Table Cutlery.

In ordinary British households the steel knife still holds its own, excepting for the eating of fish or fruit, for which purposes silver or plated knives are expressly made and in universal use. In Germany the inferior quality of the table-cutlery is a source of constant annoyance, while in France competition with English manufactures has long been keen. The cutlery of Great Britain carried away most of the prizes for superior workmanship and finish, and even yet the "Rodgers" and other special makes command the highest prices, but within the last forty years great progress has been made in the United States in this industry. And while the finest and most expensive cutlery is still imported from Sheffield and other centers of English manufacture an immense trade in domestic cutlery has sprung up, and American knives are found upon many European tables. There are various reasons for this, foremost among them the fact that in this country machinery enters far more largely into the manufacture of cutlery than in England, where the finest steel blades are forged, ground, and polished by hand, each blade receiving a share of minute and individual attention which is imposable where hundreds are turned out at one time. This individual manipulation enables a workman to detect the very smallest irregularity in the warp of the steel, and to bestow upon each separate piece that passes through his hands the amount of care that is necessary to bring it to the very highest state of perfection. For this reason the trade in English cutlery still shows an increase as far as the finest goods are concerned, and the Sheffield manufacturer stands unrivaled in the highest branches of his art. And again, in turning out very cheap goods, such, for example, as are found at the five-cent stores, the English factories can still compete satisfactorily with those of this country, owing to the greater cheapness of labor; but it is in the vast intermediate field of general supply for ordinary use that we must seek the results of American enterprise. And in this field the British confess themselves outrivaled. Of the numberless houses which a few years ago were represented in this country for middle-class cutlery goods, not one in ten remains, and not only is the home demand supplied by cutlery of domestic make, but very large exports are made to different parts of the world, notably to Africa, Australia, Germany, and Spain. In addition to the great advantages which the use of machinery gives the American manufacturer of middle-class goods, he derives still further facility from the variety of the materials now used for handles.

The expense of a knife depends very greatly upon the handle, in first-class goods almost entirely so, the same quality of steel being invariably used for the blades, and the price of imported cutlery has increased largely within the last few years upon this account. The handles of the best English knives are invariably made of ivory, and in this article there has been a formidable advance of no less than from $300 to $400 a ton, and there is a prospect of a still further rise in price. The value of a ton of ivory is about $6,000, and the estimate of material used is one pound to one dozen small knives. In this country, on the contrary, ivory is now comparatively little used, other materials being employed for handles even for the finest knives. Of these celluloid is the most remarkable. The English claim to have been the inventors of this or of a precisely similar material, which is known as xlomite, and a large trade has been carried on by them in celluloid-handle knives, but nothing in comparison to the extent to which they are manufactured in this country. The basis of celluloid is tissue paper, and camphor enters largely into its composition, together with a pigment of white zinc lead, which gives the necessary hardness. It is almost impossible to break it, and there is no danger of the unsightly cracks in a celluloid knife handle which are the perpetual torment of the mistresses of Irish servants. Besides celluloid various materials are pressed into the service by American ingenuity. Cheap knives have handles of cocoa bola wood, which is imported from the isthmus, and in spite of difficulty of transport is very much cheaper than bone. Then we have the ebony handles, the material for which is imported from Zanzibar, carried from the interior of Africa upon the backs of natives and shipped in immense quantities to America. Rubber handles again play an important part, the royalty upon the patent, which is an old German one and has now lapsed, having amounted to $40,000 a year. Many varieties of bone, too, are used, and horn is still in demand for the handles of carving-knives and forks. An immense trade is done in the solid steel knives, of which handle and blade are made in one piece. These, which are of British manufacture, are imported here and plated for the American market. Plated table cutlery, as we have seen, is popular here and immense quantities of it are supplied to the Southern States. The appearance of American cutlery is much in its favor. In the cheaper knives metal is used in the handles, and serves both as ornament and rivets, and great attention is paid to the shape both of handle and blade. Some of the more expensive knives and plated forks have pearl handles curiously cut and twisted. The pearl itself is imported from India and Manilla, and cut in New York city, where pearl-cutting forms a distinct branch of trade. A finely-finished knife passes through fifty different hands.—*N. Y. Times.*

The Benders.

Time and again the fate of the Bender family has been a question warmly debated in all parts of the West. Many people maintain that the family were duly killed by the avengers of Dr. York, whose death first brought to notice the murderous family. Notwithstanding this, every little while comes the report that the Benders are still living and have been captured. There have been discovered no less than one hundred different Bender families, and a collection of the newspaper sensations relative to the discoveries of Benders would prove a most interesting literary curiosity. The latest Bender sensation was a local one, when the detectives of the city clapped a guileless citizen into the calaboose upon the statement of a man named Green. He was discharged from custody a few days afterward.

The Benders kept an inn on a lonesome road near Cherryvale, Labette County, Kas. The road passed through the midule of a prairie, six miles from Cherryvale, and at the inn travelers often stopped to get lodgings for the night. Travelers stopping there, supposed to have money, were seated at the table, and while they were taking their meals a curtain, which was suspended behind them, showed the position of their heads. A blow with the head of an ax from behind the curtain would stun or finish them. The bodies were lowered into a cellar underneath through a trap-door, where the pockets would be rifled of money and valuables, and then the bodies were buried in a hole dug in the lot in the rear of this hospitable tavern. The disappearance of Dr. York led to the discovery of these terrible crimes, and the sudden departure of the Bender family.

Many statements of the manner in which the Benders met their retribution have been made, but the circumstances of the affair have for a long time been enveloped in mystery. A new version of the fate of the Benders sets the matter beyond all doubt.

The following statement of Capt. J. C. Reeves, who was First-Lieutenant of Capt. Burrows' Battery, United States Volunteers, and who was living at Independence, Kas., at the time the Bender family were detected as the murderers of Dr. York and others, was given to Col. D. W. Wear of this city, who furnished it to the *Republican*. According to Capt. Reeves' statement, Dr. York lived at Independance, Kas., and went from Independence to Fort Scott to sell a house and lot at that place. He negotiated the sale, but the purchaser did not pay any money down. York started for his home in Independence, Kas., where he purchased some cigars. He was next met on the road from Parsons to Bender's and recognized by three or four parties, but he never could be traced beyond Bender's.

Dr. York's wife being indisposed, her husband's return was expected that night. His brother, Col. York, aware of the delicate condition of his brother's wife, started out after him, and the first trail he struck was at Parsons, where he learned that the Doctor had gone through Parsons on his way home the day before. From this place he set out on the trail, and heard of his brother three or four times between Parsons and the Bender place. Col. York stopped at the Bender place and made inquiries for his brother, the Doctor. The Benders denied that he had ever been there. Col. York then went to Independence, Montgomery County, Kas., and got Sheriff Stone. They both (Colonel York and Sheriff Stone) made a visit to the Benders. On arriving there they had a conversation with John Bender, and the information they got from him was unsatisfactory, but enough was obtained to arouse their suspicions.

Colonel York and Sheriff Stone then returned to Independence and raised a party of men. They started out to Bender's the very next morning, and when the party arrived at the place it was discovered that the family had all decamped. They then hunted around the house, and finally prosecuted their search in the garden, where they found that the ground had recently been disturbed. On removing the surface soil they found the body of Dr. York and others, who had been murdered, buried in these crude graves. Hon. William Wright and S. S. Peterson, Deputy United States Marshal at that time, followed the wagon-track across the open prairie to Thayer, Kas., which is about twelve miles distant from the Bender house. There they found the Benders' wagon and horses, which had been abandoned. They there learned that the Benders had taken the train on the L., L. & G. Railroad for the north. The pursuing party telegraphed the conductor of the train, and he telegraphed back that the Benders had stopped at Chinutte or New Chicago. They next telegraphed the ticket agent at Chicago or Chinutte. He answered that he had sold the Benders tickets to Chetopa, Kas., which is just two miles from the Cherokee line.

Messrs. Wright and Peterson, after obtaining this valuable information, mounted their horses and rode rapidly back to the Bender place, where they found Colonel York and Sheriff Stone. The four men at once procured fresh horses and started in all haste for Chetopa. At Oswego they again procured fresh horses and started anew for Chetopa, only distant eight miles. Then they ascertained that the Benders had taken a team and wagon, which was awaiting them there, and had gone in a southeasterly direction toward the Grand River, in the Indian Nation. Chetopa is about thirty miles from the Grand River. When the pursuing party reached Chetopa they were only about three hours behind the Benders. They pushed rapidly ahead, and the four men came up with the fugitives four miles from the Grand River, and there, without further ceremony, the Benders met the retribution due their crimes. They were all shot to death, and the bones of old man Bender, his wife, John and Kate lie there in a hole dug in the ground, where they remain at this day.

Mr. Wright is now living in Iowa, and Peterson is a resident of Independence, Kans. Stone is living in Montgomery County, Kans. About a year after the terrible murders by the Bender family occurred, Colonel Wear visited the spot. The house had disappeared, and a few stones forming the underpinning, and a hollow space which was the cellar, with here and there an excavation in the rear where the murdered victims had been buried, were the only signs to be seen of the monstrous crimes perpetrated by the Benders, who in their turn met with swift punishment and a just retribution.—*St. Louis Republican.*

—A New York tailor says that when he desires to get rid of a poor paying customer he misfits him so badly that he is laughed at. Then he gets mad and patronizes some other tailor.

—It is said all things come to those who wait. That may be, but a family waiting for a load of coal may freeze to death before it comes.

PITH AND POINT.

—"Time works wonders," as the woman said when she got married after a thirteen-years' courtship.

—A member of the School Board said: "Well, children, you spell well and you reads well, but you hain't sot still."

—Lots of people pay five per cent. more for goods in Canada for the sake of smuggling them over the border.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—"The best conductor of electricity at present known is silver." The best conductor into "society" at present known is gold. It used to be brains.—*Norristown Herald.*

—A New York genius has discovered a way of making leather out of banana skins. They will thus be able to kick the man who left them on the flag-stones to endanger human life.

—No man living walks in a straight line. The squarest-footed walker walks to the right or left a distance of thirty-six feet in a mile. In case there is a saloon on the way he may diverge as much as 150 feet.—*Detroit Post.*

—"Oh, yes," said the engineer, "I had a chance to become a hero by sticking to my post when the collision came, but when I reflected that my name would be spelled five hundred different ways in the newspapers I changed my mind and jumped."

—The prosperous hardware clerk is known by his stove-pipe hat.—*Bloomington Eye.* And the carpenter by his claw-hammer coat.—*Gold Leaf.* And the lawyer by his whole suit.—*Bruce.* But the lover you must discover by his sighs.—*Elevated Railway Journal.*

—"What are you looking around for so much?" asked an Austin mother of her fifteen-year-old son, with whom she was walking. "I am looking around on your account." "On my account?" "Yes. I want to pick you out a good-looking daughter-in-law."—*Texas Siftings.*

—When a man is excited he is very apt to talk without thinking. An Austin landlord called on his tenant the tenth time for his rent. "I haven't got any money," was the response. "Well, if you haven't got money enough to pay your rent you ought to build yourself a house."

—Two rival belles at an evening party were seated in the conservatory with their respective cavaliers, enjoying their supper. The gas was turned down somewhat, as it should be in a conservatory at an evening party. "My dear Julia," said one of the fascinating creatures, "how beautiful your complexion is—in this dim light!" "Oh, thank you," responded her rival, "and how lovely you look—in the dark!"

—Let her whistle!—

What if a girl whistle?
'Twon't make your heart bristle
Or scratch like a thistle.
A whistling lassie
Need not be sassy,
Or vulgar, or brassy.
No psalm or epistle
Has thrown the first missile
At women who whistle.
It's quite as becoming
As singing or humming,
Or playing or strumming.
Be just philosophic,
O men, on this topic;
Not misogynistic
Nor grumpy nor mystic.

—*N. Y. Sun*

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

—Some French chemists have succeeded in solidifying petroleum, in which state it burns like tallow. This solidification is effected by adding to distilled petroleum twenty-five per cent. of the purified juice of the plant belonging to the family of the Euphorbiaceous.

—Ether spray in the practice of Dr. McColganan, has not only immediately relieved facial neuralgia, but has effected a permanent cure. The intense cold produced is considered to have acted on the affected nerve, so as to have produced a complete change in the nutrition and its action.—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

—Instead of employing an ammoniacal double salt of nickel in an alkaline solution, for nickel plating, a new plan is to use a neutral or slightly alkaline solution, containing certain organic acids; 90 parts by weight of sulphate of nickel, 25 of citrate of nickel, and 15 of benzoic acid, are dissolved in 4,000 of water.—*Chicago Tribune.*

—On Long Island the sand industry has grown to extraordinary proportions. Only four firms whose invested capital did not exceed $80,000 existed five years ago. The capital invested in the business at the present time exceeds $2,000,000. An average of 4,500 tons of sand are shipped in boats to New York daily.—*N. Y. Times.*

—Sheep culture is no longer a matter of doubt or experiment in the Arkansas Valley. Numerous streams of pure running water, tame and wild grasses, cheap food and market facilities present great inducements to sheep owners. From a very small beginning made about five years ago the business has increased to good proportions.

—The *American Naturalist* says that mountain cork has been recently used in Germany as a substitute for animal charcoal for the removal of color from molasses. The mountain cork, a species of amphibole, is dried, ignited and soaked in molasses, then again dried and ignited. The process is repeated several times until some 3.5 per cent. of carbon has become fixed in the mineral, which is then ready for use. It is more efficient than charcoal in removing the alkalies from molasses.

—A new map of the mean annual rainfall of the world has been prepared by Professor Elias Loomis, of Yale College. He finds that an equatorial rain belt of fifty inches of rain a year extends continuously across all the continents and islands, and is nearly fifteen hundred miles wide on an average. On the other hand the regions which receive less than ten inches of rain per annum are also very extensive, although Spain is the only land in Europe where the rainfall is so scanty as this. In Asia, however, there is an area three thousand miles long and one thousand miles broad, over which the rainfall averages less than ten inches, and like tracts exist in Africa, Australia, on the west coast of South America, and the North American continent near the Great Slave Lake, in Arizona, and in Southern California. Professor Loomis estimates that one-fifth of the earth's land surface receives an annual rainfall of less than ten inches. Very little is known as to the quantity of rain which falls upon the ocean.

Our Young Folks.

A BALLAD OF BRAVERY.

To spread his fame I'll sing about
A little lad of ten,
Who, with no weapon, put to route
An army of brave men:

The glittering troops attacked, one day,
A quiet, sleepy town,
And filled the people with dismay
As swiftly they came down.

They all prepared to hide or run,
With faces ashen pale.
All, did I say? No, all save one—
The hero of my tale.

"Cowards!" he said, with flashing eye,
"They pillage and destroy,
And yet you men stand idly by!
I'll lead you, though a boy!"

He charged alone; the troops stood still;
He bravely knocked them down!
And thus, by his heroic will,
He saved the little town

Lest this you think be hardly true,
It should be understood
That, though the boy was *real* like you,
The rest were made of wood!

—*Malcolm Douglas, in St. Nicholas.*

THE SLEIGH-RIDE;

Or Two Ways of Telling a Story.

[The following story is as good this year as in 1834, when it was written and published by one still among us, and as ready as ever with graceful pen in every good cause]:

Young people commit more faults from thoughtlessness than from intent to do wrong; and want of reflection leads children astray much oftener than want of principle. Indifference to the feelings of the aged, a proneness to make light of peculiarities, are, however, occasionally indulged in by the young, and in the excitement of the momentary gratification which such merriment may produce, all thought of the wrong and all sense of the right are equally forgotten. The proverb of the wisest man saith: "The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is their gray head." The strength of the young should protect and defend the beauty of the old. The hoary head should ever be protected, whatever may be the outward condition of its possessor: and neither sport nor ridicule should be thrown upon him whose enfeebled strength scarce suffices to bear the weight of the many years with which time has burdened him.

The following narrative, which is strictly true, illustrates what has been observed, and proves that the just recompense of a thoughtless fault may be more speedily repaid to those who commit it than may be either expected or desired by them. The common saying of "waking up the wrong passenger" is peculiarly applicable to the case.

In one of the most populous cities of New England, a few years since, a party of lads, all members of the same school, got up a grand sleigh-ride. There were about twenty-five or thirty boys engaged in the frolic. The sleigh was a very large and splendid establishment, drawn by six gray horses. The afternoon was as beautiful as anybody could desire, and the merry group enjoyed themselves in the highest degree. It was a common custom of the school to which they belonged, and on previous occasions their teacher had accompanied them. Some engagement upon important business, however, occupying him, he was not at this time with them. It is quite likely, had it been otherwise, that the restraining influence of his presence would have prevented the scene which is the main feature of the present story.

On the day following the ride, as he entered the school-room, he found his pupils grouped about the stove, and in high merriment, as they chatted about the fun and frolic of their excursion. He stopped awhile and listened, and in answer to some inquiries which he made about the matter, one of the lads, a fine, frank and manly boy, whose heart was in the right place, though his love of sport sometimes led him astray, volunteered to give a narrative of their trip and its various incidents. As he drew near the end of his story, he exclaimed: "Oh, sir, there was one little circumstance which I had almost forgotten to tell you. Toward the latter part of the afternoon, as we were coming home, we saw, at some distance ahead of us, a queer-looking affair in the road. We could not exactly make out what it was. It seemed to be a sort of half-and-half monstrosity. As we approached it, it proved to be a rusty old sleigh, fastened behind a covered wagon, proceeding at a slow rate, and taking up the whole road. Finding that he owner was not disposed to turn out, we determined upon a volley of snow-balls and a good hurrah. These we gave with a rush, and they produced the right effect and a little more, for the crazy machine turned out into the deep snow by the side of the road, and the skinny old pony started on a full trot. As we passed, some one who had the whip gave the old jilt of a horse a good crack, which made him run faster than he ever did before, I'll warrant. And so, with another volley of snow-balls, pitched into the front of the wagon, and three times three cheers, we rushed by. With that, an *old fellow* in the wagon, who was buried up under an old hat and beneath a rusty cloak, and who had dropped the reins, bawled out: 'Why do you frighten my horse?' 'Why don't you turn out, then?' says the driver. So we gave him three rousing cheers more; his horse was frightened again, and ran up against a loaded team, and, I believe, almost capsized the old creature—and so we left him."

"Well, boys," replied the instructor, "that is quite an incident. But take your seats, and, after our morning service is ended, I will take my turn and tell you a story, and all about a sleigh-ride, too."

Having finished the reading of a chapter in the Bible, and after all had joined in the Lord's Prayer, he commenced, as follows:

"Yesterday afternoon a very venerable and respectable old man, and a clergyman by profession, was on his way from Boston to Salem, to pass the residue of the winter at the house of his son. That he might be prepared for journeying, as he proposed to do in the spring, he took with him his light wagon and for the winter his sleigh, which he fastened behind the wagon. He was, as I have told you, very old and in form; his temples were covered with thinned locks, which the frosts of eighty years had whitened; his sight and hearing, too, were somewhat blunted by age, as yours will be should you live to be as old. He was proceeding very slowly and quietly, for his horse was old and feeble like his owner. His thoughts reverted to the scenes of his youth, when he had periled his life in fighting for the liberties of his country; to the scenes of his manhood, when he had preached the Gospel of his Divine Master to the heathen of the remote wilderness; and to the scenes of riper years, when the hard hand of penury had lain heavily upon him. While thus occupied, almost forgetting himself in the multitude of his thoughts, he was suddenly disturbed and even terrified by loud hurrahs from behind, and by a furious pelting and clattering of balls of snow and ice upon the top of his wagon. In his trepidation he dropped his reins, and as his aged and feeble hands were quite benumbed with cold he found it impossible to gather them up, and his horse began to run away.

"In the midst of the old man's trouble, there rushed by him, with loud shouts, a large party of boys in a sleigh drawn by six horses. 'Turn out, turn out, old fellow!'—'Give us the road, old boy!'—'What'll you take for your pony, old daddy?'—'Go it, frozen nose!'—'What's the price of oats?' were the various cries that met his ear.

"'Pray, do not frighten my horse,' exclaimed the infirm driver.

"'Turn out, then! turn out!' was the answer, which was followed by repeated cracks and blows from the long whip of the 'grand sleigh,' with showers of snowballs, and three tremendous huzzas from the boys who were in it.

"The terror of the old man and his horse was increased, and the latter ran away with him, to the imminent danger of his life. He contrived, however, after some exertion, to secure his reins, which had been out of his hands during the whole of the affray, and to stop his horse just in season to prevent his being dashed against a loaded team.

"As he approached Salem, he overtook a young man who was walking toward the same place, and whom he invited to ride. The young man alluded to the 'grand sleigh,' which had just passed, which induced the old gentleman to inquire if he knew who the boys were. He replied that he did; that they all belonged to one school, and were a set of wild fellows.

"Aha!" exclaimed the former, with a hearty laugh (for his constant good nature had not been disturbed), 'do they, indeed? Why, their master is very well known to me. I am now going to his house, and I rather think I shall give him the benefit of this whole story.'

"A short distance brought him to his journey's end: the house of his son. His old horse was comfortably housed and fed, and he himself abundantly provided for.

"That son, boys, is your instructor; and that aged and infirm old man, that 'old fellow' and 'old boy' (who did not turn out for you, but who would gladly have given you the whole road, had he heard your approach), that 'old boy,' and 'old daddy,' and 'old frozen nose' was your master's father!"

It is not easy to describe nor to imagine the effects produced by this new translation of the boy's own narrative. Some buried their heads behind their desks; some cried; some looked askant at each other, and many hastened down to the desk of the teacher, with apologies, regrets and acknowledgments without end. All were freely pardoned, but were cautioned that they should be more civil, for the future, to inoffensive travelers, and more respectful to the aged and infirm.

* * * * *

Years have passed by; the lads are men, though some have found an early grave; the "manly boy" is "in the deep bosom of the ocean buried." They who survive, should this story meet their eye, will easily recall its scenes, and throw their memories back to the "School-house in Federal Street," and to their old friend and well-wisher,

H. K. OLIVER.

—*Massachusetts Teacher.*

The Air at Great Heights.

During a recent stay for a month on the summit of the Pic du Midi (which is about 9,590 feet above the sea level) MM. Muntz and Aubin examined the air and aqueous meteors repeatedly, with reference to the presence of ammonia and to atmospheric nitrification. The ammonia of the air seemed to be in much the same proportion as that found in the air on low ground; but that of the rain-water, snow and fog was considerably less than on low ground for which various reasons are adduced—the greater rarefaction of the air traversed, absence of nitrate ammonia, dryness of snow preventing condensation of ammonia, fogs being formed where found, without descent, etc. In all the observations of rain, fog and snow for nitrate, an almost complete absence of these latter was ascertained. In this connection the authors had an examination made of the record of thunder-storms kept at the observatory (nitrates being formed in the air by electrical action.) Of the 184 thunder-storms observed from 1873 to 1882, only 23 had been produced at a height above 7,700 feet (where the original station of Plantade is situated) in the latter the summit of the Pic was surrounded by clouds whence the discharge came. It may be said in general, that in the Pyrenean region the violent electric phenomena of thunder-storms never exceed a height of 10,000 feet (3,000 meters), and that, consequently, the formation of nitrates under the influence of electricity is beyond this limit. Atmospheric nitrification seems to be chiefly produced in the zone between the sea level and the mean height of clouds. This absence of fine powders of nitrates, the authors also remark, certainly contributes to the remarkable transparence of the air in high regions, and shows that the plants on high mountains, and the soil they have formed, can only obtain their nitrogenized matter from the ammonia of the air.—*London Times.*

—For a delicious dessert pick over and wash well a cup of rice and let it boil or a quarter of an hour; drain and spread it on small pudding cloths which have been wet and laid over a bowl to shape; put an apricot in the center and the rice close around it; tie tightly in a cloth, steam ten minutes, and serve with apricot sauce.—*Chicago News.*

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