you will forgive me, I know. And have the red roses no lessons for older hearts? They and we are nature's children. And, in truth, I am a lonely man."

That was all, and, still trembling like a child, she wrote and sent back a single line. "I understand you wholly," she wrote.

The day before Thanksgiving came gray and foggy, and one hardly knew whether it was warm or cold. Mrs. Denslow went to and fro in the house, looking a little pale. She had fallen out of her usual habit of walking since the day when she had climbed the ridge, and she was beginning to feel shut up and stifled. A neighbor passing the house early had stopped to say that he had heard that there had been a sharp frost in the valley beyond the ridge. But when Mrs. Denslow went out into her garden she had found all her flowers bright and happy as ever; and then suddenly the fog seemed to blow away, and the clear light fell on everything once more. Mrs. Denslow determined to go for a walk.

Half-way down the lawn she met a man who did odd jobs here and there in the village. He stopped and saluted her, and handed her a letter. It was addressed to her in the handwriting of Prof. Churchill. With serene face she broke the wax. The letter was very short:

"The roses are in bloom. Shall I send them or may I bring them?"

Mrs. Denslow turned back to her desk and the messenger took a note to Prof. Churchill. And that late November day was notable in Harmony above all the other days of the long summer, for then did the people see the little professor walking swiftly down the hill toward the village, bearing in his hand a branch of a rose tree, whereon clustered great crimson cones whose fragrance filled the air, and he went straight down the street to the old house where the front door stood wide open to welcome him, and Mrs. Denslow waited in the porch.

UNCLE NAT'S COON HUNT.

Why He Determined That He Would Carry a Gun Next Time.

From the New York Post.

"I useter be the coon fighter of Kittle Creek," said Uncle Nat, as he leaned back in his chair, "an' in my day I've seed mo' ups an' downs then Jeff Davis an' all his legions. I had the masterest coon dog what ever broke up a settin' hen, an' you mought jes' bet yer sweet soul when that ar dog opened hit wer' no col' trail.

"The coons got so bad roun' my place that I jest wer' mos' afeared to ventur' out o' nights 'thout my dog an' gun, an', in fac', it wer' almos' onpossible to git away f'om that ar dog. He'd lay roun' the do' steps with his eyes ha'f shet, an' 'ud hardly git up to eat his sop an' tater, but you jest let me put on a coon look an' whistle, an' ol' Ruler wer' up an' agwine in less time 'n' you could bat your eyes.

"One evenin' I wer' a walkin' the foot log 'cross the run, not more'n a quarter f'om the house, an', jest as I nighed the other een', a big bar coon ris up, with his ha'r all turned wrong sid' out'ards. I seed right thar that the insignificant ol' cuss wer' up fur a fight, an' says I: 'Ol' feller, ef yer want anything out'n me you kin git it, an that durned quick.'

"I retched roun' fur a stick, but the log wer' slippery, an' I couldn't turn roun' to git to the bank, an' ther' wan't nothin' in han' retchin' of me, an' I jest made up my min' to take it out in kickin'. With that I sidled up tell I wer' shore of gittin' in my work, an' I fetched a heave at 'im wid my foot; but I furgot that I had a hole in the toe, an' that blasted ol' wretch grabbed me by the necked flesh an' jist sot his teeth. The other foot slipped, an' kersouse I went into the run, with that cussed coon a-chawin' my toe, an' me a-cussin' an' him a-cussin'. An' when I riz he riz, an' es I crawled out on one bank he crawled out on 'tother; an' he give me sich a look of revengunce, an' shuck 'is head so hatefully that hit seem lack he wer' a-sayin'. 'Oh, yes, consarn you, you hain't made nothin' out'n me nether, an' I jest dare you to try it ag'in!'

"I up wid a lightered knot an' flung it at 'im; but he dodged it an' kin' er bowed up his back and says, 'A-a-gh.' I wer' so allfired mad I couldn't see, an' I jest intermined right then an' there to fix that varmunt.

"W'en I got to the house hit wer' supper time; but I wer' too mad to eat much. An' jest es soon es Ruler had et a bite I called him, an' grabbed up the ax an' a torch o' fat splinters, an' started to the creek. I knowed dat sullen ol' scounderl couldn't 'a' got fur, beca'se he wer' busy a huntin' crawfish 'long the run.

"I p'inted Ruler to the spot where he sot w'en I flung the chunk at him. Ruler seemed to ketch on, an' went off in a lope down the thicket, an' I went out to the high land to cut me a better torch. I split the splinters long an' keerfully, so's to have a good light w'en I fotch that ole coon to bay.

"A'ter a good long while I hearn Ruler open 'way down the run, an' I knowed he'd got a fresh trail, an' I knowed it warn't noth'n else but the same ole cuss of a coon. I picked up my light an' fetched a whoop to encourage the dog, an' away I went down the creek. I wer' in a bigger hurry than common, for I wer' afear'd Ruler'd ketch up wid the coon an' the fight 'ud all be over afore I could git in a lick.

"But I calkilated too shore. The dog kep' a yelpin' and a yelpin' tell he'd run fully a mile, and then I hearn him openin' in a contrary direction, an' I knowed the coon wer' a doublin' on us. I kep' up as nigh as possible, but the dog kep' a twistin' and a turnin', fust one way, then t'other, an' up an' down an' back'ards an' for'ards, till I wer' a puffiin' and a snortin' wus'n a ballused hoss. At last the barkin' tuck a straight c'ose way up to'ards the swamp, an' I knowed f'om the way he wer' a barkin' that the trail wer' gittin' hotter.

"'I'll git you now, blame you,' I thought. 'You're a gittin' tired now an' you'll take a tree presently.'

"I walked an' run an' stumbled over the logs tell I'd gone near 'bout two mile, when I heard Ruler a barkin' fierce, lack he'd treed. I whooped to 'im to hol' fas', and then I struck out through the swamp to whar he wer', an' every step I tuck I cussed that coon fur leadin' me sich a worrisome rackit. Bimeby I busted into a slash and waded across, an' thar sot Ruler at the foot of a stoopin' bla' gum a lookin' up an' a barkin' every now an' then to keep me posted as to his wharabouts.

"'Ah, you dinged, infernal ol' corn eater, I'll git you now,' says I, and I begun to prepare.

"Ruler jumped up an' down wid excitement, whilst I walked slowly 'round the tree a tryin' to shine the varmint's eyes.

"At last I located 'em in a thick bunch o' moss an' leaves, jest whar the tree bent over, 'an',' thinks I, 'them's the masterest coon's eyes dat ever I shined in all my borned days.'

"The gum wer' a big un, an' you know they's the toughest trees that ever growed, an' I did dread to tackle that 'ere tree. I thought p'r'aps the thing mought be holler; so I laid my light keerfully on a little tussick behint me, and I hauled off wid the ax an' hit the tree a jarrin' lick.

"'Swish—sh!' Sump'n breshed my head, an' knocked my hat off, an' struck the light kerdab, an' squinched it like a flash; an' the nex' minit I felt sump'n rake me down the back, an', great Je-ru-sa-lum! Ruler j'ined in the row. The varmint fout. I fout. Ruler fout. We all three fout. Such a rummagin', an' gougin', an' scratchin', an' screechin' you never hearn sence Noer built the ark.

"It wer' dark as sin, an' as hot as—well, you'd hafter go a long ways to fin' a scorchin'er place. I fell down 'mongst the coals an' swinged my whiskers, an' the coon lipt on me an' kep' a clawin', an' Ruler, he lipt on the coon, an' there we had it. I tuck 'im a comin' an' I tuck 'im a gwine. The coon growled an' yowled, and Ruler howled an' squalled, an' I kept a cussin' every chance I got; an' the mud an' blood an' hair got in my mouth an' my nose an' my years an' my eyes, an' such a time as we had thar in the dark I wish I may die ef I ever want to speerunce ag'in.

"Finally I got aholt of a chunk an' riz to my knees, an' I fetched a swipe at the varmint an' knocked po' ole Ruler into the middle o' next week. The varmint kivered 'im, an' then I fetched a back-handed lick at the varmint an' knocked him out o' time, an' Ruler kivered me, an' so we had it.

"At las' Ruler grabbed the thing by the neck jest as I catcht Ruler by the tail, an', as he shuck the varmint, I shuck him, fur I wer' skeered out o' my senses, an' as I slung him around I got in a salty lick on the varmint what laid him out. Ruler finished the job, an', a'ter he stopped chawin' on the cyarkiss, I sot down by the root o' the tree to ketch my breath, for I'll sw'ar I wer' nigh 'bout gi'n out.

"A'ter I rested a bit I struck a light an' tuck a look at the coon, when, Great Jeehovy! hit wer' the bigges' catamount I ever seed. All that time I'd fout an' fout, thinking hit wer' a cussed ole coon, an' hit a great big yaller-spotted wildcat.

"I tell you what, I got out o' that 'ere place in a jiffy, an' nex' time I went a coon huntin' I tuck my gun."

False Economy

Is practiced by many people, who buy inferior articles of food because cheaper than standard goods. Surely infants are entitled to the best food obtainable. It is a fact that the Gail Borden "Eagle" Brand Condensed Milk is the best infant food. Your grocer and druggist keep it.

HE WENT ONE BETTER.

The Policeman Was Given a Pointer Which Explained All.

From the Detroit Free Press.

People in the waiting room of the Detroit, Grand Haven and Milwaukee depot were more or less interested, the other afternoon, in the conduct of a middle-aged couple who were evidently very much in love. As they sat together on a seat the man had his arm around her waist and she leaned confidently on his shoulder. The depot policeman might have looked at them rather sharply as he passed through the room, for soon thereafter the man came outside and queried:

"Do you remember me?"

"Can't say that I do," replied the officer, after a careful scrutiny.

"I was in here last summer on an excursion."

"Yes."

"Had a girl with me—girl with long curls and a white dress."

"Yes."

"She was a widow's daughter, and had forty acres of land in her own name."

"I see."

"That was the best I could do at the time, but that's the widow and mother inside and she owns the rest of the farm and all the stock. I've gone one better, and do you blame me fur kinder squeezing around, even if folks do laugh at us?"

The officer assurred him it was all right, and according to Hoyle, and he returned to business much relieved and encouraged.

Politeness Meets Its Reward.

From the Chicago Tribune.

"Take my seat, madam."

Cyrus Barker was in a crowded car. He addressed the remark to a young lady whom he saw standing near him.

She took the seat without the slightest glance at Cyrus, but that made no difference. Being a suburbanite and accustomed to travel on crowded trains he was used to that sort of thing.

"That young woman," he mused, resting himself against the end of a seat and looking contemplatively out of the window at a flying landscape consisting chiefly of street crossings, coal sheds and freight cars, "is probably twenty-five years younger than I am, and as well able to stand as anybody in the car, but she's a woman and I am a gentleman. Not exactly a young gentleman, it is true," and he shifted his weight on the leg that was not quite so rheumatic as the other one, "but I don't show my age, and if there is one thing I won't do it is to keep my seat in a car while—ouch!"

The conductor in passing through the car had stepped on Cyrus' toes and gone on his way without expressing any sense of obligation or evincing any emotion whatever, but being a regular traveler on that line Cyrus was accustomed to that sort of thing also, and, hastily shifting his weight on the rheumatic leg again, he went on communing with himself in that well-known exaltation of spirit that accompanies the performance of a good deed.

"Rather than see any woman, young or old, stand in a crowded car and keep my seat, as these ill-mannered animals all about me are doing," he said to himself, "I would stand up from Archer avenue to 92d street. Twenty-five or thirty years hence," he continued, with a rush of generous feeling warming him all over, "when I have begun to——"

The soft, musical voice of a matronly woman a few feet away broke in upon his reflections:

"Tommy, my son, I am ashamed of you! Get up and give that nice old gentleman your seat!"

The Mean Old Thing.

From London Thoughts.

Husband (kindly)—"My dear, you have nothing decent to wear, have you?"

Wife (with alacrity)—"No, indeed, I haven't; not a thing. I'd be ashamed to be seen anywhere. My evening dress has been worn three times already."

Husband—"Yes; that's just what I told Bifkins when he offered me two tickets for the theater for tonight. I knew if I took them they'd only be wasted, so I just got one. You won't mind if I hurry off?"

Would Be a Ten Times Jacob.

"Do you love me as dearly as men have ever loved women?" said Mabel, finding an easy anchorage for her cheek about the latitude of his upper vest pocket and the longitude of his left shoulder.

"More," said George, with waning enthusiasm, for this was about the twenty-fourth encore to which he had responded since 8 o'clock. "More, far more, deary. Oh! ever so much more!"

"Would you," she went on, and there was a tremulous impressiveness in her voice, "would you be willing to work and wait for me, as Jacob waited for Rachel at the well, seven long years?"

"Seven!" he cried, in a burst of genuine devotion. "Seven! Aye, gladly! Yes, and more! Even until seven times seven! Let's make it seventy, and prove my devotion!"

Somehow or other he was alone when he left the parlor a few minutes later, and it looks now as though he would have to wait 700 years before he saves fuel by toasting his toes at the grate in that parlor again.

Written for The Evening Star.

Charity.

His eye was dim and his body bent
With the burden of many years;
His clothes were odd and shabby and rent
And the subject of mirth and jeers.

My heart went out to this good old man,
Decrepit, forlorn and dismayed,
With comfort ending where age began,
And I stopped to offer him aid.

"A pleasant day," quoth I with a nod:
But his mind seemed wand'ring away.
I heeded not his behavior odd,
But repeated, "A pleasant day."

He looked at me with a mournful stare,
Yet answered me never a word.
Methought he was deaf and unaware
Of the music that others heard.

I smiled and bowed and pointed o'erhead
And shouted, "A pleasant day!"
"Well, who said it wasn't?" is all he said
As he turned and trotted away.

—CLIFFORD HOWARD.

Washington, November 26, 1891.

Profit in Clam Operations.

From the Lewiston Evening Journal.

In Oldtown is a man who is making money fast out of clams, though he is at present feeding the clams to his pigs. He keeps a hotel, and has bonded a clam flat down around Mount Desert. His clams arrive each day. He keeps them two weeks, feeding them on celery meal and Indian meal. They laugh and grow fat. Then he boils them, a bushel at a time. He puts in a quart of water and takes out eight quarts. The water is strained and set aside for a day in a refrigerator. Then it is heated, seasoned with salt and pepper, and sold for 5 cents a glass. He has a big trade. A bushel of clams delivered costs 60 cents. He feeds them 40 cents' worth. He gives a four-ounce drink. There are thirty-two drinks in a gallon, and sixty-four drinks are secured from a bushel of clams. Net profit on a bushel of clams $2.20, and he sells on some days six gallons. Many try to imitate him, but no one knows how to feed the clams as he does. His pigs grow fast, moreover.

What Surprised the Scotchman.

From the Chicago News.

James Whitcomb Riley went to Europe last summer. On the return voyage an incident happened which is well worth telling of. To beguile the tediousness of the voyage it was proposed to give a concert in the saloon of the ship—an entertainment to which all capable of amusing their fellow-voyagers should contribute. Mr. Riley was asked to recite some of his original poems, and of course he cheerfully agreed to do so. Among the number present at this mid-ocean entertainment were two Scotchmen, very worthy gentlemen en route from the land o' cakes to the land of biscuits upon a tour of investigation. These twain shared that enthusiasm with which the auditors applauded Mr. Riley's charming recitations. They marveled that so versatile a genius could have arisen in a land reputed for uncouthness and savagery.

"Is it nö wonderfu' Donal'," remarked one of these braw Scots, "that a tradesman suld be sic a bonnie poet?"

"And is he indeed a tradesman?" asked the other.

"Deed is he," answered the other, "Did ye no hear the dominie intryjuce him as the hoosier-poet? Just think of it, mon—just think o' sic a gude poet dividing his time at making hoosiery!"

Not Always.

From the Chicago Tribune.

Agent for charitable enterprise (with subscription paper)—"But you believe, sir, in our cause, and a man's money always goes with his convictions."

Iowa man (with sad, far-away look in his eye)—"That doesn't follow. My convictions are with the republicans, and my money has gone to the democrats."

TOLD BY AN OLD RAILROADER.

Kindly Acts, Like Chickens and Evil Deeds, Come Home to Roost.

From the Argentine Republic.

"I don't believe a good action goes unrewarded," said an old railroad man the other day to the writer.

"About twenty years ago I was shoveling black diamonds to boil the water in a locomotive on the Wabash railway between Lafayette, Ind., and Danville, Ill. Near Attica, Ind., there was an overhead wagon bridge across the track that had killed no less than five brakemen in five years, and one dark, stormy night, in coming down the hill, I happened to remember that we had a green brakeman ahead, who was unacquainted with the road. I spoke to the engineer about it, but he said: 'Oh, let him go; he's all right.' But I didn't feel like letting a fellow mortal take any such chances and started back over the train, crawling from car to car in the Egyptian darkness, and came near being blown off several times, as it was blowing great guns, and old No. 53 was fanning that train fifty miles per hour down the summit. Back twelve cars from the engine I found 'Brakesy,' who was as tall, handsome a man as you could find in a thousand, and he was twisting up the slack of those brake chains with neatness and dispatch, while the wheels made a regular torchlight procession along the rails. He was badly scared when he first discovered me by the light of his old lantern, crawling along the running board, with my face as black as the ace of spades from the dusty diamonds.

"'Sit down! Sit down!' I cried, so loud that I almost imagined the whistle was sounding for Attica; and down he sat, so hard and quick, that he bit his tongue, and the next moment we flew under the bridge, while his lamp seemed to burn brighter as it disclosed those heavy timbers over our heads that had killed many poor brakemen. He came near fainting when he clasped my hand, and we sat for several moments on the wet deck of the car, and neither of us spoke a single word, but we were as white around the eyes as the ghost of Hamlet's father.

"Six years afterward I was in Fort Wayne, Ind., at the Wabash depot one morning, the most disconsolate man on God's earth. I had been hurt on the road several years before, was unable to work, and was trying to get back home to old Lafayette, Ind., as I thought, to die. I was hungry and tired and didn't have a cent in the world, and to see people step up to the lunch counter and call for hot coffee that was smelling to heaven was enough to set a poor flat-broke invalid crazy. I had begun to think that all my friends had been conveniently translated bodily from earth to heaven, when a tall, handsome conductor, with a silver lamp and gold-banded cap, approached me and inquired:

"'Didn't you fire an engine about five years ago on the western division of the Wabash?'

"'Yes,' I replied, 'and it was a sorry day that I ever went to railroading.'

"'Do you recognize me?'

"'No, sir.' And yet I thought his face began to assume the angelic.

"'Well, I will refresh your memory. Do you recollect of risking your life one dark, stormy night in crawling over a freight train to warn a green brakeman about a dangerous overhead bridge below Attica?'

"'You bet I do! But you're not Billy the brakeman?'

"'No, sir! No more Billy in mine: it's Will—sweet Will—conductor on the through passenger,' and he broke out into a musical laugh that nearly rattled the dishes on the lunch counter.

"The tears came to my eyes in spite of me, for I was weak, weary and heartsick. He noticed them, and, clasping my hand, said in the sweetest words that ever fell on mortal ears: 'Come, come! Shut her off and oil the valves,' and he led me to a stool at the lunch counter and said:

"'Now, you sit here and fill up. Let a few biscuits hit the chair and you will be all right again.'

"He stepped into the dispatcher's office to get his orders, while I poured down coffee that would discount the nectar of the gods. He appeared in about ten minutes and said: 'All aboard for Lafayette!' took me by the arm and led me to a coach, and then stepped back to the platform and waved his moss agate at the engineer. I curled up in the seat when the train started to hide the tears that kept welling up in my eyes, and for the first time in twenty long years I could have cried like a baby. I believe in a special providence since that terrible night and the morning I was heartbroken. And Bill is still pulling a bell cord in the varnished cars on the old Wabash."

Peculiarly a Chicago Incident.

From the Chicago Sunday Tribune.

It is at the Union depot, Chicago. A train has just pulled in. Outside the great iron gates is a hurrying throng. One woman, who passes westward, attracts attention. She possesses the remains of patrician beauty. Her silken gown, covered with cut jet, glitters like black mail. Diamonds flash at her throat. There is rouge on her cheek. Her insolent eyes are artistically darkened.

"Robert!"

The cry is wrung from her. A man with hair prematurely gray has just descended the broad steps. He holds a girl of six by the hand. She is daintily dressed in snowy mull. A great shirred white hat makes a background for the smiling little face, the innocent blue eyes, the golden curls. The man tries to pass.

"Only this once!" the woman pleads.

"You may speak to her." He steps aside.

"We have come," cries the child in joyful confidence as the stranger leans down, "to meet mamma."

The woman pales under her paint.

"Not my own mamma, you know," in sweet explanation. "She died long ago."

"Do you," low and fiercely, "remember her?"

"A little. She was like you! But she had not such a shining brooch or such pink cheeks."

The woman shrinks as if from a blow.

"Do you love this—this mamma?"

"Yes; she is good, but she wants me to, and," with wistful sincerity, "I do love my own mamma best."

There is a vibration of the rails. A shriek. The train thunders in. The woman leans to kiss the rose lips of the child. She draws back suddenly. It would be sacrilege. May not God's angel record this moment as one of magnificent expiation? The train disgorges. The man takes the child's hand. She looks back at the lovely lady.

"Good-bye," she cries, laughingly. The eyes that follow her are wet and tender.

"Why is she crying, papa, and why are you?"

"Hush, dear!" He takes a sweet-faced woman in his arms.

"We have missed you so!"

"Have you, darling?" she asks the child.

"Oh, yes!"

Her stepmother caresses the soft curls; kisses her gently.

The woman by the stairway sees it all.

Then they go home.

Getting the Stuffing Ready.

From Harper's Bazar.

"What's that you've got there?" asked the doorkeeper at the parquet entrance of a man who held by its legs a live turkey in one hand while he proffered an admittance ticket with the other.

"That's a turkey, my friend. A specimen of the gallinaceous fowl known to ornithologists as the *Meleagris gallopavo*. The bird is a native of America, being found—"

"Well, that's all right, but you can't take him into the theatre with you."

"This is a minstrel show, isn't it?"

"It is, and you can just take that turkey away. You are keeping a lot of people waiting."

"I understood the performance was to be a minstrel show, and that's the very reason I brought this bird."

"Take it away. It isn't a poultry exhibition. Stand aside, please."

"But I want to take it in."

"Can't do it."

"But you know Thanksgiving is coming."

"Yes, and I know that about thirty people behind you want to get in. Move away, now!"

"As I said before, Thanksgiving is coming, and it is my intention to eat this turkey on that day."

"Well, take it home. What are you bringing it here for?"

"A very proper question, and I will explain. I thought if you would let it listen to your end men's chestnuts awhile it would save me the expense of stuffing it myself. See?"

About that time a policeman led the man with the turkey out to the street.

Arithmetic and Dresses.

From Good News.

Teacher—"If your mother had twenty-five yards of stuff and made a dress requiring but eighteen yards how much would she have left?"

Little Girl—"Mamma can't make her own dresses. She has tried often, and they are always either too——"

Teacher—"Suppose she sent it to a dressmaker, how much would the dressmaker send back?"

Little Girl—"Depends on which dressmaker she sent it to. Some wouldn't send back any."

Teacher (impatiently)—"Suppose she sent it to an honest one?"

Little Girl—"Some of the honestest ones cuts things to waste so that there is never anything left, no matter how much you send 'em."