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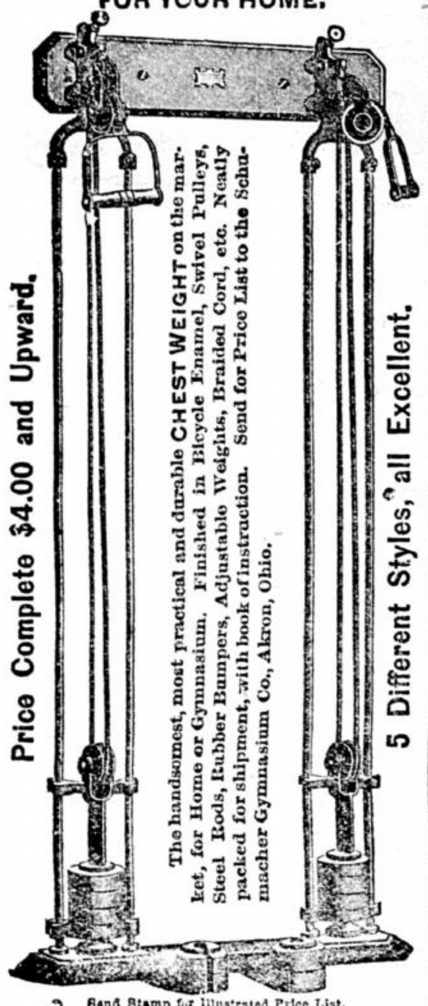

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BECAUSE the early morning cracker's cracking like possessed,
If any man's complaining that he's broken of his rest;
If any fellow's crusty over so much buzz and fizz
And the shouting and the popping—let him tell us who he is!
We'd like the chance to scorn his poor, unpatriotic spirit,
Who listens to the rumpus and who doesn't like to hear it.

Hurrah for all the noisy boys that riot everywhere
With cracker and torpedo and with hubbub and with blare;
For every country lad who brings a rosy country maid
To city sights and soda-water, peanuts and parade;
For every workman idling by exactly as he pleases;
For every flag that shakes itself against the buoyant breezes!

Hurrah for every orator that roars with might and main,
Declaring that we lead the world and swearing it again;
Who never mentions drawbacks, but with allegiance proud
Believes in Yankee glory and yells it to the crowd!
Hurrah for independence and the swagger of the nation
That dares to snap its fingers at the rest of all creation!

Star-Spangled Banner, oh, and Yankee Doodle-doo;
Hail Columbia, Happy Land; Red, White and Blue!
Let us have it once a year, boisterous and free,
Vaunting it and flaunting it for all the world to see.
Who's afraid of ridicule? Who's ashamed of bluster?
Let us, just for one short day, polish up our luster!

—Mrs. George Archibald, in Judge.

SIMEON SULKS.

THE child's name was unquestionably Simeon. The man who had brought him to Ammoniaville tavern called him that, and the boy had responded to the name in a sort of dull fashion, yet with some faint glimmer of intelligence. What his surname was no one learned; for the man abandoned him and disappeared before anyone had become interested in the question, and the boy appeared wholly unable, or sulkily unwilling, to answer any inquiries about himself. There was no police or detective force in this little hamlet, and the one constable who was expected to solve all dark mysteries and make all arrests in Ammoniaville never learned anything about the past history of this child. Owing to some peculiarity discovered in his disposition, the boy was nicknamed "Sulks;" and as "Simeon Sulks" he was known forever after.

He was about five years old when he was brought to Ammoniaville, and he was a plain, dejected-looking child, not particularly bright. Life must have already become serious to him, for he shrank distrustfully from everybody who approached him. He never confided in anyone, nor became attached to any human creature. No one thought of adopting him; but he lived on at the tavern because no one was sufficiently interested in his presence to drive him away. He slept somewhere in the building—generally curled up in a corner of the kitchen—and he ate such scraps as the servants chose to give him. His wardrobe consisted of odd pieces of clothing which the guests of the inn chanced to give him in payment for the small services he rendered them. He was not apt at anything, but in time he learned boot-blacking, and he could hold a horse long before he could hold a fork. In course of time he had the oddest collection of old clothes that ever disgraced a garret. However, when he was twelve years old he had managed to collect what answered for a suit of boy's clothing, and, clothed in these habiliments, he drifted into the Ammoniaville district school.

Ammoniaville was not a prosperous place; indeed, it was rich in nothing but endless, unceasing gossip and nicknames. It had at first been named Hartshornville, in honor of a certain Mr. Hartshorn, who had founded the village and who owned the only factory it contained; but the townspeople could not leave the name alone; they changed it to Ammoniaville, and so it remained.

It had one school where the sternest of schoolmasters made life miserable to his scholars from nine until four o'clock five days of every week, and succeeded in making them hate learning as much as they were taught to hate the scribes and Pharisees. And it was into this school that Simon Sulks drifted and enrolled his remarkable name.

Mr. Horace Carver was the schoolmaster. He had a white, cold face, a pair of appalling spectacles which did not hide his steel-gray eyes, and a mouth that closed like a trap. Simeon shot a glance at him when he entered the school for the first time, and was never known to look at him again. This man and child were natural enemies. Mr. Carver had no patience with the boy's dullness, and he ridiculed Simeon's ignorance. A boy of twelve years only beginning to learn his letters, and muttering and stumbling because he could not tell D from G. All this seemed inexcusable to Mr. Carver. He did not reflect that this waif had never had a chance to learn, and it never dawned upon his superior intelligence that this friendless child could have any pride or any feelings which he should respect.

Mr. Horace Carver had a little daughter at home. Every day she played school with a dozen dolls of high and low degree. Some of them were made of wax, had pointed faces, and curly, blonde wigs. These were the aristocrats of the school. Then there were china dolls, and one gray rubber doll that was considered the dunce, and which received all the punishment that his severe young schoolmistress could inflict. She hammered the rubber doll with a ferule, she slapped and pounded it until she was tired, and occasionally she hung it to a bedpost by its neck. She was a veritable "chip of the old block," and was conducting her school very much as her father managed his. Simeon Sulks was the rubber doll in Mr. Carver's school.

I do not mean that the austere gentleman hung his scholar up by the neck, but he pounded him without provocation. He went further; he continually prophesied that the state would some day be compelled to hang Simeon Sulks by the neck, because of his total depravity. And yet the lad never did anything worse than miss his lessons, and to fail to satisfactorily explain why he missed them. He was continually being plied with questions that were too suddenly asked or were too profound to penetrate to his slow intelligence.

Why he stayed in the school no one imagined. He did not appear like one who had an inordinate thirst for knowledge. No one in the world tried to influence him to study, nor gave him the slightest encouragement to continue his efforts in that direction. While he was reciting, all other lessons were suspended; the scholars snickered or openly laughed at his blunders, and the teacher scolded or punished without restraint.

The boy endured this treatment with dogged patience until the school year was at its close. He had so often been told that he was everything wicked that it would scarcely have been surprising if he had come to believe it, and to live up to his reputation. But he did not believe it. Deep beneath his reticence was a conviction that he deserved better treatment than he was receiving. He had learned to hate the schoolmaster who punished him for his ignorance. He had silently endured a great deal of suffering, but he was not so obtuse as he appeared. He had suffered more from ridicule than from Horace Carver's ferule; but the finishing trial of his patience came on the third of July—the last day of school before the summer vacation.

It had been Mr. Horace Carver's habit to make a little speech before he closed the school for the summer, and on this occasion he did not vary his rule. He told the old story of the early struggle in this country for independence. He told of all the taxes, battles and humiliation to which the British government had subjected the people in this country. He fought the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill over again. He told of the privation, the cruelty, the cold by which the American soldiers suffered to make the United States an independent government. And then he got down to that celebrated declaration of independence, which is the keynote of our great government, which declares all men equal and which rings with self-respect, justice and independence from beginning to end. Poor downtrodden Simeon Sulks listened and began to think better of himself because he was an American and entitled to some rights!

When Mr. Horace Carver told of the signing of the declaration of independence on that famous Fourth of July in 1776, he said that it was everybody's duty to celebrate the anniversary of this great event. He meant to give the girls and boys of his school a treat on the night of the Fourth. He had bought a lot of fireworks for his children, and they would be set off on Playfair hill after eight o'clock. Every scholar in the school was invited to be there to witness the display—every scholar with one exception.

Simeon Sulks, he said, had been an annoying and disappointing scholar all the year. He had failed to learn his lessons, had been sullen under reproof, had wasted the teacher's time and distracted his fellow-scholars. Consequently he had recommended that the trustees should not permit Simeon to return to the school after the vacation, and they had agreed to the expulsion. Certainly they had learned from Mr. Carver that the boy was not a proper companion for clever scholars or good children. And in addition to the disgrace that he had brought upon Simeon Sulks Mr. Carver had another punishment for him. The teacher said that the boy would not be allowed to come to Playfair hill on the night of the Fourth. The fireworks were not for him. In spite of all the fine speech about equal rights he was to share none of the pleasure that would be given his mates. For the first time he openly resented the treatment he was receiving. He stood up, his face flaming with anger and shame, and walked out of the schoolroom.

On the night of the Fourth all the children in Ammoniaville, save one, went up to Playfair hill. There was a deal of enthusiasm. The fireworks were hurried, for a breeze had risen which portended a shower, and the performance must needs be over before the rain began. While the crowd was on the hill Simeon Sulks came out of the inn and went slowly down the road. Under one arm he carried a bottle wrapped in a piece of newspaper. His face was very white, and he was as profoundly agitated as his nature permitted. His blood ran sluggishly, but deep down in his inner consciousness had slumbered a spirit of revenge, and to-night, for the first time in his life, it controlled him. He had reached a crisis in his history.

He had determined to burn down the schoolhouse! As he walked along bent on this evil mission, he recalled all the hardships he had experienced within its walls. What had he done in the year he had attended that school to warrant the treatment he had received? He had tried to learn, and if learning had come harder to him than to the others that was his misfortune, not his fault.

And the crowning acts of cruelty had been to prohibit him from seeing the fireworks and to expel him from the school. What harm would he have done if he had been allowed to go to Playfair hill? If this was a free and independent country then he would like to know why he was not allowed to see the celebration of its independence with the others? And he wasn't to be allowed to go to school again! Well, it would be a good while before there was any school to go to, for he was going to burn the old schoolhouse down. The people in Ammoniaville were very slow about spending money. It might be many a long day before they would build another schoolhouse, and in the meantime Horace Carver would go without his salary. Simeon was revengeful enough to rejoice at that prospect.

No doubt there would be a pretty blaze on Playfair hill, but there would be a bigger one on Schoolhouse common. And the people would come to see the latter blaze without any invitation. Everybody would be trying to put out the fire. Well, they would not be able to put it out. The schoolhouse was an old rat trap of a building that would burn like tinder, and there wasn't a big hose or a fire engine in the town.

"Look out, lad!" somebody shouted to him.

He was interrupted in his incendiary reflections by Dr. Walter Maybury, who had drawn his horse up sharply.

Something in Simeon's face as he shrank to one side of the road excited the doctor's pity. He recognized him as a boy he had seen about the livery stables.

"Why don't you go to Playfair hill?" the doctor asked, kindly. "There are great doings up there."

"I wasn't asked," said Simeon, shortly.

"Good gracious, but he's particular!" the doctor said to himself. He was a young man and a merry one. "He doesn't look like a young Ward McAllister, although he seems to be squeamish about ceremonies." The doctor did not drive on immediately. He spoke again to Simeon:

"If you go you will see the fireworks and will hear Mr. Carver make a speech."

"I don't want to hear him," the boy said, inelegantly; "I've heard him jawing long enough."

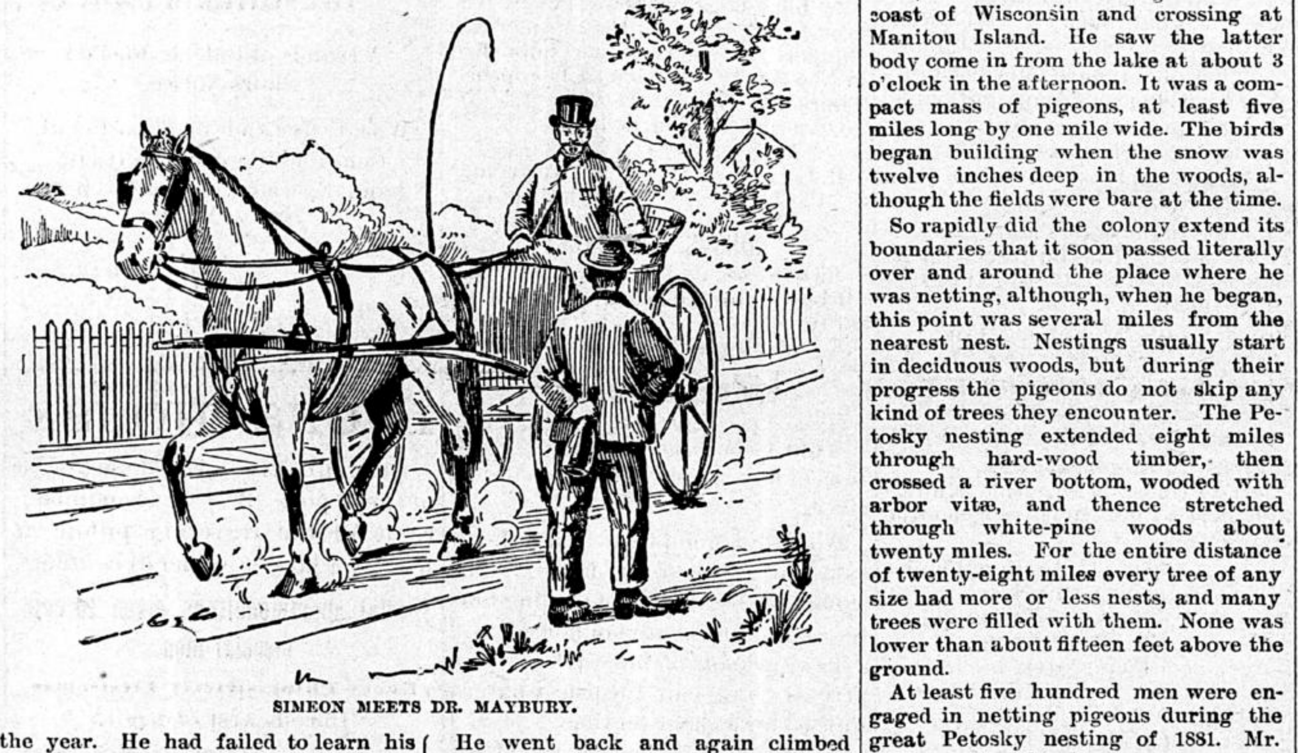
"Poor little chap!" the doctor said. "You seem to be down on your luck. Well, here is a coin. Perhaps you can get some pleasure out of that."

And when he had dropped the money in the boy's hand the doctor drove away.

There was a great lump in Simeon's throat. This was one of the rare occasions when he came near crying. He was already thinking better of his determination to burn the schoolhouse when he happened to turn his head and saw one of Mr. Carver's skyrockets. A red flag would have been quite as pleasing to a mad bull. He shut his teeth very hard and hurried on to the schoolhouse.

The bottle he carried contained kerosene oil, and in addition to this he had brought with him some matches and a slow fuse. The latter he had picked up in the street that day after some boy had burnt all his firecrackers and had no further use for it. Simeon opened a window of the schoolhouse and crawled in. He poured the oil on the floor and lighted the fuse. Then he ran away.

The wind was blowing from the southwest. It blew over Schoolhouse common into Dr. Maybury's windows—less than a hundred feet away. The guilty boy had hidden under a hedge and was waiting for developments. The breeze had freshened when a curious instinct made him creep out of his retreat and try to discover which way it was blowing. He trembled from head to foot, and his teeth began chattering in his head. It had dawned upon his sleepy perception that if the schoolhouse burned Dr. Maybury's house would also be destroyed. He was unwilling that this should occur. Dr. Maybury was the only man who had ever spoken kindly to him, and the boy would not injure him. He must go back and stop that fire.



SIMEON MEETS DR. MAYBURY.

He went back and again climbed through the open window, but before he reached the fuse the oil ignited. There was an appalling glare of fire running across the floor. Then it appeared to encircle him. He was wild with fear and remorse, but he remembered the water pail and struggled across the room to get it. He caught it up and threw its contents upon the flames; but he did not refill it. He was overpowered by a cloud of smoke which filled his lungs, and he fell upon the burning floor.

A day or two later he was vaguely conscious of being better cared for than he had ever been before. He was in a real bed with clean clothing on him. Gradually it came to him that he was in Dr. Maybury's house. He was profoundly thankful to know that it had not been burned. Later he knew that the doctor had seen the blaze in the schoolhouse and had rescued him. The fire had been easily extinguished. The schoolhouse had a new floor, and this green wood had been scorched but had not ignited. The doctor had dragged the boy out and had cared for him.

He did more than that; he induced the boy to talk. Gradually the doctor learned that Simeon had wanted to be schooled, had stubbornly borne all the hard knocks he had received in school because he was determined to learn, and had finally been expelled after all. Before Simeon Sulks was well the doctor knew more of his character than anyone else had ever imagined. The boy had lost his obtuseness. It was astonishing how his understanding and his better nature developed.

He was never prosecuted for his attempt at incendiarism. There was no jail in Ammoniaville, and no one cared to take the trouble to drag him to the county seat when he had succeeded in damaging nothing but himself.

"Let us keep the little chap with us," Dr. Maybury said to his wife. "Cruelty was rapidly making a criminal of him, but kindness is making a gentleman of him quite as fast."

"It was his gratitude to you that made him risk his life to save this house from burning," said Mrs. Maybury. "He is not a brilliant lad, but his devotion will make him faithful to you while he lives. The Fourth of July has been a great day to Simeon Sulks. It has emancipated him from cruel treatment, and has given him the protection and the liberty to which he is entitled."—Frances Isabel Currie, in N. Y. Independent.

Six Miles of Roast Pig.

There has been a marked change in the fashion of Fourth of July celebrations since Capt. Marryat visited this country in 1838. He was in New York on Independence day; and the sight that most impressed him there on that occasion was "six miles of roast pig" —that delicacy being the piece de resistance in every one of the hastily erected booths with which Broadway was lined on both sides.

—"Order is Heaven's first law," but the small boy has no use for it on Fourth of July.—Brooklyn Eagle.

THE ART OF MOVEMENT.

Not Easily Acquired by Little People Addicted to Quick Motions.

Every girl desires personal grace, the grace not only of the spirit but of the body, and wishes it should fill and conduct all her motions. If she is born long limbed and has kept herself supple by sufficient exercise, and knows instinctively something of the attack and retreat of gesture or of movement, she may have her desire without much effort. But if she is a stubby little body and always in a hurry she is not the one to illustrate the grace except after special instruction. Grace is by no means necessarily an animal characteristic, because a horse may be graceful because of his long curves and the exhibition they receive from the lustrousness of his coat, because of the flowing lines of mane and tail, of the free movement without let or hindrance, the long step, the slender limb and the whole beauty of his contour. But anything more awkward than a cow it would be hard to find. And again, although a hound or a great rough St. Bernard dog is full of grace, each in a separate way, a pug or a bulldog is as clumsy as it comes within the power of any living thing to be.

Although the first idea of grace is that of slow and leisurely movement, yet there may be quite as much grace in the rapid one, in the sweeping flight of a bird, in the floating of the waltzer, in the sinuous circling of the fish, in the leaping of a cat—that thing of curves and bending ease. The real grace of motion is that which has no sharp corners and angular lines, no halts or stumbles; it may be slow, it may be swift, it must be on the idea of the curved line. Now this rounded motion can never be achieved by the flaccid and languid muscle any more than by the stiff one or by the lame one. The muscle must be a good one, filled with the red blood and the new cells of exercise, answering instantly the control of the nerve and sound with health. The long and slender limb, that looks in repose as if it should have the movement of a dream of grace, is useless if its muscles have no mastery of it, if the muscles themselves are so rigid that the will has little control of them, and only exercise, and that of an intelligent sort, will make that limb obedient to the will and make the will know how to order it. This reason, among others of still more consequence, makes gymnastics of great value in the education of girls. Of course they are of still greater value in relation to their general health, in the expansion of the chest, the ordering of the internal economy, the bearing of the body's weight and much more of the sort.—Harper's Bazar.

WILD PIGEONS.

The Immense Flight of the Birds Seen by a Man in Michigan.

The largest nesting he ever visited was in 1878 or 1877. It began near Petosky and extended northeast past Crooked lake for twenty-eight miles, averaging three or four miles wide. The birds arrived in two separate bodies, one directly from the south by land, the other following the east coast of Wisconsin and crossing at Manitou Island. He saw the latter body come in from the lake at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. It was a compact mass of pigeons, at least five miles long by one mile wide. The birds began building when the snow was twelve inches deep in the woods, although the fields were bare at the time.

So rapidly did the colony extend its boundaries that it soon passed literally over and around the place where he was netting, although, when he began, this point was several miles from the nearest nest. Nestings usually start in deciduous woods, but during their progress the pigeons do not skip any kind of trees they encounter. The Petosky nesting extended eight miles through hard-wood timber, then crossed a river bottom, wooded with arbor vitæ, and thence stretched through white-pine woods about twenty miles. For the entire distance of twenty-eight miles every tree of any size had more or less nests, and many trees were filled with them. None was lower than about fifteen feet above the ground.

At least five hundred men were engaged in netting pigeons during the great Petosky nesting of 1881. Mr. Stevens thought they may have captured on an average twenty thousand birds apiece during the season. Sometimes two carloads were shipped south on the railroad each day. Nevertheless, he believed that not one bird in a thousand was taken. Hawks and owls often abound near the nesting. Owls can be heard hooting there all night.—Life Histories of North American Birds.

Christening Baskets.

Very pretty and convenient for other purposes are the christening baskets which are now so popular. They are shaped like the basket in which Pharoh's daughter discovered little Moses. They are lined inside with fluted muslin, and have a deep frill around the edge made of muslin and lace. At the head is a little muslin cover shirred up on reeds, trimmed all around with a plaited frill, and made to fold back or to cover the baby's face. It is a comfortable little nest for a tiny baby, much preferable to holding it in one's lap, and for traveling they are said to be most convenient, for the child can sleep comfortably wherever the basket is placed, and the basket has no weight of itself.—Chicago Tribune.

Effects of Frost at Niagara Falls.

The wear and tear of the elements on Niagara may be better remarked in early spring than at any other season. Great bowlders are continually falling from the faces of the cliffs where they were loosened by the action of the frost, and the same process no doubt is going on in the stone under the cataracts. The erosive power of the waterfall is not so great, but water, wind and frost together make the recession of the gorge, particularly on the Horseshoe side, quite perceptible.—Buffalo Courier.

A Mystery.

His eyes were very heavy and had delicate pink borders around them.

"What's the matter?" asked his friend.

"I've run up against a mystery," he answered, "and it bothers me."

"Have you discovered a strange case of homicide?"

"Not exactly. I've been trying to figure out how the man who plays the cornet avoids keeping himself awake all night."—Washington Star.

As Others See Us.

Foreigner (writing home).—I am very much surprised to learn that only the toughs and thugs run for offices in this country, and especially for the office of mayor in the larger cities. I am now in one of the most important cities of the United States, and there are three candidates for this office. One is a notorious "sure-thing" man; another is an ex-cattle thief; and the third is strongly suspected of having poisoned a rich uncle. I learn these latter facts from a perusal of the papers.—Puck.

Tit for Tat.

Little Daughter—Lucy Locket is havin' a party, an' she didn't invite me.

Mamma—You've just had the measles.

Little Daughter—Oh, yes, I forgot; and I didn't invite her, did I?—Good News.

THE U. S. Government Chemists have reported, after an examination of scores of different brands, that the Royal Baking Powder is absolutely pure, of highest leavening capacity, and superior to all others.

FASHION CAN'T BE FORCED.

Style in Costume Generally the Result of Accident or Incident.

From the first beginnings of the history of dress, which date from the garden of Eden, there is no instance of the deliberate adoption of a costume. No person or body of persons has ever said: "Go to, we will now make a fashion," and has made it. The history of dress is the history of the accidental and the incidental. It does not require a very long memory to look back over the futile efforts to force fashions, supported by the most unanswerable arguments, on the unoffending women of this country. The New York Evening Sun instances bloomer costume, which was organized and promoted by Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, now a hard-working woman in long skirts out west. A few years ago the divided skirt, which Lady Barberton has for twenty years tried to coax English women into, was busily taken up and eloquently promulgated in this country. A number of outwardly well-clad women were really persuaded to put it on. It proved to be not only ugly, but a nuisance, and the same women not only discarded it, but put on tights; it is easy to go down hill. The promoters of the divided skirt now call themselves a national council, and have put forth another scheme of dress for women. National is a large word. It is pretty safe to say that unless the national council is backed up by the army and navy there is very little hope that their costumes, even those unqualifiedly supported by reason and anatomy, will be adopted by the women of the country. Neither reason nor anatomy has ever had much to do in enforcing a fashion.

THE best thing going—An unwelcome guest.—Yale Record.

A MAN with a cast to his eye ought to be able to throw glances.

PROPINQUITY.—She (sketching)—"I suppose I could get your expression better if you sat a little further off." He—"On the contrary, I was just going to quote my favorite hymn." She—"What is that?" He—"Draw me nearer."—Boston Beacon.

ALTHOUGH never down on any list of office-seekers it is by no means unusual for a roof to find itself slated for a good thing.—Buffalo Courier.

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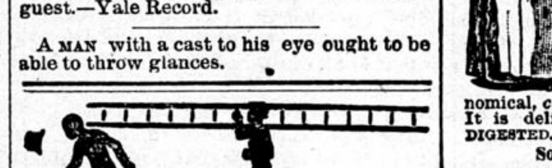

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