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"FOR THE KING."

NORTHERN MEXICO, 1640.

BY BRET HARTE.

As you look from the plaza at Leon, west
You can see her house, but the view is best
From the porch of the church where she lies at rest,

Where much of her past still lives, I think,
In the scowling brows and sidelong blink
Of the worshiping throng that rise or sink

To the waxen saints that, yellow and lank,
Lean out from their niches, rank on rank,
With a bloodless Saviour on either flank;

In the gouty pillars, whose cracks begin
To show the *adobe* core, within,—
A soul of earth in a whitewashed skin.

And I think that the moral of all, you'll say,
Is the sculptured legend that molds away
On a tomb in the choir: "Por el Rey."

"Por el Rey." Well, the king is gone,
Ages ago, and the Hapsburg one
Shot—but the rock of the Church lives on.

"Por el Rey." What matters, indeed,
If king or president succeed
To a country haggard with sloth and greed,

As long as one granary is fat,
And yonder priest, in a shovel hat,
Peeps out from the bin like a sleek, brown rat!

What matters? Naught, if it serves to bring
The legend bearer—no other thing—
We'll spare the moral, "Live the King!"

Two hundred years ago, they say,
The viceroy, Marquis of Monte-Rey,
Rode with his retinue, that way.

Grave as beditted Spain's grandees,
Grave as the silent Inquisitors should be
Of His Most Catholic Majesty,

Yet from his black plume's curving grace
To his slim, black gauntlet's smaller space,
Exquisite as a piece of lace!

Two hundred years ago—e'en so—
The marquis stopped where the lime-trees blow,
While Leon's seneschal bent him low

And begged that the marquis would that night take
His humble roof for the royal sake,
And then, as the custom demanded, spake

The usual wish that his guest would hold
The house, and all that it might infold,
As his—with the bride scarce three days old.

Be sure that the marquis, in his place,
Replied to all with the measured grace
Of chosen speech and unmoved face,

Nor raised his head till his black plume swept
The hem of lady's robe, who kept
Her place as her husband backward stept.

And then (I know not how or why)
A subtle flame in the lady's eye—
Unseen by the courtiers standing by—

Burned through his lace and titled wreath,
Burned through his body's jeweled sheath,
Till it touched the steel of the man beneath!

(And yet, maybap, no more was meant
Than to point a well-worn compliment,
And the lady's beauty, her worst intent,)

Howbeit, the marquis bowed again;
"Who rules with awe well serveth Spain,
But best whose law is love made plain."

Be sure that night no pillow pressed
The seneschal, but with the rest
Watched,—as was due a royal guest,—

Watched from the wall till he saw the square
Fill with the moonlight, white and bare,—
Watched till he saw two shadows fare

Out from his garden, where the shade
That the old church tower and belfry made,
Like a benedictory hand was laid

Few words spoke the seneschal as he turned
To his nearest sentry: "These monks have learned
That stolen fruit is sweetly earned.

"Myself shall punish yon acolyte
He gathers my garden grapes by night;
Meanwhile wait thou till the morning light."

Yet not till the sun was rising high
Did the sentry meet his commander's eye,
Nor then—till the viceroy stood by.

To the lovers of grave formalities
No greeting was ever so fine, I wis
As this host's and guest's high courtesies!

The seneschal feared, as the wind was west,
A blast from Morena had chilled his rest!
The viceroy languidly confessed

That cares of state, and—he dared to say—
Some fears that the king could not repay
The thoughtful zeal of his host, some way

Had marred his rest. Yet he trusted much
None shared his wakefulness! Though such
Indeed might be! if he dared to touch

A theme so fine—the bride, perchance,
Still slept? At least, they missed her glance
To give this greeting countenance.

Be sure that the seneschal, in turn,
Was deeply bowed with the grave concern
Of the painful news his guest should learn:

"Lost night, to her father's dying bed
By a priest was the lady summoned;
None know we yet how well she speed,

"But hope for the best." The grave viceroy
(Though grieved his visit had such alloy)
Must still wish the seneschal great joy

Of a bride so true to her filial trust!
Yet now as the day waxed on, they must
To horse, if they'd 'scape the noonday dust.

"Nay," said the seneschal, "at least,
To mend the news of this funeral priest,
Myself shall ride as your escort, east."

The viceroy bowed. Then turned aside
To his nearest followers: "With me ride—
You and Felipe—on either side.

"And list! Should anything me befall,
Mischance of ambush or musket-ball,
Cleave to his saddle you seneschal!

"No more." Then gravely in accents clear
Took formal leave of his late good cheer;
Whites the seneschal whispered a musketeer,

Carelessly stroking his pommel top,
"If from the saddle ye see me drop,
Riddle me quickly yon solemn lop!"

So these, with many a compliment,
Each on his one dark thought intent,
With grave politeness onward bent,

Riding high, and in sight of all,
Viceroy, escort and seneschal,
Under the shade of the Almandral.

Holding their secret, hard and fast,
Silent and grave, they ride at last
Into the dusty traveled past;

Even like this they passed away
Two hundred years ago to-day.
What of the lady? Who shall say?

Do the souls of the dying ever yearn
To some favored spot for the dust's return—
For the homely peace of the family urn?

I know not. Yet did the seneschal,
Chancing in after years to fall
Pierced by a Flemish musket-ball,

Call to his side a trusty friar
And bid him swear as his last desire,
To bear his corse to San Pedro's choir

At Leon, where 'neath a shield azure
Should his mortal frame find sepulture;
This much, for the pains Christ did endure.

Be sure that the friar loyally
Fulfilled his trust by land and sea,
'Till the spires of Leon silently

Rose through the green of the Almandral,
As if to beckon the seneschal
To his kindred dust 'neath the choir wall.

I wot that the saints on either side
Leaned from their niches open-eyed,
To see the doors of the church swing wide—

That the wounds of the Saviour on either flank
Bled fresh, as the mourners, rank on rank,
Went by with the coffin, clank on clank,—

For why? When they raised the marble door
Of the tomb untouched for years before,
The friar swooned on the choir floor;

For there, in her laces and festal dress,
Lay the dead man's wife, her loveliness
Scarcely changed by her long duress;

As on the night she had passed away—
Only that near her a dagger lay,
With the written legend, "Por el Rey."

What was their greeting—the groom and bride,
They whom that steel as of the years divide?
I know not. Here they rode side by side.

Side by side. Though the king has his way,
Even the dead at last have their day.
Make you the moral, "Por el Rey."

—Atlantic Monthly for July.

MR. ROWZEY AND THE BEARS.

The following sketch is from an illustrated article by "Porte Crayon," in *Harper's* for July. The writer, in company with a party of friends, is on an expedition through the mountains of West Virginia, and stop for a day at the Winston Tavern:

During the afternoon our company was swelled by the addition of sundry teamsters and drovers, habitues of the road, and several mountaineers who straggled in to pick up items of information from the great world outside, to chaffer about cattle, and incidentally to mix a little narcotic stimulant with their news as a digester. Among these we remarked a tall, athletic, black-bearded fellow, whose eye twinkled with a certain savage facetiousness, and whose swaggering sociability shamed all ceremony. Approaching our party, he saluted with a grace of a man who has had a bear for his dancing-master, and opened conversation in the lingo of the mountains, mixed, jumbled, and inflated with words and phrases which indicated some remote acquaintance with books or educated society. Seeing that we were disposed to be amused at his eccentric guest, the landlord joined us, and suggested that Mr. Rowzey should entertain us with his great bear story.

"Well, now, Best, you know I've fit and killed so many bar in my time that your request appears onedinite."

Mr. Best particularized. "Of that bout you had with the bears who stole your honey."

"Now, Best," quoth Rowzey, in a deprecating tone, "I wouldn't mind a-tellin' of that story to you or any of these mountain men about here, becase you know hit's every word the truth; but these gentlemen are entire strangers to me, as most likely they are to bar huntin', and they mought think some pints of that story rather strong for their civilized stomachs, and I bein' a person notorious for my character and judicious of my integrity, and respectably connected down in the old State, I shouldn't risk to have my word misdoubted, 'specially among gentlemen sich as these appears to be."

The major here assured the speaker that we were ready to pledge ourselves in advance to believe every word he said, and as the weather was sultry, he requested Mr. Best to serve a large pitcher of mint-julep.

"Them remarks," said Rowzey, "shows that you understand business, and are jist the gentlemen I took you for."

After a preliminary drink and some wordy compliments to the liquor, the historian seated himself and began his story:

"A bar is looked upon by the onexperienced as a mighty turrible beast; and so he is, 'specially if he happens to be an old she. The bar is also a mazin cute cretur, and can tell by a man's countenance whether he's good to eat or not. Now as for you, sir,"—touching his hat to the major—"a sensible bar would most likely walk around you and trot off; but this here feller"—laying his hand on Cockney's shoulder—"he'd make a comfortable meal of at first sight."

The audience laughed, and Rowzey took another drink.

"A bar," he continued, "is an animal to be respected and imitated. He seldom goes out of his way to injure any body, but he don't stand much foolin' if any body undertakes to meddle with him. He remembers a good turn longer than most men do, and if he has a weakness for honey, I've never knowed him. of his own accord, to mix it with any thing deleterious So much for the principal character in my story, and I must follow with a short sketch of myself before I come to the main pint. Not far from where I was borned there lived an old woman that was believed to be a witch. Now whenever a baby was borned she could tell at first sight what he or she was likely to be good for in the world. When she see my oldest brother lookin' so cute out of his eyes, and holdin' his little fists so tight, she condemned him to be a lawyer. And so it was. He turned out to be one of the biggest rascals in Southwestern Virginia. The second boy my mother fetched was prophesied for a famous politician, and he growed up still worse than the lawyer, if so be sich a thing is possible. Now when the old woman was called on to look at me, she sot for a long time in a kind of a brown-study. At last she spoke up. 'This boy,' says she, 'has got the gifts that might set him ahead of either of his brothers, but it would be a shame to bring up sich a stout and open-handed baby to any of them weakly, sneakin' businesses.

"Daddy took the thing to heart, and bein' flattered with her prognostications concernin' of me, concluded to do full justice to my faculties and bring me up as a bar-hunter; and so he christened me Rowzey, after old Leather Bill Atkins's big bar dog. This dog aforesaid was so turrible on wild varmints that Brother Ballard, the lawyer (who was high larnt), told Leather Bill if he wasn't stopped there would be no game left in the mountains—no more than there was in the Island of Chios after Orion's raid. Not bein' much addicted to Scripture, I don't know what that meant. No more did old Leather; but the expression skewed him, and he sent the dog away.

"Well, no sooner was I fairly weaned than daddy begins my eddication by gittin' me a six-months-old bar cub for a playmate. That cub was named Rough, accordin' to his nater, and he was a very comfortable friend as long as we were rompin' or sleepin' together; but when our bowl of mush-and-milk was sot down there was a suspension of sociabilities until one of us got a sound wallopin', and the winner finished the mush-and-milk.

"Rough and me generally fit fair, but he would sometimes take a mean advantage when he found I had the upper hand in a fight; he upsot the pan, well aware that when it came to lapping milk off the floor he was boss and I nowhere. In spite of these little oupleasantnesses we both managed to keep fat and hearty, and no outside beast or human ever undertook to poke his snout between us without feelin' the strength of our friendship. When we had growed to be three or four years old, Rough, accordin' to bar nater, had got so far ahead of me, and so careless about my clothes, that mammy begin to feed us in separate pans. This new plan was so mighty quiet that mammy, fearing we might dine for our usual exercise and excitement, would sometimes slop a bowl of milk into the mush pot, and allow us to go for the scrapin's. Gentlemen, are you acquainted with scrapin's?"

We were constrained to acknowledge our ignorance of the term. With a smile of benignant pity for our simplicity, the narrator proceeded:

"In our settlement it was the pride of good housekeepin' to keep the mush-pot always hot and never empty, and what with fillin' and refillin' you might reckon it would git pretty well gummed up. It was cooled off and scraped mostly of a Saturday evening. Now, gentlemen, these scrapin's, all so crisp and crusty, had a flavor that was mighty enticin' to boys and bars, and I can't help feelin' sorry for a feller whose boyhood hain't been enriched with the recollections thereof. But to foller the text. Although it mought be supposed human wit would have given me some advantage over a brute beast, yet, to tell the truth, Rough's muscle was gittin' a little too much for my strength and science together, as appeared one day when a whole coach-load of our lawyer and politician relatives came to make a sociable visit to daddy and mammy. I believe the whole notion of it was to befool him and her into signin' some paper, that they mought cheat him outen his land. But the bar and me knowed nothin' of that, bein' sent together into the kitchen when the company landed, mammy bein' ashamed to show us with the pretty children all dressed in store clothes and ribbons. But this put Rough and me both in a bad humor; so we fell a-quarrelin' between ourselves, and presently we had a row, and he slapped me into the slop-tub head-foremost, where I mought have drowned if, at the same time, he hadn't upsot the tub in his awkwardness. Now our visitors had jist laid off their cloaks and bonnets, and was a-lickin' up their children's curls, and a-braggin' of their smartness, when in I straddled, drippin' out of the slops, and bawlin' like a bull-calf. Now mammy was one of those hard-headed women that set no value on calico and store knickknacks for herself, but to see her brag child cuttin' sich a figure in company was a little too much, and she flared up like an armful of brush.

"'Husband,' said she, 'either that boy or that bar has got to leave this house. The brute has outgrowed the child, it has, and they can't git along agreeable no more, and on account of its onmannerliness it's onpossible to keep Rowzey dressed decent, it is.'

"'Well, what's to be done about the boy's eddication?' says dad.

"Mammy suggested that I was gittin' big enough to go to school. Dad had hearn say it was more aristocratic and safer for the children's morals to have a private tutor, so he swore we should hold on to the bar.

"Things went on as usual for a while, when the family dispute was settled by a onforeseen circumstance. One day I was roastin' of a tater in the ashes, when I observed Rough a-settin' off by the door a-watchin' me out of the corner of his eye. I mistrusted his intentions, and as I knowed I was no longer a match for him in a scramble, I jist kivered my tater a little deeper, and slyly put the poker to heat in the coals. When it was done, I took up the poker and poked out my tater on the hearth. No sooner was it clear of the hot ashes than Rough's paw covered it, and slap went the red poker atop of his paw. There was a yell you mought have heard a mile off, and the whole cabin smelt of burnt hair. I was scared myself; so, droppin' the poker and hustlin' up my roast, I started for the stable loft, but at the room-door I met daddy comin' in all in a flare.

"'Rowzey,' said he, 'what have you been a doin' to that poor brute beast?'

"'Nothin',' says I, feelin' mighty mean. 'He grabbed my tater, and I licked him, that's all. And it was a fair fight.'

"But what do you think the cussed brute done? Why, he jist held up his burnt paw to show daddy, and then went nosin' and whinin' around the hot poker, tellin' the whole story in fewer words than any human could have done. Well, dad jist divided his judgments by givin' Rough the tater and givin' me fits, which was sweetened by my seein' the brute eat it, all the while makin' impudent faces at me, while I stood snivelin' in a corner. We never had any more friendship or confidence in each other after that. All the artfulness of my nater was roused by the wish to git square with the brute unbeknowns to daddy; and Rough never see me pick up anything after that, even a chip, that he didn't run and hide hisself.

"Mammy took advantage of the coolness, and poor Rough, like Ishmael, was sent back into the wilderness. After he was gone it come back to me that I had acted a mighty mean part toward my old companion, and for many a day I felt lonesome and pinin' whenever I thought of him. Then I was sent to school a while, where I was licked through from *a b ab* to *Constantinople* in less than two years, fit the boys, kissed the girls, and picked up an amount of book larnin' and high dic. that has been an advantage to me ever since, as you gentlemen can plainly see. But as soon as I had growed big enough to handle a rifle dad took me home agin, to shine up my professional eddication under hisself. Touchin' lightly on the vulgar business of plowin' and plantin' corn, he larnt me to track a deer and line a wild bee to sich a certainty that we never was scarce of meat nor honey in our house, though we did sometimes have to trade for corn meal. One evenin', as I was a-comin' home from watchin' a deer lick, I meets a bar right in the path. I was so took by surprise that I tired my gun in the air, then quickly dropped it, and drawed my butcher knife; but the varmint wasn't so much scared, and sot up on his hind-legs, shadin' his eyes with his paw, as if he was tryin' to make out who I was. That paw I noticed had a streak of white har across it, and the next minute we was hugged in each other's arms; for you may well believe old Rough and me was mighty pleased to see each other.

"Now, gentlemen, a dog can always express his feelin's, or git our good-will, by a 'movin' tail,' but a bar is not likewise gifted, bein' limited to wry faces and awkward paws, and to have seen old Rough tryin' to say his say would have made you bust a-laughin'; but, gentlemen, it was plain to see the cretur's heart was in the right place. He bore me no grudge for the past, and tried to hide that scarified paw for fear I mought feel bad about it. Seein' that my old friend wasn't nigh so sleek and glossy as he used to be, I conceited he was leadin' a tolerable hard life, and tried to persuade him to foller me home, explainin' to him that we wasted enough at the cabin to keep him fat to the end of his days. But no; his mind was fixed; his only answer was a mournful shake of the head, and givin' me a far'well squeeze, he trotted away into the woods. As he went, I thought I see him lift his paw to wipe a fallin' tear. You may laugh, gentlemen, but there is more humanity about dumb creturs than we are awar' of mostly.

"For a long time after that I was afeard to risk a shot at a bar, and to shun temptation, give up carryin' a gun, and turned my attention chiefly to huntin' bee trees. They were plenty enough in our mountains, and for convenience I built me a camp some way off from the settlements, and hewed out a big trough to hold the honey I gathered. Now I filled my trough from time to time, but every night the varmints come and cleaned me out, which I knowed to be bars, seein' their tracks, and bein' awar' of their likin's. After losin' my labor in this way for some time, I bethinks me of a plan for gittin' even with 'em. I gits me a keg of peach brandy, and savin' a very moderate supply for my own needcessities, I pours the liquor into my trough, and mixed it pretty thick with honey. Then I whetted my knife, and retired to the camp to watch the effect of my trap. I carried a gourd full of the mix with me, which was so cussed sweet that I can't mind anything more that happened until to-morrow mornin', when I was awakened by a hellaballoo the like of which I never heard before or since. Clearin' the husks out of my throat with a swig from my jug, I draws my knife, and creeps on all fours toward the honey trough, where I see a sight which filled me with astonishment and laughter. The whole place was black with bars. I wouldn't like to risk my reputation—which is undoubted—by statin' the number. There mought have been a hundred, more or less, of all ages and sizes, from an old six-hundred-pounder to a six-months cub, all drunk as Christians. Now the longer I studied their doin's the more nateral they looked, jist as I've seed civilized humans carryin' on up at Beverly after an election-day. Sich was the elevatin' influences of good liquor on savage brutes, which appeared to raise 'em so nigh to our level, that as I laid there watchin' for a chance to go in I begin to feel as if I was plottin' murder against my fellow-creturs.

"Howsomdever, what I mought have concluded don't much signify, for presently an old sot, happenin' to stagger into the thicket where I was hid, caught sight of me, and give a yell that fairly lifted the hat off my head, and fetched every bar to his feet. Apparently my time was short; but still calculatin' to stampede 'em, I up with a mighty shout, slitherin' the old blatherskite that raised the alarm. I went in through the brush like a whirlwind. It was a foolish idee. Peach-and-honey don't make brutes skeery no more than it does men, and in less than two minutes I was smotherin' under a squirmin' stack of bar meat about the size of dad's cabin. Now, as I wasn't sma-shed to death, my position mought be rightly considered providential, for the bodies of the brutes that lay next to me kivered me agin the teeth and claws of the outsiders, and bein' well-nigh smothered themselves, they were obliged to fight outward for fresh air. But it don't signify to be tellin' how I got out of there, for I don't exactly know myself. Howsomdever, when I rose and got my breath, I see the bars all around me fightin' among themselves, makin' the fur fly like feathers at a goose-pluckin', and quite onmindful of the stranger among 'em. I mought have cleared myself then, but my blood was up, and I walked through 'em, stabbin' right and left, onmerciful as a mad wild-cat, respectin' neither age nor sex. Jist then several old fellers appeared to get a smell of me, and closed in mighty savage. While I fit in front, a rascally old squeezer grabbed me around the neck from behind. I struck backward, feelin' my knife enter his cussed carcass a dozen times; but it didn't loosen his grip, and I felt my strength goin'. At this pint a big bar poked his head up from behind the honey trough, rubbin' his little eyes as if he had jist waked up. In a minute he broke for us.

"'Rowzey,' thinks I, 'it's time for family worship. Now I lay me down to sleep—'

"As I prayed I made a stab at the big he, who shunned the blade, and, to my astonishment, grabbed the beast in front of me with his left paw, sending him heels over head; then with his right he tore the fellow off my back. I was too far gone to ask questions, but bein' loose once more I broke for camp. There I barricaded myself in with poles, and laid puntin' and slippin' peach-and-honey until I fairly come to my strength agin. It took me some time longer to get up pluck enough to venture back toward the battle-ground. Howsomdever, late in the afternoon I did creep down that way, mighty like a sheep-dog at first, but bolder when I see that every thing was quiet. Around that honey trough lay twenty-two dead bar, young and old. Gentlemen, I value my reputation too high to weigh it agin bar meat. Gentlemen, I counted them bodies as they lay, and you may think I was mighty proud as I viewed the ground. Well, I mought have been, but there was one corpse too many there for my peace of mind. Over by the honey trough, jists where my life was saved, as I thought, by the miraculous mistake of a drunken old bar, there lay two bodies, clutched in a death grip, jist as they had fell fightin'. They were badly tore, and the leaves all around soaked and stained; but as I stooped over to look closer, I felt a cold shiver that froze clean to my bones. There was the white paw, stiff and bloody. Gentlemen, there lay Rough, my old playmate."

The rugged hunter drew his sleeve across his eyes, reached over for the pitcher, and turned it bottom upward over his empty glass.

"Well, is that all?" asked Dick, drawing a long breath.

"Hit's all the liquor," quoth Rowzey, with a dry wink. "Of the story there's yit another pint or two at your service.

"Well, I went to work savin' my meat with a heavy heart, and next day got some fellers up from the settlements with horses and sleds to help me down with it. There was sich a pile that all the neighbors gathered in to look and git a share, and there was a mighty guessin' and bettin' on the weight. Now we had no steelyards nor scales of any kind; but there was old Bill Swanson, who had got weighed out when he was down to the Kanawha Salt-works, and accordin' to his recollection, which was good when he staid sober (which he never did willin'ly), he drawed jist two hundred and eighty, down weight, on the salt-works scales. Well, we jist laid a stout rail acrost a stump, scesaw fashion, and sot old Bill on one end and piled bar meat on the other, till we got his heft—which we did; I now disremember whether hit was seven or seventeen times. Howsomdever, none of us bein' scholars enough to substract that together, we scored the times on a saplin', till the school-master came along to cipher it up for us. But every body 'lowed they never see sich a pile of meat in all their born days."

"And did you never try that trap again, Rowzey?"

"Oh yes; for you see, after old Rough was dead I had no mercy on bar any more, and I sot that trap over and over. But I fooled away my liquor and honey; for though my bait was took regularly, I never see bar nor a bar's track in that neighborhood afterward. But onst I see old Bill Swanson lurkin' around thar, and havin' my own suspicions, I left off settin'."

"And did you eat old Rough with the rest?" inquired Dick.

"Mister," said the mountaineer, with a gesture of indignant scorn, "sich a question is a discredit to the feller that asks it. Do I look like a lawyer or a heathen cannibal? No, sir; I buried him decent and respectable, with all his har on him, jist as I would a Christian friend, and I larred his name on a smooth clapboard, and stuck it up at his head. And thar he mought have rested in peace to this day; but some of them high-scienced fellers from the East come a-nosin' and a-scratchin' through that country, and mistakin' the grave for an Injin mound, they excavated poor Rough's bones and sent 'em to Barnum's Institute, at Washington City, where I've hearn say they stands in a glass case, as the skeleton of a celebrated Injin chief, between a par of General Washington's old breeches and General Jackson's night-cap, which he wore at the battle of New Orleans."

The narrator heaved a deep sigh, and bowed to the company.

Ben Spinner's Vacation.

If there is a thing which at first I thought I would be glad of it, and am now dreadful sorry for, it is because school is out for keeps till the next term. It is most usually the way that when school don't keep there is plenty of work studied up for me to have to do. That's the way it fits me every time. It's my kind of bad luck to be raised to have industrious ways. My father is everlastingly telling me that idleness is the parent of vice, or some of that sort of disagreeable English language that I don't want to hear; and that I must keep busy at work at something, and not gad about with other indolent boys, and race the streets from morning till night perpetual. Last vacation they put me into the garden, where, they said, I could obtain some habits which would do me some good when I became grown up into a useful citizen. Well, to have to be a useful citizen is all very fine silk, but, if I could only have my own way only just once, I would rather be a peanuts on the railroad. But they have got me in the same hardships which I was into last summer, only it is rougher, because there is more of it. If they think it's proper for me to have to bug the potatoes, and weed the onions, and thin out the roobarb, and raise up a lot of garden trash for to go to seed and waste, why, then, I suppose it's all right if I could only see it; but when a boy has studied diligently all winter, I don't think it's exactly the fair thing to keep him too tenacious at work in vacation. Anyhow, that's my opinion, which I throw in. There aint a very great deal of real pleasure in bugging potatoes where the bugs is about a barrel full to the acre, and when a boy has to bend his back down to try to pull up weeds which grow clean through and climb on the other side, it's a kind of a miserable occupation which I would like to get half a good chance for to slip out of. To have to wade into the garden early in the morning when the dew is on in your bare feet, and get smart weed up your trouser's leg, is a worse thing than the Erie Sipilis or the fever and ague; but when you have to do it there is no use for to try to shirk out. I went back on the job once, but I never went back on it twice, because once was enough. I was roped in and coaxed by some boys to go off on the commons to play base ball for a whole day. Late in the evening, when I came in home the back way, and desperate hungry, the Governor gave me an abundance of stars and stripes, which I have got them yet, and could show 'em if I was only in a swimming. I found out that it is a bad habit for a boy to get into, to shake his work without permission, and it's the best way always for to obey orders if it almost breaks your back. But I have got awful sick of this vacation business, and, if I can find a school next year which will keep in the year round, it's the one that I want to go to. That's what kind of a hairpin I am.—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

Petroleum for Fuel.

The Titusville (Penn.) *Herald* says: With the present low prices the question of employing petroleum as fuel is again agitated. The latest intelligence upon the subject comes from Canada, where a man named Relighine has been trying an experiment on a locomotive belonging to the Canada Southern Railway, with an average consumption of four gallons a mile. The engine steamed quite freely and made good time with a train of 30 cars. This would be about a barrel for every 10 miles. The most simple contrivance for burning petroleum is either by means of a jet of steam or compressed air passed at right angles over the orifice of a pipe in such a manner that the oil will be sucked and thrown into the furnace in the form of a fine spray, where, if properly adjusted, it will undergo perfect combustion. The cost of the apparatus is trifling. The whole point, it seems to us, turns upon cheapness, and as the market might go up rapidly with any marked increase of demand, there seems to be an indisposition to try the experiment. There can be little doubt that oil will be found in many parts of the country where at present it is not thought of, in which case a new and unlimited market for its utilization as fuel would naturally follow.

Munchausen Without Braces.

If you could have known Farley Doble you would have warmed up to that man! As for me, I adored him. He could so sweetly and so broadly lie; the mendacity rippled from his lips with such a liquid flow, falling with so musical a splash—spread out amongst the hard realities with an encroachment so gentle, and rose above the tops of the tallest facts with such regularity of supersecension—that listening to him was almost as good as a funeral. The fellow's imagination took a five-barred fact like a bird; and as for mere probabilities he simply burst through them without so much as ever blinking his eyes. Such a man does not come once in a century! He told me this, one day, about a dog:

A Mrs. Turk, living near Leamington, has one of those small, smooth dogs, about the size of two-and-a-half rats, and in figure something like a horse—I'm sure I don't know what you call them. She was suprised one day to see the creature sneaking about the house in obscure corners, as if very much ashamed of itself. Examination revealed the lack of a tail, the bleeding stump of which looked as if the missing part had been pinched off by a gate. Being questioned, the little beast gave an evasive answer by violently convulsing the whole hinder part of its body as if to say, "O it doesn't matter about the tail; you see how well I can wag without it." The lady, however, instituted rigorous search for the hon. member, and soon found it under circumstances that left no doubt as to the cause of the injury. The animal had made an unlawful intrusion into the kitchen, and in the absence of the tutelary deitess had leaped atop of a table to prey upon the obsolete comestibles from the dining-room. In turning about amongst the dishes it had unluckily got its tail into a lobster salad!

I asked Mr. Doble afterward why he had not said the dog got the tail into the claw of a living lobster. He was quite thoughtful for a moment, then inquired if lobsters could live for any considerable time out of the water, and being assured that nothing was easier for them he brightened up a bit and said, "The fact is, I feared if I related this thing as it actually occurred your ignorance of the habits of lobsters might lead you to suspect me of lying." That was characteristic; he thought I would deem it less improbable that a lobster salad should pinch off a dog's tail than that there should be a living lobster on a kitchen table.

He came to my house once with a long story about a man who, in trying a new-fangled scythe, cut off both legs at the thighs. The accident occurred in a field at some distance from the man's house, and when he was quite alone; but taking a leg under each arm, he started across the country for home. In surmounting a fence he accidentally dropped his legs, which at once cut away as fast as they could, arriving at the house a quarter of an hour before him. The man's wife was enjoying her *siesta* when the legs put in an appearance and began kicking at the door for admittance. Very much annoyed, the woman got up from her couch and searched for a missile. Nothing offering but her husband's bootjack, she flung that out of the window at her disturbers; and when the man arrived, what did he see but one leg standing in its stocking on the jack, holding it down for the other to draw off his boot! Such is the force of habit. The spectacle reminded the man that he had walked all that distance across the stubble barefooted.

You will hardly believe that when he had finished this ridiculous tale Mr. Doble attributed my evident incredulity to mere caprice, being quite unconscious of any inherent improbability in what he had related. But far from being offended he went on for a full hour, varying and embellishing the fiction, in the friendly hope of uniting me somehow.

It was Doble who told me that yarn about the eels; though perhaps you never heard it. "I was spending the winter in Scotland," said he, "with my friend Sandy MacSimpleton, and one day we agreed on a day's fishing in Loch Porridge, which was frozen to a depth of nearly two feet. This lake at that time contained but one kind of fish called lumpers, from their obesity. They were peculiar in shape, about eighteen inches in girth in the middle, and tapering rapidly toward the head; which was remarkably small, with a sharp nose. When we were about to go upon the ice I casually remarked that we should probably catch some fine eels, as it seemed a good day for eels. Sandy looked astonished, and offered to lay ten sovereigns to a shilling that there was not an eel in the lake. I booked the bet; then going to the ice we cut a big hole and dropped in our lines. Of course we caught nothing but lumpers. Sandy began to chaff me, and pretending annoyance I took my tackle and went to another spot, where I soon pulled out an eel as long as a man, and sent it whirling across the ice to Sandy's feet. I never saw a man so surprised; but when I had repeated this a dozen times, and he had critically examined every eel, he simply put up his tackle and went home without a word. It was very simple; instead of cutting a block out of the ice I had secretly bored a hole through with an auger of the size that I wanted my eels.

"Having more than I needed, I put most of them back in the water, and now the lake is full of eels, which have quite exterminated the lumpers. The eels are called 'lampreys,' a word which hints feebly at their origin."

Another of Doble's fish stories was this. He was traveling once in a remote corner of Italy, when he came upon a wide pool of what looked like liquid amber, or Bass' ale without its toga. He inspected the liquid and found it oil—whether cod-liver oil, hair-oil or petroleum he could not determine. Desirous of knowing all he could about so remarkable a lake—not that he was unfamiliar with such—he got out his fishing-line, baited the hook with a bit of meat, cast it in and pulled out a fine herring! In half an hour he had landed a wagon-load of them.

When Doble had got to that point in his narrative I interrupted him with the simple remark that the herring, being a salt-water fish, could not possibly exist in oil, adding, to forestall argument, that I had tried them in that element a thousand times. He gave a quick furtive glance at my face from the corner of his eye, to assure himself there was no hope, then began groping nervously with his hands about the sides of his chair, as was his manner when cornered; and, finally, getting his idea, replied with perfect confidence:

"You are quite right—they were sardines."—*English Paper.*

Advice to a Young Man.

We yesterday afternoon observed "Uncle Pete" propped up against his favorite lamp-post, and overheard him holding forth as follows to a young man of the genus hoodlum: "Young man, don't you go to strivin' for a big name or fretin' yourself to make a mark in the world. It's all wanity and wexation of spirit. You just turn philosopher. That's the lay I'm on. Say to yourself the world owes me a livin' and I'm bound to have it. That's a motto to live up to. To live without a carel s my philosophy All else is wanity. What does a man get for doin' things, making inwentions and the like? Nuthin'. Look at Christopher Columbus, young man, and let his fate be a warnin' to you. What does he get for the trouble he had in discoverin' of America? He gits called a swindler and a imposture. He had all his trouble for nuthin', for they have found out that he wasn't the feller that discovered America, after all. It was some Englander or one of them fellers up North. What does William H. Shakspeare git for the trouble he had writin' them plays o' his? He gets busted out entirely. They now say that there never was no such man as William H. Shakespeare, and I believe 'em. No one man could a done it. What was the use of William Tell shootin' old Geyser? He run a big risk of passin' in his own checks, and now they say thar never was no sich man. He'd better a been a philosopher and staid up in the mountains. See the life ole Robinson Crusoe led in that air solitary island! and now they say there never was no Crusoe. Young man, don't you never try to discover America, nor the steam engine, nor the tolegraft—like Moss did—cause you'll find out when it's too late, and you've had all the trouble, that it wasn't you but some other jackass that is dead and don't know whether he ever done anything or not. Now here's the latest instance: Supposin' you to be Vasquez, when you've gone and got up a reputation as Vasquez they find that you ain't Vasquez, but are somebody else. Take my advice, young man, and lead the life of a philosopher; get all you can out of the world and never do nothin' for the world; then you beat the world and are a true philosopher.—*Territorial Enterprise.*

Editors Besieged and Captured.

The editors of Iowa got together last week for a good time. For a year they had been digging away at their work, and when the season for their annual convention came round they dropped pencils, and paste-pots, and scissors, and scampered away like a flock of boys from a country school-house. They went to Clinton, anticipating heaps of fun and very little business. Having met, slapped each other on the back, examined the "new crusade cordial," and laughed in innocent glee at the high old time before them, they sat down, like good and sensible editors, to transact the business on hand prior to going deeper into the festivities.

Hardly had they got fairly at work when they were interrupted by a committee of ladies. The ladies asked to be heard, and with that grace and gallantry so common to the profession, the assemblage bade them speak. Thereupon the ladies appealed to the craft to come out fairly and squarely in favor of temperance and prohibition. An appeal was read, concluding as follows:

"On your shoulders rests a greater responsibility than can possibly rest upon the shoulders of any other class of citizens. The drop of ink that trembles on the point of your pen has in it power to elevate humanity to an exalted standard of morality or integrity, or to debase and crush out its last God-like feature. In behalf, therefore, of the ladies of this city, and of your patrons throughout the State, we ask a frank and ingenuous response to our petition."

Persecuted and unfortunate guild! Worn and battered veterans! Here they had come to Clinton for relaxation, and were met by the assertion that on their shoulders rested a load that would tire a whole city and sink the Great Eastern! The convention was positively fatigued over the information. Each man felt as Christian is supposed to have done before he slipped away from his bundle of sin. The Secretary stared wildly when he heard the words: "The drop of ink that trembles on the point of your pen has in it the power to elevate humanity or crush out its God-like features." What an awful responsibility, and what a temptation to drop the goose-quill and turn his talents to sawing wood! But there was no escape—of course not. But one thing remained to do, and the convention did it solemnly and sadly. They resolved that they were in favor of temperance, and would do everything in their power to further its advancement. The Dubuque *Times* says the petition fell like a wet blanket upon the association; but "*wet*" is hardly the word to use in speaking of so *dry* a subject. And there stood the tantalizing little women, smiling at the trap in which they had caught the association, and watching the efforts to work out of it. It was a very trying situation, but it was managed in a neat and elegant style, as above described, which shows that editors are natural diplomatists, and deserve to be sent on foreign missions whenever their party is in power. The case was a serious one at first; but now that the excursion is over, and the editors are back behind their own fortifications, they are laughing immensely at the attack on them, and congratulating themselves on the shrewd way in which they met the emergency. They propose to carry out their pledge, though each one has his own ideas of the best style of doing it.—*Inter-Ocean.*

A. H. Stephens on the Sunday-School

The Hon. Alexander H. Stephens addressed the teachers and pupils gathered at a recent Sunday-school reunion in Crawfordsville, Ga., and in the course of his remarks gave the following interesting personal reminiscences: "It is a source of high gratification to me to say to you all, and especially to these little boys, that the first awakening of such thoughts in my mind, as well as my first taste for general reading, was quickened and brought into active exercise in a Sunday-school. It was at the old Powder Creek log meeting house, not five miles from this place, more than half a century ago, I became a pupil in what was known as a "Union Sunday-school." The day I entered was a great epoch in my life. It was in the latter part of the summer that the school was opened, or when I entered it, and though but a small boy at the time, still I had to do such work on the farm as I was able to do during the week. This was picking cotton or peas, or going to mill, or other light work of like character. It was only at night, and by a pine-knot light, that I had any opportunity to study the lessons assigned me, and yet so deeply did I become interested in the questions of the Union Catechism that 2 o'clock often found me poring over the chapters of the Bible set apart for the next Sunday's examination. To the impressions thus made I am indebted in no small degree for my whole future course in life, whether it be for good or for evil. If in the midst of any evil that has marred that course there is anything good to be found, or anything worthy of imitation, then it is due to that Sunday-school and to that great cause which you to-day celebrate with inspiring mottoes, banners and music."

A Skunk Story.

The Grand Junction (Iowa) *Headlight* tells the following savory story, which beats the lion-and-lamb business all out of sight:

The little four-year-old son of one of our citizens has had an experience with a pet that has not heretofore been domesticated. A few days ago his father returned home, and the little boy said that he had a dog out in a box, which he wished his father to see. After considerable urging, the father concluded that he would go and see the pup. There had been a dry-goods box placed in the door-yard, bottom side up, and the "little dog"