The Highland News.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1886.

HILLSBORO, : : : OHIO.

OVER THE WAY.

I am called a queer old woman,
Eccentric, I ought to say,
As the gold and gems in my coffers pined,
Form a halo around my way.

Here in the heart of the city—
The populous, busy place—
I love to watch the stream of life
Between my curtains of lace.

Away from the hard world's coldness,
In the midst of perfume and song,
I sit and watch, unaffected they say,
The hurrying, jostling throng.

My home is a marble mansion,
But over across the street,
As tho' a hand too full had dropped
It down at my very feet.

Stands a tiny, one story dwelling,
Poor, but cozy and neat,
And at one of the windows, small and clean,
Blooms a blush-rose tall and sweet.

Every morning a shy, sweet maiden
With face that rivals the rose,
Leans tenderly over the blossoms fair
While her cheek like a rose-bud glows.

Three merry mischievous children
Climb round her and nod and smile
At the passers-by in the street below,
Tho' I know who she looks for the while.

A tall, broad-shouldered young fellow,
With a face both honest and true,
And a smile revealing the loyal heart—
Tho' in cities one finds so few!

And the eyes of my rose-bud maiden—
A half-open bud she is—
Show the secret she tries so hard to conceal
From every one's eyes but his.

Thro' the day she sings at her housework,
Or laughs with the babies three—
For my neighbors are orphans over the way,
Though very dear to me.

Then at night—can I tell you the rapture
That shines in my neighbor's face,
As she looks for her lover, and so do I,
Behind my satin and lace?

His face, grown weary with striving
Against the rough tide of fate,
Lights up as the sunbeams had fallen there
When he sees the rose-buds that wait.

No doubt I'm a queer old woman,
Weary and lonely and old,
But just for one day of a rapture like theirs
I would give my lands and gold

So, "unaffected," they tell me,
Worn and weary and gray,
I watch—while my heart grows young again—
My neighbors over the way.

—*J. K. Ludlam, in Good Housekeeping.*

THE FACE OF A DOLLAR.

It Shut Out the Joys of Life from Mr. Prounce.

"But you'll die some day, Mr. Prounce, and you'll have to leave your bank stock behind you then. You may as well have some good of it while you live. This butter is only a cent more a pound than that."

"A cent spoils the face of a dollar, Joram," was the reply, in a rasping voice.

"Why, I've got a butter here that's fifty cents a pound."

"Fifty cents a pound for butter! Fifty cents for something that melts in the sun—that,——"

"That melts in the mouth," said the young grocery man, in answer to Mr. Prounce, who sat on a nail keg beside the huge stove, which every once in awhile he tried as laundry women sometimes do their flatirons. "Why," continued Joram, "there's some they call gilt edge—and there are those that won't eat any other—that sells for eighty cents and a dollar."

Mr. Prounce drew his breath with a whistle. "It's wicked," said he. "It's criminal. And some folks wanting bread! Wanting bread and books. The trade in butter ought to be discontinued."

"Well, Mr. Prounce," said the astonished young man, "That's a new idea! Do you want to ruin me?"

"You must get out of the business if you don't want to be ruined," said Mr. Prounce briskly. "Yes, it ought to be discontinued. It's as unprincipled as the rum trade in rum. I'll—I'll be blamed if I won't begin it—I'll be blamed if I won't! And perhaps there'll follow enough suit to bring things down to living prices. If my folks can go without, other folks can. Anything that can be abused so, I say, is as bad as the liquor trade. You may give me a pound of cheese, Joram, when I go home, and a dozen red herring."

"They're a good deal cheaper by the box," said Joram, beginning to hum:

"If you ask me for a penny,
I shall say I haven't any."

"No, they're not," returned Mr. Prounce. "They dry up, and don't go so far by a long shalk. No; I've got this thing down to a fine point, Joram. There's no apple-paring wasted in our house. I should feel 'twas like flying in the face of a bountiful Providence if there was."

"I've heard as much," said the clerk, stopping his music long enough to say it.

"I know what you mean now, Joram," said Mr. Prounce. "But let me tell you—those can laugh that win. When you hear folks say old Prounce is small, you just ask them if his bank account is small. And you just stop and think that going without luxuries is easy when you are used to it yourself, though it's troublesome to keep other folks at the same mark; but when you see your bank account go sailing up to the head, and mortgages fall due and farms fall in, the farms of those other folks who didn't go without and laughed at you for going, why, then the laugh's on the other side of the mouth. But, as I was saying, it's hard keeping other people up to the mark. They actually sometimes act as if they thought I meant to be mean—my women folks are dreadful extravagant"—and poor Mr. Prounce drew a sigh, for which he seemed to be only a medium; it had it's birth so far down, as it were in the very bowels of the earth. And then he took his cheese and his red herring and went softly out; he always trod softly on account of the wear of sole leather.

And Joram looked after him, and wondered how anybody so unlovely could be the father of anybody so entirely lovely as Pauliny, the brown-eyed beauty to whom his troth was plighted, but to whom he could not be married for indefinite periods, chiefly because her mother was poorly and her father could not spare her, having no one else to do the work, and Pauliny had some old-fashioned ideas of obedience.

"It's a sin and a shame," said Joram to Pauliny, coming home with her once, and lingering under the throbbing stars with an enjoyment they could not have elsewhere. Their young blood did not feel the frost and the chill of the crusted snow, they were only half conscious of the icy glory of the winter night, so rapt were they in themselves, their passion and their poverty. "When I see a lot of idle fellows with their horses and their yachts, and more money than brains, it's a sin and a shame, I say, that I can't afford to hire a girl for you, so that you could let her stay and do the housework you do now, and you come to me, my dear, and we have the happiness of our lives!"

"I don't know, Joram, dear," Pauliny murmured, a hesitating look on her sweet pale face. "I don't know as it would make any difference, I—I couldn't leave mother. It's dreadful for her now," she said, the tears springing. "I don't know what it would be for her without me."

"She'd get along every mite as well. You'd be running in to see her every day and oftener, and she to see you; and she'd be living what you might call a new life in ours, and be a great sight happier than she is now. But there, it's no use talking: it's all a castle in the air."

"O, Joram, I don't dare to think of it. Yes, yes, it's only a castle in the air."

"Well, castles in the air are poor building, unless you can put in the underpinning," said Joram, gazing at her tenderly, so sweet and fair and moving to the heart in the dark starshine. "And we can't do it. I wonder what Mr. Prounce thinks his money is for, what he means to do with it! I wonder if he thinks you won't have it in the end that he can't let you have the good of just that little of it now——"

"No, it's no use, Joram," sobbed Pauliny. "There isn't the poorest person that hires out to do chores that would put up with father's ways! I'd—I'd be ashamed to tell you some things—but there's many a day I'd have been faint if it wasn't for the eggs of the hen I got hatched myself out of the egg you gave me once in joke. Father says folks that can't live on bread oughts'a to live at all, that bread is natural food, and meat is cannibalism, and things that grow are what the Lord provides, and other things are murder; and he goes against his conscience in allowing a relish of dried fish once in awhile; and the cow's milk, he says, is a compromise, and he doesn't believe in compromises," continued Pauliny, accumulating a headlong impetus with the rush of her thoughts. "And if I didn't pasture her myself beside the road in summer while I'm knitting my sale socks, I suppose we shouldn't have the cow. And as for our knitting, it's that gets mother and me every stitch we have to wear—oh, I oughtn't to be speaking so!" And she paused, her cheeks scarlet with her indignant thoughts and words, ashamed and frightened to think she had said so much, and her lover loving her better than ever.

"Don't you mind, Pauliny, don't you mind. You needn't mind what you say to me anyway, for you and I have been one person ever since we could go alone," he said. "And it's a long lane that has no turning; and I mean to try every traverse and save every dollar to get ahead, so that the time may come when we can have the home of our own."

"O, no, no, no," cried Pauliny. "I'd rather we stayed as we are forever, the whole of our lives, than have you get to be like father. And that's what it would end in. O yes, it would! He wasn't always so. When he was a boy he used to fling his money about, and a beautiful woman, a Quaker preacher that he met, reproved him, and said when there was such a world of misery and ignorance about as the flinging away of money that would found schools and academies and make the pity of the world less, was work that pleased the powers of darkness. And it struck poor father all of a heap, he says he felt as if he'd been made over again that minute; and he's never wasted a cent since then. I wish he'd never met that woman!" cried Pauliny, wistfully.

"She's the only woman that ever touched that old heart of his—if he's got a heart," said Joram; and then repeated him immediately, for after all it was Pauliny's father, and he might be troubled by his faults, but admit them never. "Well, he sticks to a thing, anyway," he said. "And that's a good quality. You come in for some of that, too, I guess, Pauliny, or you'd never have stood so long for me, without a cent to my name!"

"O, Joram! You're all I want—you're everything to me!" sobbed Pauliny. "I should die if I didn't have you to love. You're so good, so noble, so kind, so true, and I know my father's daughter don't deserve you. But I love you, I do love you, dear, with all my heart!"

"Well," said Joram, "I don't know what we're waiting and hoping for. We'll be old folks presently before we know it, and the boys and girls will be laughing at us for a pair of old fools. Let me see them!" And he grew red and angry at the thought.

"I suppose it's what Heaven's for," said Pauliny, simply. "To fill out the beginnings here. O, Joram, just think of it, to be together through all eternity! It's worth living all this life for, it's worth dying for!"

Pauliny had occasion to wish again that her father had never seen the heart-compelling Quaker preacher, when her lover left her at the gate. Her father was out there in the snow tugging away with a crowbar at the door stone. He had lost a nickel piece that had slipped down under the sill, and he was bound to get it again, as he whistled between his teeth.

"Well, father," said Pauliny, "there's nobody can get it to-night, if you can't. So it will be there to-morrow. And you won't be wasting strength and losing sleep, if we don't trouble about it any more now. A nickel, anyway——"

"A nickel, anyway!" cried her father. "You talk as if I was made of money! Let me tell you that a nickel is a coin of the country. And there's no coin of the country that isn't a value. A nickel is the price of a loaf of bread to the poor. The interest of one nickel in a thousand years makes as much as five dollars, and I've no idea of throwing five dollars away. I should think you'd be ashamed to speak of such a thing! But there, I've no idea of losing my sleep, either. So we'll go in, Pauliny."

But Pauliny loitered a moment at the door; there was something to her more home-like than home in the depths of that tingling firmament to which she turned her gaze, and in its vastness her father's thoughts and words had an infinite littleness. "What's this smell?" she heard her father exclaiming as she shut the door; "I'll be bound your mother's either been cooking something to please that gluttonous appetite of hers, or she's just blown out another candle. "That's it!" with something like a compensating exultation in the discovery as any rate. "Who's been in here, Mrs. Prounce? Strange—company always comes when I'm out and never when I'm in! Miss Purcell and the minister! I don't care if they have! They are no better than other company that there needs to be as illumination got up when they come. I thought I told you that when company comes, and you're doing nothing in particular, one candle is enough! Here you've been burning two, and you've just blown the other one out! Don't tell me; I know you have by the smell!"

"Truly, father," said the meek, pale wraith of a wife, whom a long course of privation and starvation and tyranny had robbed of the little sense she had in the beginning. "I've only been burning one candle. I cut it in two, and lighted both pieces. That's all, really. It's only one solitary candle. And I blow the other piece out as soon as they went. I did, indeed. I do try to be just as economical——"

"By gracious, but I knew it! I wonder you've sconce enough to carry food to your mouth."

"I haven't, sometimes," said the poor woman, slightly turning.

"Well, you go to bed, now—I'll shake down this fire—sitting here and wasting heat as if you lived over a coal mine! You've no need of a candle any way—you ought to know the feeling well enough by this time to do your knitting by firelight. The firelight's quite sufficient, and that costs more than the knitting comes to—only knitting anyway to buy finery and foster a wicked vanity. I ought to take the knitting money away from you by rights," grumbled Mr. Prounce, pottering over the stove. "If it was only to save your soul, that's what I ought to do."

"O, Mr. Prounce!" whimpered she, paler yet in the dread of such a wretched anticipation. "I'm sure Pauliny and I haven't a ribbon or a flower to our names! All we have is just common ten cent prints and linen collars. And I'm sure I'm fairly ashamed of Pauliny to be seen on the street—your daughter!"

"I'm not. And you've no need to be ashamed of my daughter, I guess. You be ashamed of yourself, wasting your husband's substance! You've wasted enough in your lifetime to bring up and educate a township. You've wasted enough in the one item of candles alone, Mrs. Prounce, to have dressed your daughter like a princess." And when Mr. Prounce had shaken down the fire he followed his wife, and carefully denuding himself of the several newspapers that, folded squarely over his chest and shoulders, answered for the extra warmth of an overcoat, he was soon lost in a pleasant dream of looking for his nickel and finding it grown to a big twenty dollar gold piece. "That's the interest," chuckled Mr. Prounce, on waking in the morning. "Just what I told Pauliny." He pulled up the curtain and looked out, perhaps to see if the door stone were still there. "I guess we'll have some hasty pudding for breakfast; I've got some hard work ahead of me and so's Pauliny," he said, and he went out to bring in a handful of kindlings and a brick to make the grate of the stove smaller, so that there could be less coal used in it. "I reckon," he said, coming in from the woodshed a little later, "we'll have to eat our stirabout with salt. I sold all the milk to the milkman as he went by last now—he was a little short—wells round here running dry. Ten cents are not to be sneezed at. They don't grow on every bush."

In an hour or so Pauliny finished washing the three saucers and spoons and the milk pail, making the beds, and sweeping and dusting. She ran a mold of candles from the cake of mutton tallow in the back cellar way, and washed the potatoes for dinner—the dinner was to be boiled potatoes and salt again; she did wish she might have a bit of pork to boil to go with them, for want of anything better—and her mother needed nourishing things so badly. Then her father called her to go out and help him. "I can't lift that heavy stone, father," said she. "It hasn't been moved in a hundred years. It would take a load of oxen to do it."

"You mean a team of oxen, Pauliny. Where's your schooling? You had good schooling, Pauliny, and don't forget it! There's nothing in this world like schooling. It's better'n meat and drink; it feeds the spirit. It's a new gospel. Those that have had it never ought to let it get rusty."

"Well, then, father, a pair of oxen. And they couldn't move it, let alone me."

"There you go again. But you can try and help, and that's all that's asked of you, so far," said the father. "When I get this big stone off you and your mother can better waste your time than I can mine handling over the little stones in the pit underneath."

"It'll never do for mother to be out here in this air," said Pauliny. "It's bad enough in there."

"Pauliny," said her father severely, "it would do you good to have one first rate lesson in want and then you'd find out how comfortable you are, in spite of your ungrateful heart!" And he heaved away with his crowbar, bidding Pauliny push in the prying wedge with every heave. Perhaps the effort brought the color to her cheek, perhaps it was a blush of shame at catching a glimpse of Joram coming that way and finding her thus engaged.

"Well, I never!" cried Joram. "Mr. Prounce, what next?"

"I'm earning an honest penny, Joram. Setting an example to them that come after me," said Mr. Prounce over his shoulder. "A penny saved is a penny earned, you know."

"Well, I don't know as you've a right to break Pauliny's back for the sake of your penny, and that's what it looks as though you were doing," said Joram. "Here, let me have that weaver's beam there, Pauliny!" And he began to heave and thrust and push in her place. "What's it all for! Lost a cent!"

"A cent spoils the face of a dollar, I've told you before, Joram," said Mr. Prounce, "and I've lost five."

"And spoiled the face of five dollars; I guess that's about it! A nickel! You can't ever get that nickel again, so what's the use?"

"It's worth trying for. A nickel; a nickel," grunting over his crow-bar, "will buy an almanac full of learning and science; it will buy a tract—a tract like 'Henry and His Beaver,' that will take you to the ends of the earth; it will buy a newspaper that'll let you sit down and hobnob with Kings and Presidents."

"Well, who'd have thought there was so much in a five-cent piece Mr. Prounce, I'll give you a nickel if you'll give this one up for some little boy in the next generation to find, and go in new with Pauliny out of this frosty weather."

"You'll die as you'll live, Joram—a poor man."

"I'll have had a good time, anyway."

"That's what I've heard lots of folks say that were beggars before they got through—a little more to the left, Joram—but you won't have a good time on any of my money, you'd better understand. If you're courting Pauliny for her money——"

"Courting Pauliny for her money!" cried Joram, with a laugh that for a few moments quite incapacitated him for exertion. "Now, Mr. Prounce," he said, "you let me have Pauliny as she stands, and I'll let you have all her money!"

"Pauliny hasn't any money, and she never will have any. Heave, ho; stand now!" said Mr. Prounce, giving a powerful jerk to his bar. With the words the stone gave way—lifted, swayed, cracked and broke across the old seam. Mr. Prounce was over backward—the iron bar flew up in the air and came down across him and he lay there with his back broken.

Mr. Prounce never spoke again. He was taken tenderly as might be into the house, and laid upon the bed before Joram hastened for help. He could not move his finger or close his lip, but for a little while his eyes followed Pauliny and her mother in their movements—followed Joram and the doctor. The doctor! He had never allowed a doctor in the house, and here was not only a doctor, but an array of vials that had sprung into being like little demons, a galvanic battery, brandy, beef tea—what! Yes, champagne! He would not have swallowed it if he could; he could not if he would. He fastened his eyes on the old painted secretary where he had always kept his sacred papers locked away.

Pauliny understood that agonized gaze—she was always so quick to understand. Pauliny was a good girl; a good girl—was she going to fail him now? "Is there anything there that you want, father dear?" she kept asking. But his eyes still remained fixed upon the spot; and long habit mastered her—she dared not open it.

As the day died the fire was brightened: the candles were lighted—not one candle, nor one cut in two, but half a dozen—as the doctor, in his endeavors, ordered this and that, and Joram and Pauliny swiftly and silently obeyed; and one neighbor and another came in to sit with the mother in the next room—the helpless, shadowy mother too long suppressed to rise to any emergency now.

And not only fire and candles Mr. Prounce saw, but a supper. Joram had sent round a basket from the store; and in the range of Mr. Prounce's fixed vision was a corner of the table spread with cold canned tongue, and hot potatoes, and baker's bread, and a pat of butter, preserved greengages and coffee. This was the way the money was going then! Fire, lights, luxuries! There would be carpets and curtains next, and books and pictures, and his wife would wear a silk gown on Sundays. A silk gown on Sundays! Good Heavens! that paper was yet unsigned, and there would be nothing to hinder her from wearing a silk gown every day in the year!

And it was for this he had wrought and pinched, and gone without!

If there is any way of contracting more suffering into twenty-four hours than Mr. Prounce in his painless condition was now suffering, fate has not yet found it out.

Strange phantasmagoria now began to sweep their clouds through Mr. Prounce's poor brain—some of them perhaps the things he might have had, and that without a doubt now they would have—shining harnesses, prancing hoofs, the gleaming of piano keys, candelbras with cut glass prisms, his wife's face in the halo of a lace cap, a plum pudding with flames of brandy being blown about it, balls of butter all shining in gilt edges and gilt imprints. Now it was Joram bending over him and trying to shift him to other pillows—Joram in a beaver cloth great-coat with a sealskin collar. And then at last a sense of impatient journeying, rushing of waters and foam, an azure distance of great mountain peaks, a sun breaking through clouds, a growing and increasing shining sun like a vast silver dollar, with a blurred face—or was it Pauliny's sweet tear-stained face over his as she whispered words of love he never had deserved! He was conscious of her, but he could not answer her; now he could not see her. If he could only say: "No matter—take it all—it's yours"—but his eyes never wavered, his lips never trembled, that vast silver dollar with the blurred face was shutting out all the rest of the world behind its disk, was the wheel of the Four Cherubim blazing through Heaven—the spirit of the living creature in them—and he heard the voices that the prophet heard, crying O, wheel! and he was off and away in unknown worlds where he could not take his money, and Joram was closing his dead eyes. Then Joram gently lifted Pauliny, who cried as though her father claimed her tears, and took her to her mother, who still sat rocking back and forth in a sort of amaze, without a tear, without a sign, and with a sense of strong relief that if it were death would have been almost joy.—*Harriet Prescott Spofford, in N. Y. Star.*

A Reliable Bank Detective.

Lookers-on see most of the game, and accordingly it has been reserved for a correspondent of the *Independence Belge* to chronicle the latest addition to the staff of the Bank of England. The cashiers of this establishment, so he writes, are often required to give evidence as to the identity of persons accused of passing forged or stolen checks. When they are questioned on their oath in a court of law they sometimes are unable to swear that the prisoner in the dock is the man who presented the check for payment, as they have only seen him for an instant and in the midst of a hurrying crowd. In future they will be spared the difficulty. If at any time they have any reason whatever to regard the payee of a check as a suspicious person, they will only need to make a sign, and he will be instantaneously photographed by a concealed operator. There will be ample time for this while the notes or gold are being counted out.—*Philadelphia Press.*

—Old garments that may be utilized in a hundred ways, for rugs, linings, cushions and the like, are sometimes rendered worthless because, when no longer fit to wear, they are not ripped to pieces, brushed and put away.—*N. Y. Mail.*

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—The Mexican Government supports ten thousand public schools with facilities equal to many of our colleges.

—Sankey, the singing evangelist, has made another donation of land for a church to his New Castle (Pa.) fellow-townsmen.

—More than half the students at Harvard are from Massachusetts, while less than one-third of those at Yale belong to Connecticut.—*Hartford Courant.*

—The Hampton Institute, near Fortress Monroe, has now over 617 students, of whom 140 are Indians and the rest negroes. It has land and improvements worth $400,000 and is free from debt.

—The class of cadets which will leave West Point at the next commencement is declared to be the largest in number and highest in efficiency ever graduated from the institution. There are seventy-eight members of the class.—*N. Y. Herald.*

—The Yale Law School has lost the only female student whose name was ever entered on its roll of membership. Her name is Alice Jordan, and she has been a member of the junior class for three months. The officers of the school decided that no degree could be awarded to Miss Jordan on account of her sex, and she withdrew.

—The *Examiner* publishes a letter from a Baptist missionary in Toungoo who, referring to the war against Burmah, which he has been expecting, says: "We have worked close up to the boundary and are ready to go over. This opens to me a large Karen country. Many villages are ready to receive the gospel at once when English protection is declared."

—Popular education in India sometimes arouses school-boy jealousies on rather an alarming scale. Recently near Lahore, a native lad tried to poison a dangerous rival in a competitive examination by giving him sweetmeats drugged with some deadly compound. The attempt was happily discovered in time, and the jealous school-boy was popped into prison.

—There is in Dooly County, Ga., a Baptist minister who for nearly a year and a half served a church as punctually as he could, often walking twelve miles to feed his flock, and received as a compensation for his services only four dollars. Two dollars of this sum was paid by a young lady who works for a living, one dollar by a widow lady not over-blessed with the goods of the world, and one dollar by the widow's daughter.—*Chicago Times*

—Rev. Dr. Clark, in reviewing the work of the American Board of Foreign Missions during the last twenty-five years, thus reports: "As a result we note an advance in churches, from 105 to 292; of church members, from 3,500 to over 23,000; of pupils in common schools, from 8,000 to 35,000; of native pastors, from 25 to 147, not to speak of the growth of a large and efficient body of native preachers and teachers acting as co-laborers with us in the evangelization of their people.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

—A Bachelor's Logic "Marriage is a lottery; lotteries are illegal; therefore I simply obey the law in keeping single."—*Funny Folks.*

—Up in Maine the other day the pistol wouldn't go off, but they buried the boy all the same.—*Palmer Journal.*

—A skeleton was unearthed in Nantucket the other day with a small copper coin under one hand. The remains of an editor, most likely, who tried to take his wealth along with him.—*Chicago Ledger.*

—Father, starting down town: "Yes, Robert, my son, keep in mind what your mother says, and always say please. Though a little word it indicates the gentleman. Here, wife, hold my overcoat and hat; be quick about it."—*Prairie Farmer.*

—One great reason why woman has not reached eminence in the mechanic arts is because she has never been able to rise superior to the idea that the right way to drive a nail is do it with both eyes shut.—*N. Y. Mail.*

—"Ah, me!" said a husband as he laid down his book and gazed thoughtfully into the fire, "how true it is that ''Tis better to have loved and lost than—than——'" "Never to have loved at all?" supplied his wife, softly. "No; than to have loved and won."—*Chicago Tribune.*

—"Does you wife talk in her sleep?" asked one married man of another one day when they were comparing notes. "I don't lie awake to see," replied the heartless husband, "but she talks all the rest of the time, so I rather guess she does."—*Louisville Journal.*

—At a recent meeting of the Thursday Evening Club, in Boston, William Everett read a paper on "Hegemonic Diadexis." There was not a dry eye in the house, and our readers will regret that they were not present. There are very few of us who know as much as we should about that interesting animal.—*Norristown Herald.*

—M. Tommy and Mlle. Lili are playing together in the Champs Elysees. A quarrel occurs and the little girl gives her companion a box on the ear. Tommy is furious, doubles up his fist, and then calms down suddenly. "You know," he said, in a tone of scorn, "that if I don't strike you back its because you are only a woman!"—*Paris Figaro.*

—Massachusetts last year spent $7,020,430 on her public schools, an average to each child of $20.42, an increase of $1.08 over that of the previous year. The Secretary of the State Board of Education declares the free text-book law of the State to be one of the best legislative acts of recent years. He traces to the operation of the law the increase in enrollment in all the schools.—*Boston Globe.*

—"O, by the way, pa, dear," said a Hartford young lady as she bade him good morning, "don't forget when you come home to bring one of those—one of those—one of those—you know, those potato mashers." "O, no, indeed. Any thing to encourage you in the household arts. Are you going to be the cook?" "Why, no; but you know I'm going to paint a lily of the valley on the masher end and a clematis vine on the handle and send it to the mission fair."—*Hartford Courant.*

—It looked like rain as Mr. Joblittle started out of the house, and he came back into the room where his wife was: "I thought you had gone down to meet the boys," she said quietly. "I started, my dear, but it looks like rain." "Ain't you going?" "Yes, but I guess I'd better take a waterproof along with me." "Perhaps you had, my love," she said ironically; "and, dear, don't you think you had better take a whisky-proof along?" Job concluded that the proof was against him.—*Merchant Traveler.*

WILL-POWER.

Its Lamentable Failure to Work in the Case of One Man's Resolution.

No man likes to have any one tell him that he has no will-power. A man's weakest spot of conceit is the supposition of a personal possession of will-power. My friend Bjinks got very wrathy when a friend told him that he (Bjinks) hadn't will-power enough to stop chewing tobacco. "What! I've got no will-power? Why, man alive, you don't know me. I've quit buckwheat cakes. I used to be a perfect slave to the deadly griddle placques. I——"

"Yes, you've quit them because your wife's mother will not allow her rooms to be smoked and scented up any more."

W—well! Isn't my allowing my wife's mother to set her foot down upon one of my pleasures one of the grandest manifestations of will-power, I'd like to know?" clustered Bjinks.

"It might be; but, all the same, I reiterate, you haven't got will-power enough to quit chewing tobacco."

"Haven't, hey? See here, I'm going rabbit-hunting to-morrow. When I return I shall be able to tell you that I've formed a solemn resolution to quit chewing. You can believe me. If there is any one thing more than another that I'm proud of, its my immense——"

"Very well. Try it on, and good luck to you, Bjinks. I suppose you'll come back from rabbit-hunting hump-backed with will-power instead of game. Good morning!" and Bjinks's friend took his departure.

"I've got no will-power! Humph! I'm proud of my will-power. When I put my foot down to do a thing, I do it. A stone wall couldn't turn me out of my way, when I say go. Can't quit chewing! Nonsense! Any man can do a thing when once he sets out to do it. I'll go rabbit-hunting to-morrow, and to show my friend that I've got will-power enough to pass round among my neighbors, I'll form the resolution to quit chewing while I'm on the chase. Will-power! Bah! Only children and weak, puny women haven't any will-power."

Thus Bjinks mused as he wended his way toward his office. All day long he chewed vigorously. To-morrow he will manifest the stupendous abundance of will-power which can be encompassed in one human frame, 5 feet 5½ inches, weighing 113 pounds.

When the roseate blush of early morn peeped through the windows of the house, Bjinks arose, got his gun, called his dog, and started forth to slay the gentle rabbit. The air was crisp and fresh. Bjinks felt as buoyant as a boy with a little red bob-sled. He felt a new strength within him. He feels more manly, more like one of nature's noblemen, and less a serf to a slavish habit. His thoughts rove to his childhood's days, when he wore a chip hat and went fishing with a pin-hook; when he drove the cows home to milk, and stole cream off the pans in the cellar (when he got a thrashing for that act and various other little mistaken ideas of life too numerous to mention); when he wove the wreath of romance from the pages of a dime novel, and went forth bent for the trackless plains to slay redskins with a hammerless pistol and a brass pair of false knuckles. All these and various other items connected with his days of freedom illuminated the research of his memory. He is once more free——

He slaps his hand upon his hip-pocket. He halts and stares about him. A cotton-tailed rabbit sits upon its haunches and blinks its curious eyes and points its rose-tinted ears at him. "Great heavens! I've come away without my tob— Pshaw! How foolish I am. Aha! will-power. Bjinks; will-power." The rabbit flashed out of sight and the man of stupendous will plodded on in search of tracks.

His thoughts went back to his sparkling days. The little parlor with a fire in winter and dampness in summer; this gate that swung without a creak when he entered at eight, but groaned enough to wake the seven sleepers when he went out at three the next morning; the attenuated bundle of conversation he was wont to throw at his darling seven nights in the week; the pop—the "yes"—the holy altar of matri——

"By heavens I must have been a blockhead! Here I am five miles from home without my tob— Pshaw! non sense; will-power. Bjinks; will-power!" It was a struggle. It was a relentless endless, ceaseless struggle. He saw half a dozen rabbits. He shot at them. He didn't bag a single rabbit. His hand was very unsteady. But he was growing big in his own eyes; for—his immense will-power. He hurried over the ground as quick as possible and make tracks for the town. The first man he met was his friend who has twitted him about not having will power. "Ah! my festive Nimrod Been shooting, eh? Got a bag I—" "For the sake of Heaven and a suffering man, give me a chew!" groaned Bjinks, abjectedly.

"Will-pow——"

"Be hanged to it! Your plug—oh thanks. Good morning;" and Bjink went home feeling like a man again, but very sensitive on the question of will-power.—*H. S. Keller, in Boston Globe.*

A RAT STORY.

How a Rodent Was Cremated by Means of Electricity.

The complete disintegration of a rat by electricity so that it retained all of its natural appearance, but crumbled to dust as soon as touched by metal, is vouched for by Mr. Henry J. Tolbert, now visiting Philadelphia—although electricians connected with the electric light plants in this city remain rather incredulous. The story was told to a *News*-gatherer yesterday.

The city of Reading is furnished a portion of its light by a company, which produces the electric current by means of the Brush machines. Mr. Tolbert says that he visited the plant of the Reading company, and while looking at the brushes gathering the sparks of the fluid a rat came running over the floor. To escape his human enemies, he jumped directly to the floor on to one of the brushes and was thrown back to the ground. He lay motionless, apparently and certainly dead, but without even a hair turned. One of the employes was sent with a shovel to gather it up, but as soon as the shovel touched it the rat fell to dust, with a little cloud of particles rising from the place where its body had seemingly lain. There was no vestige of hair, flesh or bones remaining.—*Philadelphia News.*

—The smallest fire-arm in the world is a gold watch charm, in the form of a revolver, about an inch long.—*Chicago Herald.*

SAGE REMARKS.

A Texas Philosopher's Views of the World and Its Contents.

A born musician has a great advantage over one who is not born.

If he were fed regularly the shark would not be half as ravenous as he is.

When a great man dies of hunger, that is a sure indication that he will soon have a monument.

When a man says: What a blawsted kentry this is, that is an indication that he is an Englishman.

Those whom we have compelled to concede our natural advantages are the ones who are best acquainted with our failings.

When a sick man refuses to send for a doctor that is a sign that he still olings to life.

The fact that there are two hemispheres goes to demonstrate that the shape of the earth is spherical.

In society a woman is admired for her good looks and her talents, but if she wants to make herself solid with her husband, she should see that his shirt-buttons are in their places, that his meals are properly cooked, and that he gets them regularly.

All knowledge that does not strengthen a man's uprightness of purpose goes to make him a dangerous member of society.

The only sensible time to be happy is the present moment. Most people put it off until week after week, and then forget all about it.

There is considerable difference between pride and vanity. The proud man esteems himself very highly; the vain man brags about himself.

The difference between genius and talent is that the former is a perpetual, never-failing spring; the latter is merely a cistern that has to be filled up from time to time.

Jealous people love themselves more than they do those whom they torture with their jealousy.

Looking at pictures is an easy mode of thinking.

It seems to me that a hen that lays two eggs a day must neglect some of her other duties.—*Texas Siftings.*

A GOOD STORY.

An Anecdote Illustrating the Courage of the Late President Garfield.

A retired army officer of high rank told me a new story about Garfield's canal days. The subject which brought out the story was the question as to whether President Garfield possessed much moral courage. The officer said: "Whether James A. Garfield had moral courage in a high degree or not I do not know. I am sure he possessed a remarkable amount of physical courage, and I heard of an instance of this while he was yet in Congress. It was on the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago road. I was coming from Chicago to Washington. As we neared Fort Wayne a gentleman came into the sleeper, and, asking my permission, sat down beside me. In the course of conversation he informed me that he was division superintendent of the line, and upon learning that I was going to Washington he asked: 'And how is Jimmy Garfield getting along down there?' I told him I was acquainted with Representative Garfield, and he then went on to say that he had been the Captain of a canal boat in connection with which Garfield as a boy was driver. He said that Garfield was very brave at that time—that he would fight any fellow that dared knock a chip off his shoulder. 'One Saturday night,' said he, 'when we tied the boat up to stop for Sunday, Jimmy came to me and asked if he might not leave the boat until starting time the next day, as he wanted to go to a little town about twelve miles off. I gave him permission and away he went. The next day shortly after noon he came back with a pair of the blackest eyes I have ever seen on boy or man. I asked him what was the matter, and he told me there was a boy in the village where he had been who boasted to a friend of his some months previous that he could whip Jim Garfield out of his boots, and that he had decided that as soon as he got the chance to go to the town he would give him the opportunity of doing so. He had walked all that twelve miles and back again merely to fight the boy, and I think he whipped him. After I returned to Washington I told Garfield this story. He laughed, but would not affirm that it was true nor deny it."—*Carp, in Cleveland Leader.*

HUMOROUS EPITAPHS.

Some of the Briefest Tombstone Inscriptions Ever Written.

A good epitaph never comes amiss. Probably one of the briefest ever written was on a man by the name of Thorpe. It was simply:

"Thorpe's Corpse."

But one written on Dr. Cains, the founder of a college, was quite as brief:

"Pro Cains."
(I was Cains.)

And another on a certain Mr. Maginnis:

"Finis
Maginnis."

Camden, in his "Remains"—a collection of fragments illustrative of the habits, manners and customs of the ancient Britons and Saxons—gives examples of great men who had little epitaphs. For himself it has been suggested that the name of the work itself would be the most fitting:

"Camden's Remains."

An importunate tailor is said to have had this couplet written above him:

"Here lies W. W.,
Who will never more trouble you, trouble you."

On the tombstone of Dr. Walker, who wrote a work on "English Particles," is inscribed:

"Here lies Walker's Partisles."

Douglas Jerrold proposed the following for Charles Knight, the Shakespearian critic:

"Good Knight."

On the eminent barrister, Sir John Strange:

"Here lies an honest lawyer—that is Strange."

—*Christian at Work.*

—A remarkable escape from an alligator is narrated by the Sylvania (Ga.) *Telephone.* A Mr. Oliver and a negro servant were out searching for logs, and at the edge of a pond discovered a peculiar looking pile of leaves, which they poked into with a pole, when out leaped an alligator and gave chase. Mr. Oliver took to his heels across the pond on the ice, but slipped and fell, and the dreaded reptile overtook him. He thought his time had certainly come, but in his desperation seized his formidable foe by the upper and lower jaws and held its mouth open until the negro came up and put a stick in it, thus propping its jaws apart and rendering it helpless. They then killed the saurian, which measured something over six feet in length.

TEMPERANCE READING.

PAUL THOMPSON.

How and Where He Began His Downward Career—A True Story.

One afternoon, a few weeks since, while passing through one of the principal business streets of a large city, we came upon a crowd of school-boys standing in front of a saloon. The boys had come out of the school-house only a few moments before, and had their books and slates, etc., in their hands. They were a company of bright, intelligent, happy-looking lads, but they all seemed deeply interested in something that was going on inside of that saloon. As they opened their ranks to make way for us to pass we stopped and asked what it was that had attracted such a large crowd of boys.

"Paul Thompson's been in a fight in the saloon there, and a policeman has just gone to arrest him," said one of the boys.

While he was speaking a large, blue-coated, brass-buttoned officer came out leading a man, or rather jerking him, by the coat-collar. The man in custody was young, with slight form and delicate features, and as we looked into his face we saw traces of intelligence and cultivation.

"He is drunk," said another boy, "and when he's drunk he is always ugly and wants to fight. This isn't the first time he has been taken, either."

The crowd of boys followed the policeman and his prisoner, and we soon lost sight of them. As we passed on we noticed the public school building was only a short distance from that saloon; many of the scholars had to pass by it every day. The same proprietor had been in possession of the building for ten years past. Only six years before Paul Thompson had graduated from the high school. He was a scholar of high standing, too. But he had been in the habit of passing this dangerous corner for years before he graduated. He had been attracted to it in his boyhood, as the boys just spoken of had been, by some similar occurrence. He began by looking in to see what was going on behind the green screen doors. Then he stepped inside to hear what the men were talking about. The saloon-keeper noticed him, for he had a manly bearing, and belonged to a family in high standing.

He encouraged the boy's coming in with pleasant, flattering words, and one day he gave him a glass of beer to drink. Paul thought it was manly to take the offered glass, but he could only drink a part of it; he did not like the taste; it was bitter; but the saloon man patted him on the shoulder, and told him to drink as much as he could, and it would make a man of him. Paul knew it was wrong, and when he went home he felt ashamed to stay in the presence of his good, sweet mother. He could not look her in the face; every smile she gave him and every kind word made him feel more and more guilty. He resolved never to pass by the saloon again, but to go home another way, although it was much farther. But somehow he did not go the other way but a few times. There seemed to be a fascination about that saloon, and he would linger around it. That was the beginning. Now we see Paul Thompson a constant fr