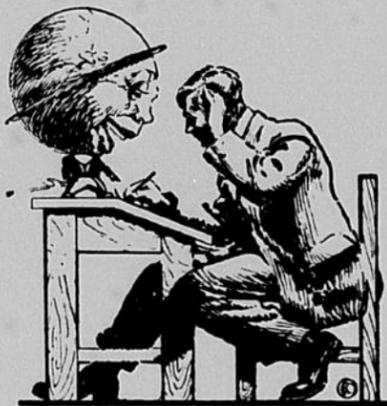


THE FUN OF IT ALL

By GEO. FITCH



ous engagements, that they have at last met the real thing. As a rule the efforts of the author will be entirely taken up in inventing some plausible reason why they should not marry at that age without anybody's interference.

The scenes of the new books will be laid largely in New York, which is rapidly becoming congested with novel characters. Enormous as the output of real automobiles is to be this year it will not begin to equal the number constructed by authors for the new books. The death rate in the new novels will be very low. There will be very few convictions and practically nothing will happen worthy of a 9 p. m. extra. The covers will continue to assist literature by selling the books in vast numbers on suspicion.

ESSAYS ON AMERICAN CITIES

Washington

WASHINGTON was the only Made-to-Order city in the United States until Gary was built by the Steel Corporation. It was laid out in 1800 as the capitol of the United States and has continued to hold the job successfully ever since.

Washington is one of the very few cities in the country which is not infested with aldermen. It is governed by the United States and the citizens do not have to worry about elections. There aren't any. They are the only citizens in the country who are governed without the consent of the governed, with the exception of Indians not taxed. If they do not like the administration they do not even have the satisfaction of going out and voting against the republican party. They can't vote.

Washington has been nicknamed "The City of Magnificent Distances." It is 300 miles from the western coast and 1,500 miles away from the insurgents' country, but only across the fence from Rhode Island. Washington was laid out by an engineer, who was also an artist. In consequence it is full of diagonal streets and avenues and public squares, which are infested with statues. The statue directory of Washington is as large as the telephone directory, and if they were included in the census reports the city would show a remarkable growth.

Washington contains the national capitol, which stands with its back to the city, owing to the perverseness of the people, who refused to buy lots in the proper part of town. It also contains the White House, the Congressional Library, Washington's monument, the first skyscraper, the Gridiron club, nearly a hundred senators and many other suspicious characters. The new Washington depot cost \$20,000,000 and is so large that it sometimes contains two kinds of climate at once.

Washington contains 400,000 citizens, varying from deep black to lily white. It has no factories and is full of magnificent buildings, which are surrounded by dejected sign boards and old frame hovels. The climate of Washington is lovely for several days in April. The rest of the time it varies from sloppy to superheated. Pneumonia is more fashionable in Washington than appendicitis and the habit of holding presidential inaugurations in March has proven very beneficial in removing old statesmen via the exposure route and making room for ambitious young men.

LITTLE LESSONS IN NATURAL HISTORY

VI. The Night Mare

THE Night Mare is one of the best known of all animals and one of the most feared. She is wilder than the tiger and more frightful in its speed than the turkey buzzard. A young night mare with no previous experience can fling a 200 pound man over her flanks and carry him all over the South Sea Islands and the Gobi desert in less time than it would take him to look them up on the map.

The Night Mare is so called because she is always ridden at night. She is somewhat timid, but may be easily caught. Mix up a little crab flake, some mayonnaise, a dash of champagne and some rich pastry and you can catch her with it every time. She will also come for mince pie, for broiled lobster, for chicken salad and for a variety of other temptations. Strangely enough the Night Mare is no lover of hay. Offer her breakfast food and she will remain shyly aloof.

Once the Night Mare is caught it is no trouble to ride her. It is no fun either. The Night Mare usually wears a high saddle without stirrups and studded with red-hot nails. She rocks like a ship in a gale as she dashes from mountain peak to mountain peak. The rider soon loses his hold and slides downward, only to find sharks and cuttlefish awaiting him. He hangs on to the Mare's legs and is kicked by her hoofs. He lets go and falls 11,000 miles, catching on jagged splinters of rock and crashing through acres of glass and ice. Occasionally the Mare comes after him and tramps on him. Sometimes she varies this by eating his leg. When the ride is over the rider wakens sideways in bed very cross and spansks his oldest child before breakfast. The lasting effects of riding Night Mares are always more severe upon other members of the family than the rider.

The champion Night Mare is Dyspepsia Mince Piecuss, a pale green animal with red-hot legs, who can do the circuit of the earth upside down in 11 seconds. Nobody likes to ride Night Mares, but every one does just the same. They are not as expensive as taxicabs, but are far more exciting.

WHEN FATHER WAS A BOY

THE world was full of wondrous things
When father was a boy.
It almost seems like folks had wings
When father was a boy.
They liked to work the live-long day,
And rise at five and never play.
They just seemed to be built that way
When father was a boy.

The little boys were awful strong
When father was a boy.
They'd weed the corn fields all day long
When father was a boy.
And when the day at last was o'er
They'd go and do up every chore.
Then come and beg to work some more
When father was a boy.

The youngsters never had no fun
When father was a boy.
They'd go to bed when work was done
When father was a boy.
They only had a book or two;
The clothes they wore was never new,
And gee! the lessons they got through
When father was a boy.

The snow was thirty-two feet deep
When father was a boy.
They tunneled through to feed the sheep
When father was a boy.
The crust 'ud freeze and then they'd go
And coast to town upon the snow
Without a stop, ten miles or so,
When father was a boy.

Young folks were seen and never heard
When father was a boy.
They couldn't say a single word
When father was a boy.
But now Dad loves to whoop and shout,
I guess us kids has heard about
Most all the talk he went without
When father was a boy.

NEW MODELS IN FICTION

ADVANCE views of the 1910 models in fiction fail to reveal any great change for the better or worse.

The heroines will continue beautiful as a rule. Very few authors have had the nerve to write about a homely heroine and none such will break into the best sellers this year. On the whole the morals of the heroine will deteriorate considerably. She will be divorced more and will be more unconventional in love affairs. She will still refrain from robbing banks, but is likely to do time for disorderly conduct as a suffragette in several editions.

The hero will have a fat time of it. The days when the hero had to carve his way through a 400-page volume with his sword are about past. Very few heroes will be required to spit villains this year and the amount of gunpowder burned will be considerably below the average. As a rule the hero will be expected to attend strictly to business, amass a fortune and be experimented on by the heroine. Technically speaking, the hero will be the goat this year. He will not have any brains to speak of, but the heroine will love him just the same. This is life-like and just as it should be.

Advance views of the villain reveal him almost unanimously in full dress after 6 p. m. He will be a man of great business ability, but will wear his conscience in his lower left hand vest pocket with his liver pills. The villain will be given a hundred million dollars at the beginning of the book and will be instructed to do his worst. Some terrible things will result, but just as the villain is about to buy the capitol of the United States and turn it into a private garage, Fate will interfere as a rule. It is fashionable nowadays to pile onto Fate a good many of the hero's old chores, among them being the disposal of the villain.

As a rule the new stories will be divided equally between business and marriage. The average age of the heroine, however, will no longer be 18. It has been growing steadily until of late years grown-up people refuse to read about 18-year-old heroines just as they would refuse to be bored by them in society. The 1910 heroine will be about 28 years old and what she doesn't know wouldn't fill a very large library. As a rule she will not have been married more than once at the time the book begins. Unmarried heroines are not regarded with so much favor any more. They cannot say smart enough or exciting enough things. However a few carefully selected maiden ladies averaging 28 years of age will suddenly discover, after numer-

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