

A TILT WITH FOILS.

Mr. Kelly Teaches His Wife How to Fence.



HE RECALLED Mr. Kelly, looking at his paper, "that would be a good thing for you."

"What would?" asked his wife.

"Fencing," replied Mr. Kelly. "Fencing," she echoed, "in surprise."

"You say it's fashionable?" Mrs. Kelly hesitatingly asked.

"Says so right here," explained her husband. "What do you say," he went on, enthusiastically.

"Oh, yes," sneered Mr. Kelly, coldly, "a healthy Hamlet would be. Who ever saw a Hamlet with red hair and a mole on his chin?"

"Oh, that's the way," growled Mr. Kelly, as she stooped to pick up the debris.

"I didn't know it was right under the lamp," protested his wife, as she threw the broken glass in the stove and resumed her seat.

"Now, be more careful this time," said Mr. Kelly, as she again took a position. "No—don't hold your foil like that—you're going to beat yourself."

"The hits rattled against each other a few times, and Mrs. Kelly received a terrific clip on the hand that she moved the skin from three inches and knuckled, and was evoked from that lady a stupendous yell.

"A hit—a palpable hit," gleefully exclaimed Mr. Kelly, as he dropped the foil and lunged forward, grasping her hand.

"It's all over," she wailed. "Pool! Mustn't mind a little thing like that," Mr. Kelly remarked, as she bound up the injured member.

"I guess you wouldn't call it a little thing," protested his wife.

"Hah!" roared Mr. Kelly, scornfully, "a man wouldn't notice a blown cork of that sort. Come on, now."

He picked up her foil again in a disjointed sort of way, and crossed Mr. Kelly's foil.

"Look out, now," he said, excitedly, "I'm coming for you with the death blow, and you want to look out for yourself."

"This bit of information had the effect of stimulating his wife to extraordinary efforts, and the foils struck fire at every blow, while Mrs. Kelly's hands performed a variety of gyrations simply marvelous in their eccentricity.

"Here I come!" shouted the excited Mr. Kelly, and he lowered his foil for the finishing stroke. At that instant his wife's foil was describing a most astounding evolution in the air, and in the confusion of the moment that worthy woman brought it down with a degree of spirit totally unlooked for in one of such sedentary habits, catching Mr. Kelly neatly across the ear, and knocking him with great precipitation over a chair.

"What do you do that for?" he yelled, as she struggled to his feet and hung on to hisaching head.

"I didn't go to," pleaded his wife, abashed and awed by the unlooked-for termination of their innocent pleasure.

"You didn't go to," shrieked Mr. Kelly, in a passion-turn voice, dancing about the room and rubbing his injured ear, "oh, Kelly falls backward of course not—over a chair."

"Now of your back talk round here," shouted Mr. Kelly; "you take and lug them into the shed, and the next time you want any exercise don't you ask me to help you out with none of your blame foolishness."

And as his wife meekly gathered up the remains of their encounter, he jumped into his boots and went out doors to rub his swollen ear.

What women seem to hanker after is exercise.—W. O. Fuller, Jr., in Texas Sittings.

NEEDY MUSICIAN—I am going to have a benefit. How many tickets will you take? They are a dollar each.

Luckless Friend—I suppose I'll have to take a couple. Rather pressed for funds, though.

Needy Musician—Well, if you'd rather lend me a dollar, I won't take a benefit, and we'll call it square.—Drake's Magazine.

WILKINS—No intended son-in-law of mine should be seen coming out of a drinking saloon.

Snickips—And no intended father-in-law of mine should be seen going into one.—Munsey's Weekly.

SEVEN SPOOK EVENTS.

No Particular Locality Has a Monopoly of the Spirit Kingdom.

A woman in a small house near Marshall, Ill., last November. Since then it is said that a form in white has been seen to pass in and out of the house at the same hour each night.

On a farm near Springfield, Mo., a spectral rabbit lingers about an old well, into which the dead body of a murdered peddler was thrown many years ago.

A New York widow, on the night of his marriage to another woman, was surprised by a visit from the spirit of his first wife, who delivered to him a lecture on the evil of his ways, giving him to understand in the most emphatic language that she strongly disapproved of his course.

As a Maine judge was riding past a grave-yard one moonlight night, he thought he saw a ghost. There was something white on top of a tomb, and it moved. Getting nearer, he saw its eyes gleam. But determining to solve the phenomenon, he advanced into the grave-yard and discovered that the spectral object was only a stray sheep.

An elegant Indianapolis mansion is empty and is offered for rent at a very low figure. The owner vacates because he is tired of the racket kicked up by intruded midnight visitors. Furniture is turned upside down and the piano played by unseen hands. A ghostly figure appears and traces on the mirror letters of the color of blood, spelling out the word "Beware!"

A correspondent of a Cincinnati paper says that while he was in the army in 1838 he awoke one morning on hearing his name called by his sister's voice. No one else heard the sound and the occurrence passed from his mind a few days later, when he received a letter from home stating that his sister had died on the very day he was so strangely awakened.

Mandan, Dak., has a spook and is proud of it. A man named Lansing died in 1881 in a house which has been vacant ever since. Those who pass the place in the night-time see strange lights flickering about the deserted rooms and hear groans and cries of distress. One farmer who had the courage to look in the window declared that he saw Lansing, with a face as pale as death, lying on the floor.

Sparrows Stop a Town Clock.

The Sarnia (Ont.) town clock stopped at 4:30 on Thursday morning, and Mr. Williams, on going to ascertain the cause, found the hands had been secured by a pair of English sparrows, who had selected the angle formed by the hands as a site for a nest.

The movement of the hands interfered with their work, and they became so angry that they decided to devise a remedy that would secure the stability of the nest. Their first scheme was to wind the shaft on which the hands are pivoted round and round with grass and cords. That failing, they tied the hands together and to the framework in such a manner that it took considerable time and a great deal of labor on Mr. Williams' part to remove the obstructions. The engineering skill displayed by the birds in accomplishing their object showed that they possessed reasoning powers of no mean order, besides an amount of industry and perseverance in gathering the material with which the few hours at their disposal that it almost incredible.

A Pen Picture of Parnell.

Charles Stewart Parnell usually wears a loosely-fitting cutaway coat. He gets all the wear out of a coat that there is in it. He wears it until it is thin, then he wears it until he is shabby, then he leaves it on his back and has it brought very old-looking in a few days.

The bald spot on his head has increased perceptibly in size, and the grey hairs in his beard are growing more and more numerous. He feels the responsibility of his position keenly, and his health has become impaired under its weight.

There is a constantly troubled expression on his face, and his sitting plans are broken up by fits of restlessness. After he becomes worn out with work he disappears, sometimes for weeks, and no one knows where to look for him. He drops as completely out of the world as if he had dropped into his grave.

U. S. SENATE PAGES.

A Bright Lot of Boys, One the Son of a Senator.

They Can Only Serve Between the Ages of 16 and 21, and Must be Citizens. They Think of Leading Senators—Well Paid and Very Ambitious.

(Copyright, 1890.)

HAT if the Senate pages 3 in a "d strike?"

The question was once asked by a gentleman who sat beside me in the United States Senate gallery and noted how heavily the Senators were loaded with little fellows who perform errands for them.

It seemed to him, he said, that such a strike would stop the wheels of Government; and so it might if there were no means of filling the places of the strikers, for presumably very few of the Senators would know where to go or what to do to procure the documents, etc., for which they keep the pages running.

But about the Capitol and in the several departments of public life in Washington there are enough men of National renown who began their political careers as pages to fill the places of all these boys; so—

What if the Senate pages should strike? The Government would go right on.

The number of famous men who once were pages seems to warrant the assumption that embryonic greatness is not uncommon about the Capitol in knickerbockers, running errands, perhaps, for men not fit to bear its shoes.

Surely this is excuse enough for devoting a little consideration to the pages of the Senate.

Four years is the longest term a boy may serve as page, since he is eligible to the office only between the ages of twelve and sixteen.

In the Senate there are fourteen of these boys, under the immediate direction of Alonzo H. Stewart, a young man of nearly twenty who four years ago closed his career as a page and is now attached to the Sergeant-at-Arms under the title of Messenger on the Floor of the Senate.

But this chief page and all his assistants are under the supervision of Captain Isaac Bassett, the venerable assistant door-keeper, who has served continuously as an attaché of the Senate since he was appointed a page fifteen years ago, by Daniel Webster's request.

Captain Bassett, with his long white hair and beard, is the most striking figure on the Senate floor, and if any man is indispensable there it is he. In the matter of ceremonial he is the authority on whom Vice-President, Presidents pro tempore of the Senate and all the officers and members of the Senate rely.

For more than half a century he has kept a memorandum book at hand and made entries of all those acts which were likely to be useful as precedents, and any thing else of an unusual character happens, the presiding officer of the Senate turns to Captain Bassett, who sits on his left, and is informed as to what is the conventional mode of proceeding under the circumstances.

It is said that Captain Bassett has, during all these years of service in the Senate, kept close memoranda of such speeches and acts as have marked events in our country's history. He can tell the precise spot where Webster stood when he made any of his famous arguments; where Sumner sat when he received the blow which helped the cause of emancipation; and where every word was said and every act performed which has had direct bearing on the great events of this last half century.

But he is as uncommunicative as the Sphinx, and as for his memorandum books, he would no more let a newspaper correspondent look at one of them than he would willingly sever his connection with the Senate.

The fourteen Senate pages are all bright-looking lads. Harry Long, McKee Cochran and Albert Mackey are the seniors. They have served three years. And Warner Moody and Fred Kappeler are the juniors. Warner Moody is the son of Senator Moody, of

South Dakota, and is a peculiarly interesting, not to say charming, little fellow. He is a quiet, fair-haired child, whose delicate physique and sweet, gentle manners lend Oliver Twist constantly to mind. His appearance is that of a boy—I had almost said a girl—of seven or eight years, but his precision of speech and his quiet old-fashioned ways together with his precocious judgment make him seem more than a child. He is the sort of lad that mothers can not meet without having an irresistible impulse to snatch him up and kiss him.

With as much solemnity as a President, for all a Senator has to do is to "spat his hands and the pages do all the work for him." Fred answers to the name of Swipes and says he is sure it will never offend his dignity, not even when he becomes a Senator, to be known by that pseudonym.

Fred Kappeler is also a diminutive lad of thirteen, but is a more rugged, boyish chap. He acknowledges Robert Porter, the superintendent of census, as his patron saint. Fred was born in Switzerland, but in the seven years of his residence in America all traces of his mother tongue have been obliterated from his English speech. He is well aware that it would take an amendment of the constitution to make him eligible to the Presidency, but he very contentedly asserts that there is nothing to hinder him from becoming a Senator, and so far as his observation goes a Senator is now to be elected than a President, for all a Senator has to do is to "spat his hands and the pages do all the work for him."

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In the bestial of nicknames the pages seem to delight in contrivance. For example, McKee Cochran is called Ethiope, and Albert Mackey, whose exceeding generosity has made him the favorite of the group, is called Shylock. Events in the careers of the boys also determine their nicknames, as in the case of Logan Harris, a handsome little lad

low with bright, twinkling eyes, who is called Pie because when he was being initiated to the secrets of page etiquette he was informed, and he believed, that it was his conventional duty to buy a round of pie at the Senate restaurant for all of the other pages.

He bought, along with this experience, the name which will not leave him, at least until he quits the atmosphere of the Senate.

To "intervene" a Senator who has nothing to say has been adjudged by newspaper men a pretty difficult thing to do. But compared with interviewing fourteen Senate pages who have every thing to say and are eager to say it all at once it is as easy as rolling off the traditional log. I met the boys all together a few moments before the Senate was called to order. When they learned that I wanted their opinions

concerning Senators they began to push and crowd and chatter all at once. The atmosphere was full of opinions. Had I been fourteen stenographers with a full complement of ears I could not have heard and preserved all that they said. Every one of them talked louder and faster than all the rest and each tugged at some portion of my apparel to attract my attention to what he had to say. The frankness of these boys, their willingness to declare an honest opinion, their eagerness to "talk for publication," set the unaffected little fellows far above some men of note whom I have known and who, while manifestly no less eager, surround themselves with sham barriers and sit behind them sorely disappointed if the interviewer does not see the sham and knock the barriers down.

Out of the clamor I managed to snatch a few facts—first, the general fact that good feeling prevails between the Senators and their pages, and then some specifications as to individuals. Senator Stanford was unanimously declared to be an able statesman and a great man because each year he gives them all an entertainment at his house where he distributes presents, and then because he gives a bright crisp \$5 bill to each page every year. But as the chatter went on this was found to be a complimentary ballot. Senators Manderson, Vance, Reagan, Gorman and Davis seemed really to be the most general favorites of the boys, and Senators Ransom, Dixon, Moody, Butler and Manderson were also popular. Dr. Ed. W. B. Smith is in the Senate. They give also to Senator Butler the credit of being the most polite and elegant gentleman in the chamber. Senator Gorman is liked because he once was a page himself and has not forgotten it.

"He is always good natured," said one of the little fellows, "and often tells us stories about what he used to do when he was a page. I guess he was a riper fellow than any of us." This last remark was intended to be a sort of cap for a climax of compliment.

Senator Vest is not generally a favorite with the boys. Indeed, the youngsters passed unmistakable censure upon the very vigorous language he sometimes uses toward them, and they assert openly that they would rather be doing something else when he snaps his fingers for a page. One of the boys, however, thinks Senator Vest is a great deal better than any other Senator. McKee Cochran was one day rushing at breakneck speed to do the bidding of some other Senator, when, darting out of the chamber, he plumped squarely into Senator Vest and knocked breath enough out of him to make raw material for half a dozen Fourth of July orations. The Senator saved just enough to supply the surrounding audience with a few bits of tint and an odor of sulphur. The boy who did this had had come "for surely" this time, slunk back under Captain Bassett's protecting arm and tremulously awaited to hear his doom pronounced. Instead of declaring war, however, Senator Vest at once began to manifest a decided interest in young Cochran, and something afterward, when the youngster fell into a fight with one of his colleagues, he was one of his particular protectors.

and procured a reduction of the suspension to two weeks.

Young Harry Long never tires of telling me how kind a man Senator Farwell is. The Senator entertained the boy at his elegant home in Chicago during the Republican National convention in 1888 and opened the eyes of the youthful Pennsylvanian to the glories of the Western metropolis, and procured for him a seat in the convention to boot.

"Why," said the boy, all aglow with gratitude, "he not only invited me to his house, but he paid all my expenses. Senator Vance is the best of all the Senators, and Senator Reagan has gained the eternal friendship of the boys by making paper caps and giving them around."

Senator Cockrell is more dreaded than any other member of the body. "He is always wanting something," said one of the lads.

"Yes; and it's always something outside of the chamber," said another. "You bet when a path running to the door meets your aim."

"You bet, when Senator Cockrell claps his hands," said a third, "we all try to find something else to do. He ought to have a page all to himself."

Senator Jones, of Arkansas, is another one who needs a great deal of waiting on.

"He's a good enough man," said one little fellow, "but he's awful on us."

"That kind of a man is Senator Ingalls," I asked, "and he is?"

"Oh! he never notices us," answered one. "No," piped a wee chap, "he ain't so-able."

Senator Hiscock is not very popular among the pages. They say he seems "sort o' tired of every thing and every-body."

Some time ago the pages formed a sort of their own. For some reason they excluded Moody, Long and Harris, whereupon those three organized themselves into a reprobator corps and broke into so many secret sessions that the judiciary officer of the body concluded it was time to adjourn sine die; so he decamped with the twenty-five cents in the treasury and six sheets of paper, and the organization collapsed.

The boys get \$75 a month in salary and numerous small sums from generous Senators. They also have a trick of picking up all the printed speeches of certain Senators, and, after having them neatly bound, sell the volume to the

"Does anybody but the Senators buy these peeches?" I asked.

"Oh! not only the Senator who has made the speeches," was the innocent answer.

One little fellow—Harry Long—told me he had made \$75 in the last year by selling speeches to the Senators who made them.

"What would you do if you were a Senator?" I asked one of the small boys. "I'd rather get out of the Senate."

"I'd call up the Blair education bill and have it passed," he said.

"Yes, sir!" chimed in half a dozen more, "we all wanted that bill to pass."

I learned afterwards, however, that they did not care a fig for the merits of the bill. They had seen Senator Blair's earnestness in the matter and his repeated disappointments over its failure, and they were sincerely sorry for him.

When asked whether they would rather be pages or Senators, all but one agreed that generally they would prefer to be pages, "because we pages have a heap more fun than the Senators do."

Little flaxen-haired, blue-eyed Warner Moody, however, looked up and spoke with a quaint dignity and thoughtful deliberation:

"I would rather be a Senator, of course."

Page etiquette demands that each lad shall be permitted to wait on his own Senator. That is, the Senator who procured his place for him; and it is inconceivable rudeness for one page to respond to the call of another Senator unless the other is so engaged that he can not attend to it.

The pages are ostensibly Republicans, but they do not mind saying that there are a good many things about the Democratic side that are attractive to them. The prominent among which is the fact that from the motions to adjourn come out of the Democratic side, and since the boys report for duty at 9 o'clock in the morning and remain until adjournment, this is no inopportune matter to them.

The Democratic side of the chamber, however, is what the boys call "the peeching." Since whenever one is in refractory Captain Bassett delegates him to duty on that side. It is an old-time custom, and pages soon learn that it is not permitted to serve on the majority side of the chamber. There are seven boys for each side, but those on the majority side always feel a little more favored.

"I got to larking the other day," said Master Long, "and Captain Bassett sent me over on the Democratic side."

As I turned to leave the group one little fellow followed me, saying: "Don't forget to put in something about Nobby Bullin (Master George Mann of Michigan) and Rev. Ed. Ward Bailey of Georgia, the boy who got caught and 'died I did,' and 'tore' (Squire) Kana (Master Will Auldick of Illinois) and the Bassett, Jr., the grand son of Captain Bassett, the boy that ate the nose-blinking when he was told it was a page for a year."

"And say," he added, "you ain't got to interview the House pages, are you?"

"Why not?"

"Well, they ain't in our class, you know."

"There is as much distinction among boys between a Senate page and a House page as there is among men between a Senator and a member of the lower House," William B. Hawkins.

A SENATOR'S TRIALS.

How Ben Wade Established One of the Door-keepers.

The name of the average Senator's life is the requests of his friends and constituents for tickets of admission to the Senate chamber when any thing of great interest is going on upon the floor. In later days, on great occasions, the Senators have transferred the responsibility to the Sergeant-at-Arms, says the Boston Budget. About twenty years ago the whole duty devolved upon them. Good-natured men were made miserable by the demands upon them, and it is told by good authority that the late Senator Wade, when acting as the door-keeper, distributed his tickets with a lavish hand, but they gave out sooner than his constituents. He managed to make enough of all but one, an old Army Chaplain, who had come from the northern corner of the State just to be present at the impeachment.

"My tickets are all gone," said Senator Wade, "but perhaps I can serve you in some other way."

"There is nothing else I want," sighed the Chaplain, "I have heard that you are a generous man, but this is the first favor I have asked after serving my country for three years, and besides I have come clear from Ohio to be present at the impeachment of Andrew Johnson."

The old Senator looked him over with a merry twinkle in his eye, noticing especially the clerical cut of his coat, and then, writing something on a slip of paper:

"If that door-keeper is a Christian he can not resist that plea."

After he got out of sight the Chaplain looked at the paper, and on it were these words:

"For God's sake let this man in. Ben Wade."

EXPECTATION.

Under the trees my heart and I together await the coming of someone who will come. Await the greeting word forever dumb. I know not how—whether we dreamed, or whether

My heart and I, seeing the new-blown summer, took hope from its fall glory, or the hum of earth's life for moving our patient numb. Draw us abroad into the sweet warm weather.

We entered the lesson well, long, long ago, My heart and I—we entered the lesson well. In summer heats, in winter's stubborn cold! That he will come no more, we know, we know; yet we expect him moving, that tongue can tell, And listen for his coming as of old!

—Ida W. Benham, in N. Y. Independent.

AN ODD PROPOSAL.

My Lady Love Rescued by a Bit of Short-Hand.

LIT new boarder," said Miss Cathcart, "do you sit next me at the table; then in a lower tone, "I don't see what Mrs. Matthews can be thinking of. I will not give you a very select place."

"So it is, isn't it?" answered, in true Yankee fashion, with an assertion and a question.

"Judge for yourself! This latest acquisition to our number is a stenographer and type-writer in Lawyer Butler's office."

I looked down the table at the very pretty young lady sitting there, and thought to myself that she might prove a very charming companion. Miss Cathcart—thirty years old and attired like a girl of eighteen—looked faded and old in comparison.

"That evening, in the boarding-house parlor, I was introduced to Miss Rachel Stone, the 'new boarder,' and in half an hour we were on very friendly terms."

I had touched upon the subject of short-hand early in the conversation, saying that I was a stenographer. I had thought I would like to take my own notes in the court-room, and a most enthusiastic advocate of stenography I found. She up set all my theories about shorthand, declaring it was not hard to acquire, and that it was a most delightful and fascinating study.

"Why not give me some lessons?" I said, laughingly.

Miss Stone took me up at once. Not that she would undertake a proposition that she would give me regular lessons, but she assured me that if I would get the proper books I could pursue the study without a teacher. "In any difficulty," she said, "I should be very glad to render you assistance."

Now, to be quite honest, I fell in love with the new boarder in that very first hour, and as a natural consequence, I returned home the next evening with the necessary books in my possession. I am ashamed to confess how often I feigned ignorance just to enjoy her pretty, eager way of explaining the difficulty.

It was not long before the lines and curves and hooks began to mean something to me, and one particular phrase had a peculiar fascination for me. I used to write it over and over again—"I love you, I love you."

It came to be an understood thing that after supper Miss Stone and I should sit at a small table in a corner of the parlor and talk over the short-hand. Miss Cathcart made herself exceedingly disagreeable, and sometimes Rachel—I called her Rachel in my heart—would leave the room to escape her discourtesy.

Sometimes we would make a little break in the shorthand and turn to other topics, and in these exchanges of confidence I learned a good deal about Rachel's home, in a small New England town, and of her only brother, a college student of whom she was very proud. I found it was to help this brother through college that she had sought a position in the city.

Every day I fell more deeply in love, until I reached a point where there were no more depths to sound. I loved her, and I did not make a formal proposal—perhaps because no very good opportunity presented itself, perhaps because I was in doubt as to her answer. Sometimes I would fancy her color deepened a little when I entered the room; but there was a frankness about her treatment of me, and a business-like way of making shorthand the chief topic of our conversation, that did not tend to encourage me.

One afternoon I went home earlier than usual with two opera tickets in my pocket, and in my heart a determination to know my fate that night. Surely I could manage a proposal during the walk home.

As I stepped in the hall to leave my hat I heard Mrs. Matthews' voice through the parlor door. It was pitched high as though the speaker was angry or excited. "I must have your room," she was saying. "Some of my best boarders will not remain under the circumstances, unless you leave the house."

"Under what circumstances? I do not understand you, Mrs. Matthews." It was Rachel's voice, and it sounded as though the poor girl might break down and cry the next instant. I considered myself wholly justified now in playing the part of a eavesdropper.

"Your goings on with Mr. Hamilton under cover of that shorthand study. You could not spend more time in his company if you were engaged to him."

Ah! if my darling had been engaged to me how quickly I could step to her side and defend her from these cruel insults. The little phrase: "I love you," flashed into my mind, and it was like an inspiration. As it happened, I held in my hand a book—a compilation of stenographic phrases I had just purchased about the white paper wrapped around it and the lead pencil in my pocket, every thing necessary to carry out my plan was at hand.

In bold, black characters, I swiftly wrote on the book the words: "I love you. Be my wife," in shorthand. The next instant I stepped into the room.

"Excuse me, Miss Stone," I said, "you are engaged. Hearing your voice as I passed through the hall I thought of you about. I hope it is all right."

As I handed her the package I saw

that my poor love's cheeks were holed and flushed and her lips quivering. I wanted to take her in my arms in the face of the frowning landlady. As she took the book her eyes fell upon the shorthand characters. They stood out boldly on the white paper, and to her they were as plain as print. Her head dropped an instant. Then she gave me a look—if eyes could say yes, heads did. We were engaged, and now my way was clear.

"I have been thinking, Mrs. Matthews," I said, "that it would be well for Miss Stone's engagement to me to be announced. Shall we delegate you to make the fact known to the rest of the household?"

"Engaged!" gasped Mrs. Matthews. "Is Miss Stone engaged to you?"

"It gives me great pleasure to say that she is. Miss Stone will return to her home in a very short time to make preparations for our wedding, which will take place the coming winter."

When the landlady left the room, eager to know the news to Miss Cathcart, I took Rachel in my arms and begged her pardon for so summarily deciding her future for her. I told her that her brother needed aid to complete the majority of the debt that he had just given me, and that two months was just as long as I was willing to wait.

In a certain little box my wife cherishes the keepsakes she values the highest, and among them is a bit of wrapping paper bearing a few stenographic characters—my shorthand proposal. Would you like to see it? Here it is:

—Edna F. Martin, in Chicago News.

FACTS ABOUT LEAVES.

Specialty Modified by Nature for Some Particular Purpose.

Even the most cursory observer of vegetable life must have been often struck with the various forms of leaves. Why they should be so variously formed does not, however, often suggest itself, though there is a reason for the special shape and texture of almost every leaf in existence. Plants, such as grasses, daffodils and others which usually grow in clusters, have generally narrow leaves growing upright, so as not to overshadow one another.

Other plants, of isolated habits, have an arrangement of foliage which secures to themselves the space of ground necessary for their development. The daisy, dandelion and shepherd's purse—which may mostly be seen in pastures—are examples of this.

A circle of broad leaves pressed against the ground, forming what is known as a rosette growth, effectually bars the approach of any other plant and keeps clear from all other roots the space of ground necessary to its own nutriment. Floating