MRS. BARKER'S WOOD.

"No wood!"

Mrs. John Barker's eyes wandered in dismay around the unpromising looking wood yard. Two or three green logs lay there, against one of which an ax leaned in a cleft formed by a stove length being half chapped off. Her husband and his hired help, consisting of a man and boy, had just gone to their work on a distant part of the farm, and she knew she should see neither of them before dark.

What should she do? Half impatiently she turned toward the house, and then, with a thought of the pan of light dough waiting inside, she began to gather some of the chips which lay around, only to fling them down again.

"It's no use. I can't bake bread with these. I know what I'll do."

She quickly washed the dinner dishes with the already cooling water, and then went to the stable, in which, with hands dextrous by practice in such work, she had soon harnessed a horse to a light buggy.

"Mother and the girls will think I'm crazy," she said to herself, "but I can't help that. I swung an ax once and ached for a month to pay for it, so I'm not going to do it again,"

She brought out her pan of bread wrapped in a large cloth, and, setting it in the bottom of the buggy, sprung in herself, and had soon driven the two miles which lay between her own house and her mother's. Arriving there she carried in her pan and set it down with a laugh.

"There, mother. I've come to bake my bread. John and the others went off without leaving me any wood, and I had to do it or let it spoil. Men will forget, you know,"

She was not going to blame him to others, nor let them imagine now often, since she had gone as a bride to John Barker's new house only last spring, she had this same trouble about wood.

"That's right. Set it right down there by the fire, so't'ill get het up before you knead it into loaves. Yes, they will; and if any man's to be excused for not keepin' wood on his mind it's John Barker, if there's anything in blood and I say there is. His father is just so—a real forehanded man, good provider, and took proper pride in havin' things spick and span about him, but never seemin' to think what a bother it was to the women folks not to have their wood handy. Many and many's the time I've dropped into tea with John's mother and see her have the grea est time a scrapin' up a few chips or shakin' the snow off sticks of miserable green wood."

John's wife turned her face as she took off her things, for fear her friends would see in her face how nearly her own experience was already becoming like that of John's mother.

"I used to tell her," went on her mother "that she'd ought to trained him better when he was young. Now, like as not, John takes a little after his father—nobody could wonder at it—and I wish father could haul you a load or two of his good seasoned wood, s'pose 'twouldn't do—eh, Susan?"

"No, 'twouldn't do, mother; thank you all the same."

Twilight of the November day was shutting in when John Barker, returning to his house, missed the accustomed fire glow in the windows.

"What's up? no fire! no wife! No wonder!" he ejaculated again, as he went out and took a view of the wood yard.

After fifteen minutes' work with his ax he carried in an armful of wood and kindling, and had a bright fire crackling and snapping in the stove by the time his wife's cheery voice was heard.

"I've had a real frolic, John," she said, tugging in a basket, from which she laid out several loaves of bread and a number of light, puffy biscuits. "I couldn't find any wood, so I just hitched up old Bill and went over to mother's to bake my bread."

There was not the slightest shade of reproach in her tones, but John felt a tingle of mortification at what had occurred, and resolved that it should not happen again, and so he assured Susan with great fervor.

And the next day he went vigorously to work to keep his word. Logs, some freshly felled, others which had fallen through decay, were hauled from the piece of timber land belonging to the farm, and for a week all hands sawed and chopped with a will. Then the results were flung pell mell into the wood shed, and John, who had never learned at home to look far enough ahead to think of providing seasoned wood from year to year, felt proud at having done his duty like a man.

And Susan, as she worried through that winter with wood green or decayed, too short or too long for the stove, made up her mind (and she had a good deal of mind of her own to make up) that she would never worry through such another, remembering some sensible advice her sensible, energetic mother had given her when she left home.

"Bear things, Susan. There's lots of things has to be borne in this world, and them that learns to bear 'em best's the best of all. Men will be trying, and if woman can't be patient it's apt to make trouble. But mind—when I say bear I mean there's reason in all things, and I don't mean you should bear things that's out of all reason. If a woman'll let herself be trod on, and them that does it'll never thank her for it or look up to her for it. Bear what's reasonable, Susan, but if things go beyond reason, why then look out for yourself."

It came about that when the next October term of the Circuit Court was in session John was drawn on the jury and had to be away for two weeks.

"Why, what in the world's this, Susan?" he said, staring into the woodshed when he got home the second Saturday.

"That's my winter's supply of wood," said Susan.

"And how in thunder did it get there—and, in such good shape, too!" he gazed at it in astonishment.

It was in good shape. Row after row of well-seasoned, neatly sawed and split wood piled to the rafters, with a heap of pine and hemlock in kindling lengths in one corner.

"I had it put there," said Susan, quietly.

Some more questions he asked, but, with a little way, she sometimes had of asserting herself, she gave him to understand she had nothing more to tell, and he was ashamed to ask any one else.

The winter brought its usual round of simple gayeties in the country neighborhood, in which John and his wife took their full share.

"It seems to me, Susan," he said one evening on their return from a church sociable, "you don't fix up quite enough when you go out."

"Don't I look nice?"

"Yes, of course you do; but that's a dress you had when we were married, and that's nigh on two years ago. I haven't seen anything of that silk I gave you last fall."

"Are you sure?" she said, with a smile which he could not understand.

"Yes, I am. 'Taint been made up yet, is it?"

"Yes, it is. And you've seen it worn."

John was puzzled, and felt sure he had not, but Susan would give him no further satisfaction on the subject of the silk dress.

As spring approached she made a few suggestions as to the advisability of fire wood being set to season in due time. But John, prompt and dilligent in preparation for seed time and harvest, full of the best intentions regarding his wife's comfort, still thought the wood was one of the things which could be looked to at any time, and Susan soon gave over reminding him of it.

One day in September he came home to dinner and found a cold lunch waiting him. The house was clean and quiet and cheerless; no wife there, but a written line which ran:

"DEAR JOHN—I am going to spend the day over at Mrs. Carter's. Will be home in time to give you a late supper."

He was glad to have her go, for she had had a busy summer and needed a little change. But there was a day out the next week and the next and the next, until he began to wonder at Susan's growing taste for gadding about. In early October he came home to find his woodyard, which had still remained empty, occupied by half a dozen or so cords of first class wood, with Sol. Carter and his two big boys busy at it, and they worked until it was stored up as before in the shed. And John felt cross, but asked no questions.

"Where's Mrs. Barker?" said a small Carter boy to John, as he put up his bars one evening.

"She is over to neighbor Grant's. You will fine her there if you want her."

"It ain't no matter. You can tell her here's the sewin' she's to do for mother, and mother wants to know if she can come and wash to our house to-morrow."

"The—old scratch she does?" exclaimed John, turning on the boy in blank amazement, which rapidly grew into anger. "Mrs. Barker hire out to do washin' and sewin'? What d'ye mean by comin' to me with such a message, you young rascal?"

The astonished youngster dropped his sewing and applied his knuckles to his eyes as John advanced towards him, then ran with all his might as the bundle came whizzing after him. And Susan's lord and master strode in dignified wrath down the road to meet her.

"Susan—I don't understand this—there's been a young chap talkin' about sewin' and washin' for Mrs. Carter. What in all creation does it mean, I'd like to know?"

"It's all right," said Susan, composedly. "What was the message?"

"Thunderation! You don't mean to say you sew and wash for other folks, do you?"

"Yes, I do."

"And for what?" Is there anything you want, Susan, that I don't give you?"

"Yes, John, there is. I want wood. I can't saw and chop, but I can wash and sew and do anything else a woman ought to do, and there's no blame to me for changing work I can do for work I can't. I'm never," Susan spoke very firmly, but without a grain of irritation, "going to put up with poor, badly cut, green wood again as long as I can turn my woman's work into man's work. I'd rather wash for somebody every week, it's half the comfort of a woman's life. You've never had to wait for your dinner with the wood sizzling in the stove and the fire not burning since I've been providing the wood."

John was dumbfounded.

"And you've been working for Sol. Carter's wife these two years!" he said, in intense disgust.

"No; my silk dress paid for last year's wood. I hated to let it go, John, because you gave it me, but Tilda Carter took a fancy to it. It was she you saw wearing it," and Susan laughed at his grunt of dissatisfaction with the whole business.

"You to go letting me down this way before the Carter's!" he growled. And if Mrs. John's eyes flashed a little who can blame her, as she answered:

"If there's any letting down to do it's your doing, not mine!"

They finished their walk home in silence, and then John said:

"Susan, will you leave the wood business to me after this?"

"I'll try you, John," she said.—Philadelphia Call.

In an English Hotel.

The style of charging dinners is to submit to you a printed blank upon which what you have ordered is written, and just before rising from the table you are desired to approve it by signature before the waiter carries it to the cashier to be charged to your account, and, if staying at the hotel for a few days, you are only permitted to pay for what you orde on leaving, or, if remaining more than a week, at the end of each week, when a huge bill of items is handed in. It is of course impossible to tell then if the charges for the various meals, etc., have all been made correctly unless one is blest with a memory not vouchsafed to ordinary mortals, or does as a friend of the author did, who was staying there with his family, make daily record of everything they ordered in his pocket memoranda, by which he discovered an error of account.

"In future," said he to the bookkeeper, "I will pay the waiter for each meal as I finish."

"Quite impossible, I assure yah, sir.

"Why, so? I observe people do it every day."

"Er—yes, beg your pardon, but those are transients, sir."

"Well, consider me a transient, and I'll pay as they do."

"Really! We couldn't—we—ah—have to have a system—our enormous business, doncher know."

"Enormous business? What do you a call an enormous business?" said the now irate American.

"Why, immense dinner trade; why, we often have to dine two hundred and fifty persons a day hyar!" and the young man leaned back as if half expecting the American would reel under his announcement.

"How many?" said the latter.

"Two hundred and fifty a day!"

"Now, look here, young man, don't ever tell that to any other American; if you do he will laugh in your face for calling it a big business. Why, I am from a second-rate city where at one of our regular hotels from five to six hundred are dined daily, while three or four clubs of thirty or forty members each are having dinners in different parts of the house at the same time."

"Really—most extwardinary!"

"Extraordinary! No, sir; I have sat down in a dining-room at Saratoga Springs where over a thousand were dined at once with not half the trouble of getting served that there is in this country."—Boston Commercial Bulletin.

An English Farmer's Wife.

"We's up at four o'clock, for yer must be up betimes, the young poultry are soft, and can't bide long whiles without food. At quarter to four I steps out of my bed just sharp like, and sings out to the girls, and they slips forth from bed as quick as ever they may, and we jumps on with our cloths and minds our beasts, whatever it may be that God has given us to look after. And then at seven o'clock Bilston and all of us have breakfast. We has home-made bread, and there's bread and milk for the gals; and we always has a slip of bacon on Sundays. After we have had breakfast,' continued Mrs. Bilston, 'master he bids they settle theyselves, and we all sits this wise—Polly there, and Tom yonder, and Bilston in his armchair,' and the good woman enumerated and showed me exactly where each member of her family sat. 'Then the master he calls for the family Bible, as belonged to his grandmother, in which is written how his father's sister died of the measles when she was 4 years old; and he begins at the first chapter of Genesis and works right on forward like till the book is ended, and then he starts and begins again. He always reads one chapter, and never no more and never no less; and when anything as he thinks applies like he says to one of them, 'Now, you take and mind that, my lad,' or 'my wench' as the case may be; and then when he has said a few words of learning and minding we get up, and each of us goes off to his or her business. I churns regular three times a week, and the girls they get off to making the beds or scrubbing, or may be to the calves or to the poultry. There's always work for the willing. Then by 12 o'clock we're all in again; and after the gals and the boys has a-made theyselves tidy—for I can't do with no dirt about their hands and faces at meal—while we sits down; and we has most times broth, and rice or sagy pudding, and Winter times an apple tart, or, for a treat like, a jam roll; and then there's a class of cider for Bilston and the men, and there's milk for the gals. And after we've done—that's saying, when all's have eaten up clean and neat whatever father or myself has a-given them—we goes out, all but Polly, who clears away, and washes up and puts back all the pewter; and then we minds the beasts again till 4 o'clock, when we comes in and has tea, which I keeps in the tea caddy as my mother a-gave me when I married, and which I always keeps locked—for I won't have no trifling with the tea; and after tea we drives in the poultry to roost, and we stalls the calves and such like 'nesh' beasts for the night. And after that the gals come, and they out with their needle and thread; and to make the work go merry we sings such songs as I used to learn by times when I was a chit, such as 'Cherry Ripe,' 'Little Boy Blue,' and 'Sally in our Alley,' and all the while we darn father's stockings or make the boys new shirts, or may be the gals make their own gowns—but I won't have no furbelows nor bunching about behind or before, as such-like folly only hinders their gait and makes them vain with flippery. Then there's often the sheets to mend or the underlinen to put to rights. And I always keep they sweet with lavendy, as does a body good to smell and seem well and pleasant-like for any one in bed. And at 9 o'clock we all get to bed, and I goes round rooms at the half hour, for I won't stand no candles burning after such whiles, for it be a danger to the house and a folly to themselves."—The Nineteenth Century.

The Hand-Grasp of the Various Nations and Some Public People.

The Scotch hand-grasp is the roughest; the Frenchman shakes hands with the tips of stiffened and drawn-together fingers, which signifies that he walls himself around with politeness as with a fortress, to keep off intruders. Never expect anything of a person who shakes a soft hand in a limp way. I have had a wide experience of false cordiality, which was betrayed by "old soldiers," who, in battering through hotels and boarding-houses, have lost all womanhood, by hardened diplomatists, by persons thankful for past favors and hoping for favors to come, and by exhibitors at universal exhibitions wanting puffs. An Italian, who, in all cases, tries to hide his little game, hates to offer his hand. To avoid doing so, when he meets an Englishman, he rubs both his hands slowly together, as if washing them. An enthusiast about ideas, principles and systems rarely puts cordiality into a handshake.

Thiers' hand-shake, though brusque and dry, was not unpleasant. That of Gambetta contrasted with his apparent openness and heartiness, and did not express character. Clemenceau's is nervous and rapid, and with a friend very friendly. Grevy scans your face in a good-humored way in holding your hand. Madame Adam's handshake is that of a fearless and amiable woman who wants to make a conquest of every man, woman and child she meets. It is counted improper for a French miss in her teens to offer so much as the tips of her fingers, whether they are gloved or not, to a gentleman. The French lady shakes hands in a pussy-cat style, and the German frau in an honest, simple, motherly fashion. Victor Hugo does so in the manner of a grandiose statue, into which, as into Galatea, the breath of life has been breathed. When he has to do with a lady he, with Olympian majesty, tempered by chivalrous feeling, takes her hand slowly, gravely, and kindly, and, after holding it to his lips, lowers it to a level where it was when he raised it.—London Truth.

THREE ELEPHANT STORIES.

Treed by an Angry Brute—An Intrepid Beast in Battle.

London Times.

Major Rogers had been out shooting, and had discharged all his guns, when an elephant made a charge at him from the skirts of the jungle. There was no help for it except to run, and for 400 yards the Major kept ahead, feeling at every step as if the trunk was trying to twist itself about his loins. A turn around a tree gave him a momentary advantage, which he made the most of by springing up into the branches; he was as nimble as a cat and as strong as a lion. One foot higher and he would have been out of the elephant's reach; but before he had time to draw up his legs the elephant had got him firmly clinched in the toils of his proboscis. Still, Rogers pulled against him, thinking it was better to have his leg wrenched from the socket than to fall back bodily into the animal's power. The struggle, however, did not last long, for, to the delight of the pursued and the chagrin of the pursuer, the Wellington boot, which the former wore, slipped off, released the leg, and saved the life of poor Rogers. The dilemma, however, did not end here, for the elephant, finding himself balked of his pray, after destroying the boot, took up his quarters beneath the branches and kept his anticipated victim in the tree for 24 hours, when the country postman happened to pass by. Rogers gave him notice of his position, and soon help came, and the elephant was frightened away by tom-toms and yelling. Had this occurred in a deserted part of the jungle, the officer must have been starved to death in the tree.

There is a beautiful story of an old elephant engaged in a battle on the plains of India. He was standard-bearer, and carried on his huge back the royal ensign, the rally point of the Poona host. At the beginning of the fight he lost his master. The "mahout," or driver, had just given him the word to halt, when he received a fatal wound and fell to the ground, where he lay under a heap of slain. The obedient elephant stood still while the battle closed around him and the standard he carried. He never stirred a foot, refusing to advance or retire, as the conflict became hotter and fiercer, until the Mahrattas, seeing the standard still flying steadily in its place refused to believe that they were being beaten, and rallied again and again round the colors. And all this while, amid the din of battle, the patient animal stood straining its ears to catch the sound of that voice he would never hear again. At length the tide of conquest left the field deserted. The Mahrattas swept on in pursuit of the flying foe, but the elephant, like a rock, stood there, with the dead and dying around and the ensign waving in its place. For three days and nights it remained where its master had given the command to halt. No bribe or threat could move it. They then sent to a village a hundred miles away, and brought the mahout's little son. The noble hero seemed then to remember how the driver had sometimes given his authority to the little child, and immediately with all the shattered trappings clinging as he went, paced quietly and slowly away.

"The native Hindoo," the narrator of this story tells us, "from want of thought keeps up a constant drumming on the beast's head with the goad, or 'ankus;' I, therefore, hoped not to use it at all. Such an improvement all at once, however, proved more than the elephantine mind could comprehend. He began really to enjoy himself, going his own way more than mine, till at last he marched straight into an immense forest tree of the banyan species and commenced to browse. He seized the boughs above his head, and, tugging violently at them, brought them down on my devoted skull. This was too much. I raised the ankus and brought it down on his head with a blow that brought blood through the skin. This had the desired effect, and he at once bundled off along the road by which he knew I wanted him to go. He merely took with him a branch about the size of a small apple tree to discuss as we went along. From this moment we were friends, and I don't think I ever had to use the hook again so as to bring blood."

A Norther.

From the Marshall (Texas) Messenger.

An old Texan being asked by a stranger to describe a norther said:

"I tell you what it is, stranger, a norther puts in the quickest work of anything you ever saw. You see that lake down there (pointing to a beautiful lake about a mile distant) last spring, in the latter part of March, I was fishing in the afternoon; the sun was shining, and it was as warm almost as the middle of summer. The fish were jumping up all over the lake, and they were biting splendidly. A shade came suddenly over the lake, and I thought I smelt a strange smell that often precedes a norther. I immediately turned away from the lake and looked toward the northwest, and I saw a small dark cloud passing like lightning and I knew I must hurry home. After looking a short time at the cloud I turned and looked at the lake, when, to my astonishment, the lake was frozen over and many fish were lying on top of the ice. The fish had jumped up, and the lake had frozen over so quick they could not get back. Stranger, maybe you think that is stretching things a little, but I'll tell you a norther can beat anything but lightning, and it can hurry that up mightily."

Why the Crow is Black.

The Indians of the extreme Northwest had some very remarkable legends about the creation, in which the crow takes the leading part, bringing order out of chaos. Perhaps the most curious was that which accounted for the raven coat of the crow. One night, while making a tour through his dominions, he stopped at the house of Can-nook, a chief, and begged for lodging and a drink of water. Can-nook offered him a bed, but, on account of the scarcity of water, refused to give him anything to drink. When all the rest were asleep the crow got up to hunt for the water-butt, but was heard by Can-nook's wife, who aroused her husband. He, thinking that the crow was about to escape, piled logs of gum wood upon the fire. The crow made desperate efforts to fly through the hole in the roof where the smoke escaped, but Can-nook caused the smoke to be denser and denser, and when the crow finally regained the outer air he had a black plumage. It was previously white.—The American Magazine.

Superstition About Children.

From the Chicago Current.

A superstition used to exist that a child which did not cry when sprinkled in baptism would not live long. In the west of Scotland, according to James Napier, it was considered unlucky to name a child by any name before the rite of baptism was performed. When children seemed prematurely smart it was believed that they would not live long. Shakspeare puts this superstition into the mouth of Richard III. Bulwer mentions the tradition concerning children born open-handed, that they will be liberal and big-hearted. A character in one of Dekker's plays says: "I am a most wratched fellow; surely some left-handed priest christened me. I am so unlucky."

According to Irish and Scotch fairy superstitions, the elves, though in the main harmless, have the bad reputation of stealing children from the cradle and substitute for them changelings who bear resemblance to the stolen infants, but are ugly little things and never thrive. On such a theft of a female infant, who is carried to fairyland but in the course of years returns to her parents, James Hogg founded his fine ballad of "Kilmeny" (Queen's Wake.) In some parts of Scotland it is a popular notion among the lower classes that when a child is for the first time taken into the open air, the bearer of it should give something to eat to the first person met otherwise the child will be unlucky. The gift is called "the bairn's piece." When a child was taken from its mother, and carried outside the bedroom for the first time after its birth, it was lucky to take it upstairs, and unlucky to take it downstairs. It was not considered lucky to carry a baby into a neighbor's house until the mother took it herself; and this it was unlucky for even her to do, until she had been to church.

It was considered unlucky for children to walk backward while going on an errand. It was deemed unlucky to measure a baby; and if its nails were cut before it was a year old, it would turn out to be a thief; it was unlucky for a boy to wear trousers made on Friday, and to sweep dust over the feet of girls would prevent them from getting husbands. In Hindostan, when a baby sneezes, the mother snaps her thumb and finger, and repeats aloud the name of one of her gods. When a child casts a tooth, in South Sweden, the tooth is thrown into the fire. In Switzerland it is carefully wrapped in paper, and salt enclosed with it before it is thrown into the fire. In Herrick's time it was regarded as a lucky omen to place a knife near a sleeping child. Good Friday and Easter Sunday were considered lucky days for changing the caps of children.

In the west of England the fortunes of children are believed to be largely regulated by the day of the week on which they are born:

"Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for a living,
And a child that is born on Christmas day,
Is fair and wise, good and gay."

Among some of the tribes in Africa if two babies come to a family at the same time they think it a dreadful thing. Nobody except the family can go into the tent where they were born nor use any of the things in it. The twins are not allowed to play with other children, and the mother cannot talk to one outside of the family. This is kept up for six years. If the babies live to be six years old the restrictions are removed and they are treated like other children. FRANK H. STANFFER.

One of Parepa's Charities.

The season of music was closing. Satiated with praise, Parepa Rosa drew her fur wrap about her shoulders, and, stepping from the private entrance of the "Grand," was about to enter her carriage, when "Please, miladi," in a low, pleading accents, arrested her attention. It was only the shrunken, misshapen form of little Elfin, the Italian street-singer, with his old violin under his arm; but the face upturned in the gaslight, though pale and pinched, was wistful light in the great brilliant eyes, the quiver of entreaty in the soft Italian voice, held her for a moment against her escort's endeavor to save her the annoyance of hearing the beggar's plea.

"Well?" said the great singer, half impatient, but full of pity.

"Would miladi please?" in sweet, broken English, and the slender, brown hands of the dwarf held up a fragrant white lily, with a crystal drop in its golden heart.

"Do you mean this lovely flower for me?"

A passionate gesture was his answer.

Taking the flower, Parepa Rosa bent her stately head.

"You heard me sing?"

"Miladi, I hid under the stair. 'Twas yesterday I heard the voice. Oh, miladi, miladi, I could die."

The words came brokenly from quivering lips passionately in earnest. The loud voice of the world she had just left had never shown Parepa Rosa the power of her grand voice as she saw it now in these soft, dark eyes aflame, and in the sobbing, broken words, "Oh, miladi, miladi, I could die!"

"Child," and her voice trembled, "meet me here to-morrow at 5 o'clock," and, holding the lily caressingly to her cheek, she stepped into her carriage and was driven away.

It was Parepa Rosa's last night. In a box near the stage sat little Elfin like one entranced. Grandly the clear voice swelled its triumphant cords, and rang amid the arches with unearthly power and sweetness. The slight frame of the boy swayed and shook, and a look so rapt, so intense, came on his face, you knew his very heart was stilled. Then the wonderous voice trilled softly, like the faint sound of bugles in the early morn; again its sweetness stole over you like the distant chimes of vesper-bells. Encore after encore followed. The curtain rolled up for the last time, and as simply as possibly the manager told the audience of last night's incident, and announced that Parepa Rosa's farewall to them would be the simple ballad warbled many a bitter day through the city streets by little Elfin, the Italian musician.

Long and prolonged was the applause, and at the first pause, sweeping with royal grace, came our queen of song. At her breast was the fragant lily. Queen, too, by right of her beautiful, unstained womanhood, as well as by the power of her sublime voice, she stood a moment, then sang clearly and softly the ballad, with its refrain of "Farewell, Sweet Land." Accompanying her came the low, sweet wail of little Elfin's violin. There was silence in the great house at the close, then a shout went out that shook the mightly pillars.

A whisper being heard that Parepa Rosa meant to educate the boy musically, the generous hearts of a few opened the gates of fortune for little Elfin. To-day he is great and famous, "the boy violinist," and they call him to play before princes.—The Domestic Monthly.

EATING A GIRL.

Narrow Escape From Cannibalism on a Snowed-in Train.

From Peck's Sun.

Few people who have never been on the verge of starvation can realize what the pangs of hunger will bring a man to. There are people who are boarding at cheap boarding houses who have some faint realization of hunger, as is shown when they take a meal at a hotel. Then they reach for everything that is in their sight, and their eyes roll in frenzy, and you can watch them and imagine what they would do if hard pressed and no food for ten days. Right here at home there have been narrow escapes from cannibalism when trains have been snowed in for a week. Only a couple of years ago a train was snowed in west of St. Paul, and for four days there was no food except the cotton waste that is used to oil the engines and a barrel of shell oysters. After all the food was gone, and the traveling men had eaten the leathern fire-buckets and chewed the sustenance out of the plush chushions, they held a consultation in the baggage-car, and decided to kill and eat a girl in the rear coach. She was about twenty years old, a school teacher by profession, rosy-cheeked, and just about the right age to eat. The boys appointed a young fellow who was traveling for a Milwaukee tobacco house to go to the girl and tell her that they had decided to eat her, and to get her consent. It is a delicate thing for a young man to do to go and tell a girl he had been flirting with three days in a snowstorm that the boys had decided to eat her, but the law among traveling men is severe, and the young man had to obey. He went in the coach with a sinking heart and a smile, sat down beside her and told her he had a proposal to make, and, with a smile that was worth two in the bush, she told him she had mistrusted something of the kind ever since he squeezed her hand the evening before, when they were playing casino. He said the proposition he was about to make was the harder from the fact that he had learned in the past few days to love her as he had never loved another woman but in times like these we must stifle our duty, and a tear came to his eye as he looked at the rich red cheek and the true blue eye. He said the proposal he was about to make was one that might strike her as peculiar. She said that was all right. There was no use beating about the bush, and if he wanted her to marry him she did not see any objection, and when they got back to St. Paul she would throw up her position, and they would be married at once. The young man was slightly taken back, but he said that was all right, and he would be the happiest man on earth, and he threw his arms around her neck and began kissing her. The traveling men in the baggage car were looking through the door at the young fellow and the girl, and wondering if he was going to be all winter about it, and when they saw him kissing her, they thought his hunger had overcome him and he was taking a meal out of the best place, and it made them mad and they went in the rear car to remonstrate with him. When they got to the rear of the car he had quit kissing her, and she had opened a big basket filled with cold chicken and everything good, and spread a lunch, and as they came along she said: "Gentlemen, assist us at our wedding-breakfast. Your friend and myself are to be married when we get to St. Paul." The boys took hold and helped eat the lunch, and congratulated the young fellow, though they reprimanded him for turning traitor at a serious moment, but he pulled out a box of cigars and they smoked for a little time, when a relief engine was heard to whistle, and in an hour the stalled train hauled out of the snowdrift and on the way to St. Paul, and that evening the cannibal and his victim were married and the assistant connibals were witnessses. The young people are keeping house now, and no doubt the stories of Greely and his men will cause them to remember the great snow-storm when they came so near eating each other.

Cause and Effect.

The National Opera Company has been pursued by a portion of the press with a hatred almost inexplicable It has been pooh-poohed at, sneered at, and maligned. From so-called fashionable New York no conduct could be expected so patriotic and so manly as the helpful encouragement of native art. But the criticism of an influential portion of the newspapers of the city has been altogether destructive. So far from encouraging, or from offering useful and kindly suggestions, they have consistently maligned the National Company from the start. They have delighted in predicting its collapse; they have given currency to every evil story of every angry attache; they have again and again circulated damaging stories of the company's financial unsoundness and equally untrue stories of its suspension. Indeed, where confidence can be most easily destroyed and ruin most speedily wrought, these newspapers seem to have delighted in hastening those results. And if the National Opera Company is finally disbanded and its noble educational work given up, the chief burden of responsibility must be laid upon the shoulders of a profession whose mission it is, and whose purpose it should be, to labor for the intellectual, moral, and æsthetic advancement of mankind.—Providence Journal.

BITTEN BY A RATTLER.

Prof. Leon Dallied with the Reptil for Amusement.

Prof. Charles Leon, a roving chiropodist, who recently arrived from Cincinnati, had an experience with a live Rocky mountain rattlesnake last evening which will very likely result in the loss of his life, says *The St. Louis Globe-Democrat.* Some two or three weeks since John Sommerville, proprietor of a saloon at No. 116 South Seventh street, took a fancy to a well-developed rattler which two railroad men carried into his saloon, well secured in a wooden box with a glass cover. He thought it would be a good idea to have the reptile in his saloon, knowing, no doubt, that he had snakes of another variety corked up in the bottles on his shelf. The railroad hands were not particularly fond of the snake, and readily accepted the offer made them by Sommerville. He placed the case covering the dangerous snake on a table in his saloon, where it attracted a good-sized crowd daily and aided materially in swelling the receipts of the house. Prof. Leon happened along, and, seeing the reptile coiled in his corral, informed Mr. Sommerville that he could tame snakes with the same ease and facility which he removed a corn or a bunion, killed the roots, and prevented their reappearance upon the feet of their victims. Mr. Sommerville on receipt of that bit of information, told the professor that the rattler was a very savage member of the snake family and that it would rather bite people than eat. Prof. Leon replied that there was no science in training harmless snakes, and added the more savage and dangerous the better. He called at the saloon daily and convinced the dispenser of drinks that he was not afraid of the snake, caressed it, stroked its slimy cuticle, and manifested in other ways that the rattler was not as bad as he was pictured. In handling his snakeship the professor was very cautious not to place his hands near the mouth. He called frequently and seemed to become better acquainted with the Rocky mountain terror with each visit. Mr. Sommerville appreciated the services of the chiropodist and placed the best drinks the house afforded at his disposal. Last evening Prof. Leon's experience demonstrated the truth of the old time-honored saying: "It's a long lane that has no turning." He had bearded the snake in his den daily for nearly weeks without so much as getting a scratch or a rebuff from the captive reptile. Last evening between 6 and 7 o'clock, he walked into the saloon in company with a friend, said to be an attache of the Crystal Palace theater, and told the proprietor that he would remove the snake's fangs, and make him perfectly harmless, so much so that the children could caress it with impunity, and that without any fear as to the consequences. From all accounts Leon's friend argued that it would be foolish to undertake it, and tried to dissuade him from carrying out his rash intention. The little party in the meantime took a few drinks. Leon insisted that there was no danger, and raising the cover watched for an opportunity to seize the reptile, which lay coiled in the corner of its prison. Getting his left thumb and right index finger in position, he told the spectators to watch him and that they would soon see the snake deprived of his dangerous possession. His idea was no doubt to sieze the reptile on both sides of its head and thus keep its mouth open until the fangs could be extracted. What happened is told in a few words. He thrust his thumb and finger in the snake's mouth, and before he could withdraw them the venomous serpent fastened its fangs in the flesh. Whether the snake raised its head when the professor made the attempt to keep it from biting, or whether the disaster was due to his nervousness, no one could tell. When he jerked his hand from the box the snake had a tight hold on his flesh and was lifted almost bodily from the box. The blood trickled in three streams from the poisoned wounds, and Leon, who had turned deathly pale, asked for whisky to counteract the effects of the poison. The proprietor had a bottle on the counter in an instant and poured a goodsized drink into the sufferer. Leon's friend hurried for a physician and returned with Dr. Coryell. The latter applied the usual remedies and bandaged the wounds. Leon soon became very sick, and he was delirious in fifteen minutes after he had been bitten. He tore the bandages from his fingers and when asked if he would go to the hospital positively refused to be taken there. An ambulance was summoned, and in company with several friends, he was taken there, much against his will. Leon seemed to grow better after his arrival at the hospital, and he stated to one of the physicians that he had been bitten before. There is no doubt that the poison has entered his system, but the physicians at the hospital state that there is some hope for his recovery. He is 30 years of age, and has been engaged for some time in selling corn remedies on street corners.

A Crawfish in His Knee.

A remarkable surgical operation was performed in Oglethrope county the other day. Joshua Sims, a negro man, has for some time been complaining that he felt something crawling in his leg just above his knee. He declared it was a crawfish, and said he could feel him biting him all the time. Physicians made an examination and laughed at Joshua, telling him there was nothing wrong with him. He would not be satisfied, however, and he consulted a negro hoodoo doctor. This doctor performed some kind of an operation, and, sure enough, brought forth a live crawfish from Joshua's leg. That is the negroes claim he did, and say that Joshua has the crawfish to show for itself. He has at all events made no complaints since.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

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