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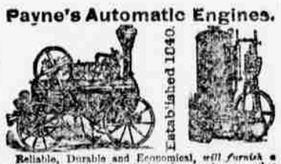
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Frost Time.

Upon the meadows, far and wide,
A silvery frozen mantle lay;
And on the upland mountain side,
Frost glistened in the dawn of day.
Winter was nigh.

The farmer paused in early light,
His rugged face was marked by care;
Amid his locks were lines of white,
For Nature, too, had frosted there—
Winter was nigh.

—Chas. K. Lush in the Current.

HUMPY'S HEROISM.

Every Brooklynite knows where Gowanus is. Gowanus is famed chiefly for its boathouses, its lumber-yards, and its crabbing. On Saturday or Sunday afternoon the athletic and sporting youths of Brooklyn can be seen coming down Henry street, "to take a spin on the screw" or laden with baskets and the inevitable brown crabnets. Gowanus is a rival of Hunter's Point in the matter of smells. The refuse of the city is dumped at the water's edge or thrown in the pools, half slime, half sea water, that lie between the newly-made streets. Yet many people live in Gowanus, for the rents are not high and there is plenty of soil solid enough to build on. Little white cottages with green shutters and weather-beaten shingles stand side by side, with the regulation morning-glory clambering over all. If one were to go by in the morning of a week day he would see, in front of one of them, sunning himself on the sandy walk or clinging to the stumpy white-washed fence, a wizened, humped-back boy, answering to the name of Humpy. What Humpy's right name was (if, indeed, any one knew) had been forgotten long ago.

He lived in the cottage with Mary Ryan and her brother, by whom he had been picked up from the streets. He led a happy, harmless life, never went with the other children, although they were always pleasant to him, and he preferred, unless he were sent to the grocery or on some other errand, to lie in the sun or shamble around the house watching pretty Mary Ryan sew. Mary Ryan was pretty. Mr. Stern had told her so often enough, and, although she was a poor Irish factory hand, (when she could get work), she was pretty enough to captivate the fastidious Mr. Stern, and transform him to the assiduous Mr. Stern. Since Tom Ryan had been called away to an all winter post in a Maine lumber camp, Mr. Stern had a light cedar boat at the boathouse, and Mary Ryan had been out in it nearly every night, down beyond the oily, muddy waters of Gowanus Bay, into the clear, blue stretch of waves beyond. Humpy laid in his old spot on the walk turning the matter over in his mind as Mr. Stern came sauntering down the street.

"Mary in, Humpy?"

Humpy looked up.

"Oh, it's you, is it? Yes, she's in."

As Mr. Stern went in Humpy lay down again.

"Mary, is it?" he muttered. "He didn't know her a month ago, and now it's *Mary*. I'm a-thinking it's a bad day she ever saw him."

He rose and went toward the door, and then, changing his mind, crept around to the back of the house and crawled noiselessly into the kitchen. Through the half opened door he heard Mary saying:

"I'd a letter from Tom this morning and he's comin' back to-morrow."

Humpy did not hear Mr. Stern's reply.

"It's no use to talk like that, for Tom will never let a fine gentleman like you call on a poor girl like me. Maybe I am pretty—that only makes it the worse. The neighbors will tell him enough as it is, and I only hope he let's me bide here. Like as not he'll bid me leave the house."

The girl was weeping now. Evidently she feared her brother terribly.

Mr. Stern saw the chance and took it.

"And why should you wait to meet him, Mary, dear?"

Humpy ground his teeth and looked uglier than ever, but the usual order of things followed. Mary's protests grew weaker and weaker, and finally it was settled that Mary should quit the house that night. Mr. Stern worked strongly on her fears of her brother.

If Humpy had been a character in a novel by the philosophic James or the witty Howells he would have thoughtfully diagnosed the situation for an hour, and then remarked: "The outcome of this will be tragic." However, being a poor Irish cripple, he only shook his head and said under his breath: "And now, there's the deuce to pay." Then he slowly crept out and back to his sunning place.

After Mr. Stern went away the house was strangely quiet. A half-starved street cat, that wandered by, saw Humpy lying in the sun, his head buried in his arms. As the cat slunk by him into the house, it saw on the homely hair sofa a girl sobbing convulsively and saying from time to time: "Oh, mother, if you hadn't died! Oh, mother, if you hadn't died!" The cat wandered back into the kitchen, and gnawed away, undisturbed by the boy lying motionless by the door, or by the girl sobbing there on the sofa. When the cat left the house the last thing it saw was the boy lying silent in the scorching sun, and the last thing it heard was a faint moan that sounded like "Oh, mother, if you had not died!"

There was little supper for Humpy that night, but he did not seem to notice it. He went over to the sofa and lay down with his long bony arms crossed under him. After the dishes were washed, and the last evening's work done, Mary took the lamp and started for her room, and as the lamplight fell on the misshapen wretch she stopped and looked at him. The boy opened his eyes and they looked at each other.

"Humpy, if any one should ever say anything again' me, tell 'em I did the best a motherless girl could do."

Humpy looked at her—ah, so lovingly, and yet so shrewdly, too.

"I'll do that," he growled, and shut his eyes again, while Mary went up stairs.

Mary loved Humpy as only a woman can love a monstrosity, and yet she would give him no other hint of what was to happen.

When Mary had gone up stairs, Humpy opened his eyes very wide, drew from his pocket a bunch of keys, rattled them, and chuckled.

"I'm a thinkin' Mr. Stern will have to go away by himself." Then he crept up stairs very softly.

About ten o'clock a buggy drew up in front of the door. Mr. Stern jumped out and rushed up the dark stair to Mary's room. When Mary heard him, she came to open her door.

They were both surprised, very much surprised. *The door was locked*, and Humpy was chuckling to himself in a dark corner downstairs. But Humpy chuckled too soon for, with a few athletic shoves of the shoulder Mr. Stern sent the weak pine door tumbling off its hinges, and sprang inside to meet the girl. Humpy heard the dull crack of the door, sprang to his feet, and rushed to the foot of the stairs. A niche in the wall barely gave the stair door room enough to swing to and fro. Humpy shut the door and put his broad back against it, while he braced himself against the wall with his pipestem legs. He heard Mary and Stern coming down stairs. He felt another and another, and then a hot stinging pain rushed through him. He shut his teeth and held on. Another wrench and he sank a shapeless mass on the floor, while the awful burning, shooting pain wrung a cry of agony from him, that shook the girl's heart. Throwing aside the bundle she carried she knelt on the floor and took him in her arms. As she bent over him to sooth him her hair tumbled down over her shoulder and streamed over her eyes, but she paid attention to nothing but the boy.

Mr. Stern bent over and felt the cripple's arms and legs, and when he touched the shoulder the boy shook and gave a weak, shuddering moan.

"It's nothing serious, Mary," Mr. Stern said; "only a wrenched shoulder. He'll be all right in a day or two. Put him down and come along."

The girl only held the boy the tighter. Mr. Stern felt out of place. He waited for a while in the dimly lighted room, but the girl kept the boy in her arms, soothing, kissing, and crying over him, but he felt so brutal and so cowardly that he sneaked out like a whipped hound and drove away.

When Tom Ryan came home Mary told him everything, and Tom only said:

"Well, well, Mary, let it end there. You have been foolish, but Humpy has kept you from being wicked."

And in about a month the street cat passing by saw Humpy in his old place as well and happy as ever before.—*Washington Hatchet.*

A Quaint Town in the Grecian Archipelago.

The quay at Syra was gay with small hucksters' shops. One man had a pile of eikons, or sacred pictures, wherewith to tempt the pious about to start on a voyage, pictures of St. Nicholas being most numerous on his stall, for he is the patron saint of the seafarer; another man had besoms; his neighbor sold Russian teabowls and large wooden spoons, while a third offered for sale brilliantly colored handkerchiefs, which, though made in Birmingham, are particularly Eastern in appearance. All among these stalls the water cart was threading its way to supply the huge amphora which each householder produced as the cart went by with the daily portion. Far along the quay was the fish market with strange sights for unaccustomed eyes. Advent was soon to begin, that is the month's fast before Christmas, so there were any amount of octopadia in the market ready to be dried and stewed for this period. Sea urchins, too, and bright red pinna shells afford a substantial part of a Syriote's meal, and this morning were plentiful, besides red mullet and haddock which looked more tempting. In front of this market the boats of the Psariote and Hydriote fishermen with their wicker instead of canvas bulwarks were lying. These men are the best fishermen in the Archipelago, and if you desire to travel among these islands and their treacherous winds, by all means choose one of them.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*

There are over 300,000 persons in England who now use the bicycle and tricycle.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

Artificial ice, Mr. LeFevre declared in a recent paper, can now be made "purer, cheaper and more lasting than natural ice."

The number of living specimens known in the animal kingdom is at least 300,000, of which more than nine-tenths are invertebrates.

The interesting fact has been demonstrated by Mr. Arthur Searle that the Milky Way is about two magnitudes brighter than the mean brightness of the sky, and a square degree of the Milky Way must give between five and six times as much light as an average square degree of the rest of the sky.

In the majority of mammals the teeth are limited in number and definite in their forms. The number ranges from one in the narwhal to 220 in the dolphin. The average is thirty-two, occurring in ruminants, apes and man, but forty-four, as in the hog and mole, is called the typical or normal number, and this number is exceeded only in the lower groups.

The time required to pass from an egg to an imago varies greatly. Thus the bee consumes less than twenty days, while the cicada requires seventeen years.

After much experimenting, Dr. Richardson has found a satisfactory means of causing painless death, and has introduced it into the Home for Lost Dogs, in London. The animals to be killed are placed in a chamber charged with a mixture of carbonic oxide and chloroform vapor, when they tranquilly fall asleep and wake no more.

From surveys of the Gulf of Mexico it appears that its area is 595,000 square miles, and that the area of the surface included within the 100-fathom line is 337,000 square miles—rather more than one-third of the surface having a depth of less than 100 fathoms. The greatest record depth in the Gulf is 2119 fathoms, the mean depth being 858 fathoms.

The Art of Seeing.

In everyday life it is much more important to be an accurate observer than a mere book learner. I have frequently seen the latter made to blush for her deficiencies by the most unlearned, says a correspondent in an English contemporary, for in a contest between eyes and no eyes, eyes have generally got the best of it. Nature has given us such an inexhaustible store of interest that those who go through life without "seeing" lose much of the zest of it. The savage, who necessarily depends upon his keen eye and his quick ear, cultivates those faculties in an extraordinary degree; for does he not see indications and hear sounds which to an unpracticed observer would be utterly unintelligible? So also with all persons who live near the heart of nature. The English shepherd, while perhaps ignorant of the very formation of the alphabet, stores up a fund of interesting knowledge, derived entirely from observation. He can give you simple, interesting astronomical facts which might astonish a scientist, as well as trustworthy information on natural history and even botany. One may possess everything in the way of scholarship, but if he or she have that alone, those who are unlearned but observing will often make them feel very small. I would, therefore urge my readers to cultivate the art of seeing or observing; there is nothing like seeing things for ourselves. Our ideas become fresher, more natural, and more in unison with latter day tastes when they are formed from observation. Nature's book is the one wherein we find the richest, the most varied, and the most inexhaustible subjects for thought.—*Scientific American.*

How a Chinaman Gets Into Business.

Wong Chin Foo, the Chinese ex-journalist, tells how his countrymen get into business in America. He says: "One of our race arrives in New York with no money and in debt to his friends or to bankers for the steamer and railroad fare. He generally engages himself as a greenhorn or apprentice to some successful laundryman. Although the compensation is small ($4 or $5 per week and board) for the six months or one year of his contract, he learns the business, pays off his debts, and gains a good name for integrity and capability. At the end of his term, if he is a skilled workman, he can either secure first-class wages ($17 per week), or open a laundry of his own. The latter is his usual course. He may see, for example, a laundry for sale for $600, whose looks and location he likes, and he himself has but $50 to his name. He goes to Mott street and there on the bulletin boards puts up a notice calling for a 'whey,' or syndicate of twelve men with $50 each to meet him at a certain time and place. The meeting is had, and if he be regarded as honest and capable the requisite $550 is given to him, he in return acknowledging the indebtedness, and promising to pay a certain interest on the money advanced (generally 20 per cent per annum). This money is paid back in monthly installments, so that at the end of a year the borrower is free from debt, his credit unimpaired and the laundry absolutely his own."

GREATEST MONUMENT.

A White Column Erected in Washington's Honor.

Description of the Magnificent Shaft, the Loftiest in Existence.

A fair white marble column, the loftiest of all the creations of men, has slowly arisen, during the past few years, to the memory of Washington. It is situated near the Potomac, in the midst of the groves and gardens of our beautiful national capital, not far from the President's House. It is now nearly completed and will be dedicated with imposing ceremonies on the next anniversary of Washington's birthday. In height it will exceed the pyramid of Cheops by nearly a hundred feet, the ball of St. Peter's by almost as much. The famous London monument by Sir Christopher Wren is a little more than one-third its height; the cupola of St. Paul's would seem almost a dwarf at its side. Our accomplished builder has made an excursion into the regions of the air quite unparalleled, and seems to rise easily with his great theme above all the labors of the past.

Yet it is a curious trait, showing the close connection between the early and the later discoveries of science, that the Washington Monument is built almost with the exact proportion of an Egyptian obelisk. This was found to be the best guide for the construction of so tall a pillar. The monument is ten times as high as it is broad at its base. It will be 555 feet high. It is an enlarged obelisk, a copy of the solitary shaft that still points out the deserted site of Heliopolis, or the ruddy pillars that adorn the Central Park and nearly all the great capitals of Europe—exiles of Egypt. But our American column will add to its attractions many conveniences unknown to the ancient or even modern builders. Wren's monument, or Trajan's column at Rome, could only be ascended by a weary flight of steps. In Washington's the visitor will be seized upon by the genius of steam, and raised in a few moments in a comfortable elevator almost to the copper apex at its top. It is white marble on the outside, granite within. Iron columns rising to the top support the elevator. The foundation is so solid, the proportions so just, that the tall pilar shows scarcely a deflection from the line of strictest rectitude.

Globes of electric light will adorn the interior. There will be no darkness in the shaft. The copper point at the top conducts the lightning to the ground. It will never be struck like the statue of Jupiter on the Roman Capitol. The electric experiments of Franklin will be remembered by every visitor. No one can examine this remarkable column without feeling that a new advance has been made in architecture, and the various devices used in its construction show the triumph of modern skill. Why should we not have houses as tall? Why abandon the upper regions of the air and cling so closely to the tainted earth? Before the visitor to the Washington Monument will open a prospect as fair as any the eye of man has rested on. He will look down upon a land of freedom. The scene is crowned with historical memories—some sad, some full of hope and joy. Before him flows the broad Potomac; not far away is Mount Vernon. Beneath him are battle-fields and scenes of bitter struggle in the past, and now the quiet city, hid in groves and gardens, sleeping in the shades of perpetual peace.

It is a hundred years since Washington, victorious yet sad, sick, impoverished, and almost despanding, had returned to Mount Vernon, hoping to find rest. But for him there was to be no repose. He was drawn at once into that violent political contest that followed the cessation of the war. He led the party of union. His mental labors were ceaseless and excessive; he grew old early. But he was successful. The disturbed and disordered country rose to prosperity and peace. Its enemies, who had foretold its utter ruin, were amazed at its progress. The Union sprang up fair and shapely from the builder's hand, and it was chiefly by the influence of Washington's spotless name and ceaseless toil that the nation became one. It is this period in his life that the new monument will most fitly commemorate. It was then that he became more than ever the author of modern freedom.

This lofty and magnificent column will attract for generations the reverent curiosity of freemen. They will come from every part of the world to visit the city, the monument, and the grave of Washington. The obelisk recorded only the name of a despot and the sorrows of the people. A Trajan and a Marcus Aurelius were the masters of a nation of slaves. The legends and monuments of European kings grow stale and unprofitable. The white marble shaft at Washington recalls a name dear to all mankind.—*Harper's Weekly.*

Recent vital statistics show that under the age of fifteen there are more boys than girls, but after the fifteenth year there are more women than men, and between the ages of ninety and one hundred the proportion is three to two in favor of women.

The Emblematic Candlestick.

Like Aaron's rod that budded, the mystical candlestick had buds, blossoms, and fruit. The bowls which contained the oil were shaped like an almond-nut, the knops like the flower-buds, and the carved flowers resembled the fully expanded blossoms of the almond tree. This tree was selected as the pattern of the golden candlestick, and as that which yielded Aaron's miraculous rod, because it is the first to awaken from the sleep of winter, as its Hebrew name signifies. Its early rosy bloom, coming in January before there is any green leaf on herb or tree, and when the ground is naked and desolate, heralds the approach of spring, like the crimson flush on an Alpine peak, that announces the daybreak long before the valleys have emerged out of the shadow of night. I remember being greatly struck with this circumstance among the ruins of the palaces of the Cæsars at Rome. The rosy clouds of bloom looked surpassingly lovely, clinging to the leafless trees that grew among the grey old ruins, and looking down upon the Arch of Titus, on which, among the spoils of Jerusalem, the golden candlestick is sculptured, still retaining delicately cut in the Pentelic marble the ornaments on its shaft and branches. It was a symbol of the life of nature, rising in perpetual youth and beauty out of the decaying ruins of man's works. And so the Hebrew candlestick might be regarded as emblematical of the life of the Church, being the first to awaken out of the wreck of the Fall, exhibiting its beauties of holiness, and fruits of righteousness, while all around the world is wrapt in the sleep of winter, dead in trespasses and sins. —*Rev. Hugh Macmillan in the Quiver.*

The Smallest Republic.

The whole territory of the state (San Marino) consists of 16 square miles, and has a population of about 9000 souls. The capital city, inclusive of the Borgo at its foot, has over 900 inhabitants. The army is composed of 10 companies of 90 men each; but perhaps our guide forgot to reckon the reserves, for Mr. Bent says that the military force is 2000 strong, and that half the able-bodied men of every family must be enrolled between the ages of 16 and 55, unless they are government officers, doctors, priests, or students. The entire revenue of the state is less than $5000 a year, but San Marino is a model of financial prudence, has no public debts, lives within its income, and has even a nest egg laid by against rainy days. And although it bestows no titles on its own subjects, it swells its exchequer by the sale of orders and titles of nobility to foreigners. To avoid complications with Italy it has no printing press within its dominions. For the same reason it refrains from growing tobacco, and, buying the leaf from Italy at cost price, contents itself with manufacturing its own cigars. It possesses no penal establishments, but has made a very pleasant arrangement with its obliging neighbor. San Marino sends its criminals to be punished in Italy, and—although that part of the arrangement is probably not recorded in black and white—may be said to receive monks and nuns in exchange. For the two large nunneries and four monasteries of this tiny state afford the devout uncurtailed privileges that are no longer, it seems, to be enjoyed across the border.—*London Belgravia.*

"Tell's Kapelle."

Beyond the village of Kussnacht, on the road to Immensee, writes a correspondent of the Boston *Herald*, I found the "hollow pate" of Schiller, where Tell placed himself to watch for Gessler's arrival, and then I entered the little chapel erected to mark the spot where the tyrant fell, struck down by the avenging dart that helped so much to free the Swiss. There was another 'Tell's kapelle" that I visited, the one, on the lake shore erected at the spot where Tell leaped ashore from Gessler's boat and gave the signal for the revolt for national liberty. The walls are covered with pictures recalling the terrible acts of despotism committed by the ancient tyrants of this land. Here we have a nobleman putting out the eyes of an old man which looked at him too boldly as he passed; there a father's tongue is being torn out by the root because he refused to betray the hiding place of his son, a reticence which does not seem to have been of much avail, for a little farther on we see the son being skinned alive for having resisted the hirelings of his lord. It would be hard to convey an adequate picture of the frowning, wild savage aspect that the lake presents around here. On all sides tower up a perfect chaos of mountains, which hem in, and here and there push forth their rocky spurs into the very bosom of the lake; black, smooth, steep, inaccessible rocks, against which the waves dash in heavy masses driven by gusts of wind that issue suddenly from some lair. There are some who pretend that all this story about Tell is legend and not a bit historical; for my part, I prefer to believe such stories. To me the heroic deeds of William Tell are a part of the history of this earth.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

Smiles or Tears.

Hair in such a tangled mass,
Round face rather tearful,
A frown to pucker up the brow
Won't make the world more cheerful.

A pout upon the cherry lip
Won't make the small heart lighter;
But see, a smile is lurking there,
Now all the world is as brighter!

Playthings of African Children.

The girls in Africa, as elsewhere, are fond of dolls; but they like them best alive, so they take puppies for the purpose, and carry them about tied to their backs, as their mothers carry babies. Some of them "play baby" with little pigs. The boys play shoot with a gun made to imitate the "white man's gun." Two pieces of cane tied together make the barrels, the stock is made of clay, and the smoke is made of a tuft of loose cotton. In one African tribe the boys have spears made of reeds, shields and bows and arrows, with which they imitate their fathers' doings; and they make animals out of clay, while their sisters "jump the rope." Besides, the African children like children all over the world, enjoy themselves "making believe." They imitate the life around them, not playing "keep house," "go visiting," or "give a party," because they see none of these things in their homes; but they pretend building a hut, making clay jarf, and crushing corn to eat.—*Methodist Recorder.*

A Queer Rag-bag.

Aunt Mary kept her rags in a large green bag. It had once covered Uncle John's big bass-viol.

One day Aunt Mary said that the rag-bag was very full, and they must sell the rags to the ragman. Jan needed a new bread pan.

The ragman called for the rags, and Jane carried down the bag.

"You have a fine lot here," he said. "I will weigh them in the bag."

So he weighed them.

"Just two shillings," said he; "now I will put them in my cart."

When he did so, Aunt Mary heard him use a strange word.

"That beats all I ever saw!" said the rag-man.

Aunt Mary ran out. Jane followed her, with Uncle John's two boys.

"Dear me!" said one.

"Did you ever!" said another.

"What can it be?" added Aunt Mary.

And there was "Malta," the cat, in the rag-bag, with two of the prettiest kittens you ever saw!

She had been missing for three weeks. The boys had asked all the neighbors about her. They even went to the police-station, and the kind inspector said, "We will do all we can to find your pet."

All this time she was sleeping with her babies in the rag-bag. The boys thought she must be starved. Malta looked fat and wise.

"I know," said Jane; "she has taken some of baby's milk. I put it on the table every night, and in the morning it was all gone."

"That was it," said Aunt Mary, "for sometimes baby did not wake up."

"She must have eaten mice, too," said Fred, "for they have all left our room."

Then the ragman had to weigh the rags again without Malta and her babies, and Aunt Mary did not get two shillings.

The ragman said he would give them two shillings for the cat and her babies

"Sell Malta!" said the boys. "Why we would just as soon think of selling mother!"

A Good Cup of Coffee.

Of course, a good quality of the coffee-bean, and thoroughly clean utensils, are indispensable. Then there are three requisites to perfection; namely, that it be fresh roasted, fresh ground, and fresh made. Of the many recipes that have been published, we will give only two. The first is the "Thurber recipe":

Into a large cup of coffee ground moderately fine break one egg with shell; mix well, adding enough cold water to wet the grounds thoroughly. Pour on a pint of boiling water, boil slowly for ten or fifteen minutes; let it stand three minutes to settle; pour through a fine wire sieve into a warm coffee-pot. This will do for four persons.

The following method is due to that "king of cooks," Soyer. If simplicity is an evidence of genius, it is worthy of its author:

Put two ounces or ground coffee in a stew-pan set on the fire, and stir with a spoon until quite hot. Pour over a pint of boiling water. Cover over closely for five minutes, pass it through a cloth, warm again, and serve.—*Popular Science News.*

The Voice as an Instrument of Music.

She who taught the nightingale to sing, she whose early hymn the sweet ark warbles to the morning, she who pours forth the full melody from the deep throat of the thrush, and gives the little sparrow the pleasant, the articulated harmony, she also, when she gave to man a throat and breath, taught him to modulate. This is the work of nature, in harmony to the laws of nature's God. Thus far music is her gift. None of the "sweet-toned instruments known to human invention equals the natural voice in sweetness; they are all harsh or they are rough, when compared with the pure tone, the mellow softness of the throat. What was the great praise of Martini, but that he made the hautboy emulate the sound of the human voice? Nature has given to man the first and finest of all instruments in his own frame; the ancients were employing their time uselessly when they endeavored to demonstrate in what country music first saw its origin. It is, doubtless, coeval with the human fabric, and natural to all countries where men have lived.—*Chicago Current.*