..Is.. "Widow Woman" Correct?

By Professor T. R. Lounsbury.

NUMEROUS indeed are the motives which have led and still lead men to resort to expletives. Certain of those now in use contain little more than a repetition of the same idea expressed by two different words. A part of the compound has become obsolete or archaic; hence it needs or needed to have its meaning strengthened. Luke, for instance, meant "tepid"; but as it came to be somewhat unfamiliar, the sense was brought out with precision by adding to it warm. Different from this, though possibly allied to it, may be the attributive use of widow in the expression widow woman. The second word of the combination is clearly unnecessary; but it may not have been always so. The difference of the final vowel in the original Anglo-Saxon words constituted the sole distinction between widuwa a "widower" and widuwe a "widow." When the levelling processes that went on after the Conquest gave to both these words the same ending -e, a natural way to fix definitely the idea of femininity, before -er was added to create the masculine form, would be to append "woman" to the common word. If this were so, it would be almost inevitable that the combination would survive long after the necessity for it had disappeared. However this may be, the expression has subsisted for centuries in our speech. When in our version of the Bible the woman of Tekoah tells King David, "I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead," we are supplied in the same short sentence with illustrations of two different sorts of expletives. For the one, the original Hebrew is necessarily responsible; for the other, the sixteenth-century translators. The Wycliffite version of the fourteenth century had "woman-widow." But whatever the origin, the expression has come down to the present time. Nor is it confined, as is often asserted, to colloquial speech. To cite one instance out of many, it is used in Barnaby Rudge by Dickens, when speaking in his own person. "To find this widow woman," he says, . . . "linked mysteriously with an ill-omened man . . .was a discovery that pained as much as startled him."—Harper's Magazine.

Happy Farmers

They and Nature Smile While Wall Street Groans Under the Knife.

By Cham Cristadoro, Tent Village, Point Loma, Cal.

TIME was when if Wall Street sneezed it sent the farmers of the country to the banks to beg that their mortgages be not foreclosed. Now Wall Street sneezes and yells and shouts and kicks up a devil of a fuss—in Wall Street—and the farmer follows the plough, the wheat grows, the chickens lay abundantly, the stock increases, all nature smiles in peace and plenty, and the farmer buys autos and gives not a rap for Wall Street.

The wires are broken. The farmer is not interested, for Wall Street has ceased to be the barometer of the nation's prosperity. The barometer has been moved elsewhere. Wall Street drops three billions in values and the farmer reads of such "terrible doings" with a chuckle and says: "Things are droppin' some in Wall Street and no mistake, b'gosh!"

No better time could have been selected to thrust the lance into the Wall Street ulcer; and no better period for the good of the public could have been chosen. It is, of course, hard upon the innocent investor, especially the "common investor," who bought wind and water and nothing else; but it was a case of caveat emptor. The man at the White House—well, has he not done the national body a good service, just as does the surgeon to the body when he cuts a boil that is ripe for lancing? It had to come.—From the New York Sun.

Playing

By Louise McGrady.

TO most people who have had a real childhood, not cramped by overwork, physical or mental, or starved by sordidness, or filled with an intellectuality beyond their years, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" are not far afield, the children of Mr. Kenneth Grahame's, "Gold Age" are real people; and "Peter Pan" is more than a delightful play. Lewis Carroll and Mr. Grahame and Mr. Barrie have all told the truth, because, with real children, things are always being "made believe" just a little different from what they actually are. Playing house in a fig-tree where your roof is made by broad leaves, and where wide branches make your floor, your successive stories, your easy stairways; playing ship on a sofa or in an invalid's chair; playing street-cars with chairs for horses and quarrelling as to which child should be conductor and which driver,—that was before the days of electricity; playing that you are a horse eating hay in your stall, "a real horse, you know," as a child said to me last summer; playing wild animals in the most gruesome places until you are paralysized with terror and afraid of yourself in the dark; "making believe" in every instance that you are grown up or different from what you really are,—That is a wonderfully rich life.—From the Atlantic.

Treating Yellow Fever.

"Yellow fever is not as dangerous as a bad cold," remarked Isaac M. Montgomery, who returned from a trip to Central America and Panama a few months ago.

"If the proper treatment is commenced when the victim is first attacked he will soon be out of danger. When a person begins feeling pains in the back of the head and the calves of his legs he will find castor oil a specific. A huge dose is all the treatment that is necessary.

"On the Isthmus the saloons have a big bottle of castor oil and when a man begins feeling the symptoms of the fever he helps himself."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Two railway lines are now under construction in the Malayan state of Pahang; they will open regions of great mineral and agricultural possibilities.

Crookedest Railroad in the World.

Grading is in progress in East Los Angeles for the crookedest railroad in the world. Compared with it the famous Mount Tamalpais road, which now has the squirming record, is as straight as a Mexican hair.

It will take two miles of tracks to cover a stretch not more than three blocks running north and south, and not more than that running east and west. It is claimed by engineers that there will not be a single straight rail in the two miles of track, every one will be curved. The road is designed as an extension to the Griffin avenue street railroad line, and will open up for residents the highest tract of land in the city.—Los Angeles Express.

More than 2,000 applications for space have already been received in Prague for the complete industrial exposition to be held there in 1908.

IN THE SHADOW.

In those dewey, twilight valleys,
Where but mellow sunbeams stray,
(Half of sunshine, half of shadow,
Blend of eve and blend of day),
Grow the sweetest woodland flowers,
Waxen-petaled, soft and white,—
Pale, as though the moon in passing
Buried there its silver light—
And a perfume mild, exquisite,
Ever from their bloom exhales,
Fragrance rare and vague and dreamy,
Lent from Eden's flowered vales.

But they tremble, ah, they tremble,
In the thoughtless wandering winds,
And they wither, ah, they wither,
At the first frost winter sends.
While the hardy hillside flowers,
In the sun-rays longer bloom,
Knowing not that transient beauty,
But a dreader, lasting doom,
For that wild, exquisite fragrance,
Lingers 'round the valleys still,
Vague and haunting, pure and deathless,
Through the winter's blighting chill.

—From Uncle Remus's Magazine.

MEARS MITCHELL, SCIENTIFIC FARMER.

By Isabel Graham Bush.

'It's the regular price."

Silas Gridley looked shrewdly over his glasses at the lad, his eyes narrow, black and searching.

Mears hesitated a moment. He wondered if two cents a bushel was really a fair price. But there did not seem to be any other work in sight; why not try it? Of course, his hands would be blistered before he had worked half a day—they were rather white and shapely now, in spite of vigorous athletics.

The old man instantly interpreted the glance. "Blistery work for a chap like you. Nothing soft about husking corn. If you're looking for an easy job, like driving home the cows, just pass on." The thin-lipped mouth curved scornfully as Farmer Gridley thrust a pair of horny thumbs under his suspenders and eyed the town-bred lad from head to foot.

Mears straightened. "I'll begin tomorrow morning," he answered with dignity, then turned and disappeared down the lane. For some time he hardly noticed the undulating field of corn-shocks stretching for many rods along the country road. "If it wasn't for the folks, I wouldn't knuckle down to the old chap," he thought indignantly. "I can see he's a regular skinflint, but I mean to make him do the right thing by me." The square boyish jaw took on a look of determination that plainly meant defeat to Silas Gridley should he meditate dishonesty in his dealing.

Sudenly Mearsd' gaze wandered from the corn to the straggling pumpkin vines stretching their network in patches across the amber-colored field. Beyond, the sheep were feeding upon the meadows freshened by the fall equinox. Unconsciously, the lad drifted into touch with nature. His step grew brisk, a tune bubbled out in little catchy whistles. He hadn't even thought what it would be, but there it was, the soldierly air of:

"We march, we march to victory—"

The rhythm possessed him. As he reached the sidewalk, the time grew more pronounced with the click of his heels on the boards, and when a certain low-roofed house on a side street appeared, it had reached a climax of triumphant melody.

"I've got a two-cent job," Mears announced jubilantly to the figure bending over the flowers near the gate.

"A what?" Mrs. Mitchell raised her head, but her son had bounded past her. She followed slowly. In the spotless living room his twin sister sat reading with one finger upon the picture of Sir Galahad.

"Oh, Mears!" she cried in dismay at his sudden onslaught, "you mustn't! Wasn't he handsome! I'm at the loveliest part! Did you say you had a—"

"Job," finished Mears.

"Oh, tell me all about it—no, just let me guess. It's a pro-fes-sion-al one." Ruby's eyes danced as she rounded out the word.

Having once resolved to see the humorous side, Mears greeted the venture with applause. " It sure is, as Mike used to say. Requires experience, too, and dexterity." The tone was a close imitation of Ruby's. "Here's mother. I couldn't tell either of you alone. You may both have a guess."

Mrs. Mitchell looked indulgently into the boyish face on a level with her own. "It's a salaried position, I think you said when you met me at the gate—"

"O-o-h!" Ruby looked incredulously happy. "My, how big that sounds!" Then Mears told the whole story touching very lightly on the disagreeable parts. He had tried everybody but the farmers, and, he diplomatically added, he had come to the conclusion that out-of-door work would be better for him than an office—for awhile. Hadn't he been in school for eleven years, ever since he was five years old? And that was the prettiest road out of town! The long lane leading to Mr. Gridley's house was edged with maples, and the cornfields!—well, "you know that picture we saw in the gallery last spring? The corn almost rustled, it was so real, and the pumpkins made me want pie."

Ruby laughed at her brother's imagination. "And the lane with the maples in the distance—I can see it all," she added. "But mother, why don't you say something?"

Mrs. Mitchell looked serious. "Did you say the farmer's name was Gridley?" she inquired soberly.

"Yes; Silas, his wife calls him. She came down the lane wearing a blue sunbonnet, and told him supper was ready. Do you know him?"

'Gridley is a familiar name," answered his mother evasively. "There's the Gridley school house in that neighborhood. But, my boy, I wish you didn't have to work so hard for so little pay. Perhaps—but let us have supper now. When do you begin?"

Mears attacked a roll with great cheerfulness as he replied: "My work begins at 6.00 a. m. tomorrow; the remuneration for the week," ignoring Ruby's surprised exclamation, "appears Saturday at 6.00 p. m. If you both will kindly walk out to the Gridley estate, bringing suitable handbags, I will allow you to assist me in bringing it in."

* * * * * * * *

Mears found the farmer finishing his morning chores. The barnyard had been awake for hours. The brilliant Dominick rooster had finished his morning announcements from the corn crib ridge-pole, and was busily eating the remnants of a scattered breakfast. A litter of squealing pigs disturbed the serenity of the scene and interfered with conversation. But at last Silas Gridley found time to pilot his new help to the field and start him out with his first bushel of corn.

"Ef ye stick," he said, by way of encouragement, "ye'll be the fust city chap I've had that did. They're turrible afraid o' work an' dretful tender."

Mears looked at the slouching, stoop-shouldered figure and roughened hands. A boy who led in athletics ought to amount to something at farm work. Yes, he intended to stick as long as the job lasted.

All through the morning the corn flew into the basket with unerring accuracy. Wasn't he captain of the basketball team last year? After all, blistery hands wouldn't last forever. They'd soon get tough and tanned—a badge of his servitude. By that time, perhaps, a bank account might be to his credit.

By noon Mears had what seemed to him a large pile of yellow ears and a pair of red hands. Under a hickory tree the small wicker hamper containing his dinner was opened. Tucked in one corner was a cup of his favorite custard—Ruby's make. The basket was full of surprises—small ones. Mears enjoyed them gratefully, even to the last crumb. His first day of actual hard work was half over. For just ten minutes he stretched himself luxuriously on the grass and studied the surrounding country. The woods skirting the cornfield made a beautiful background for the intervening browns and yellows. The sorrel lent a dash of burnt sienna to the stubble field adjoining. Mears turned toward the yellow farmhouse, with its unpainted barns and stacks of straw. The farmer was doing the noon chores. At his heels bobbed a little figure wearing a broad-brimmed straw hat. "Grandson," thought the lad, remembering the small black eyes peering at him through the barnyard fence that morning. "As much alike as two foxes! Wonder what mother meant by looking so solemn when I told her the name?"

At 5.30 the farmer came around with horses and wagon to measure and gather up the corn. It seemed to the lad as if the heaped basket represented almost two of honest measure. "Fifteen bushels," reported the old man, and Mears saw his day's earnings dwindle. Wrathfully he started homeward without a word.

"No wonder he wanted to bait me by talking about city chaps! I'd never go back, only mother and Ruby'd feel bad if they knew." Before he reached home, Mears resolved to keep his job a few days while he hunted for another. The next day there were twenty bushels.

"Seems to be gaining a little," remarked Silas Gridley, still giving himself very generous measure and eyeing the blistered hands cynically.

All the rest of the week the lad stuck to his work manfully, but in spite of every effort, could not get beyond his previous record. Mears met his mother's and sister's questions evasively. He had a secret that they should know Saturday evening—not before. He knew now the old farmer needed him more than he would admit.

"S'pose you'll be on hand Monday morning?" was the casual remark at the close of the week.

"That depends upon you, Mr. Gridley." The lad looked straight into his employer's narrow black eyes. In school Mears had been known as a born leader. Nothing fired him like being "downed." Here was a foe worthy of his steel, a man voted by his neighbors "a born skinflint." The lad squared his shoulders for the conflict as the shaggy brows in front of him lowered ominously.

"Mr. Gridley, I find that other farmers are paying three cents a basket and give fair measure to the husker. You haven't—"

"That will do, young man. I didn't hire ye to go sneaking around the country trying to find out what other folks were doing. I run my own farm to suit myself," and Silas Gridley's shrewd old face fairly purpled with wrath.

"I have the same right," insisted Mears, "that you or any other farmer has—to get the market price for what I sell. When it comes to a case of selling my work, the same rule holds good"—Mears measured every word. "I have husked ninety-five bushels of corn for you the last five days, by your own measure—more than a hundred by any other farmer's. I heard you say the other day that help was hard to find, and if you could get enough boys like me to husk your corn, you could sell it all at more than the market price. Now don't accuse me of listening. You talked loud enough for anyone to hear who was husking within twenty yards of the barn. Please remember the buyer was a trifle hard of hearing." In vain did Silas Gridley fume and interrupt. The cool, self-possessed lad talked on to the point. "If you'll pay me what you owe—that extra cent on a bushel and fifteen cents for the extra five, I'll promise to have five boys here by Monday morning. We'll finish your corn in time for you to get the advance price."

"You'll be likely to, you young rascal!" fairly shouted the farmer. "You'll get your money and run!"

"All right," said Mears coolly, certain that he saw signs of weakening. "I can't expect you to trust anybody when you haven't been honest yourself." And the lad turned and walked away scornfully.

A quick vision of the financial loss he was about to sustain flashed through old man Gridley's mind. It wasn't a pleasant picture to contemplate, in view of the recent poor crop of wheat. Mears had nearly reached the road when he heard an imperative summons to stop. The farmer came panting down the lane.

"See here," he sputtered, "if you put a statement down in black and white that I can depend on five good huskers—five, remember—I'll pay you what you ask, though it's agin' my better judgment. A bargain's a bargain."

Mears ignored the last sentence. "I'll make out a paper agreeing to furnish five boys—they'll finish your corn by Monday night—if you'll give me a written agreement to pay each boy three cents for every bushel he husks, fair measure."

Silas Gridley knew that he was caught by a boy of sixteen. It was fortunate for him that he had a saving sense of humor. "Think you're pretty foxy, don't you?" he chuckled. "Guess you're no lamb in a horse trade. I'll git that paper in a jiffy, but mind, you'll have to furnish the boys or you're up against it. And say," he added, after counting out the additional silver, "while you're hurrying around for boys, jest drop into the Barnes House and tell Mr. Scudder—that's the buyer—that Silas Gridley wants to see him; that he'll be down 'bout eight o'clock."

"Sure you can trust me?" flashed Mears, with a sly twinkle as he started home. "I'm glad I stuck it out," he thought; "but I didn't really expect he'd give in."

Mears' progress in farming was the source of much merriment at home. Many were the questions Ruby innocently asked. "Were Holsteins better than Jerseys? Did he think the best laying chickens were Buff Cochins or Leghorns?"

Mears borrowed farm journals and pored over them after supper. "There's no reason why I shouldn't learn to do something well," he said. "Book-learning isn't everything, but if I can't go to school, I can get a scientific knowledge of farming. It's good healthy work, and pays as well as half of the professions."

Mr. Mitchell's letters were growing more encouraging. He had improved rapidly since all cause for worry had been removed.

One evening Ruby met her brother at the door. "What do you think is going to happen? I can't keep it another minute. Father's decided to settle in Benton. He has a good position out there. But that isn't all. There's the finest agricultural college in the West, and he says—Mother, just let Mears read it—that a boy who can get along with Silas Gridley and be the head of the family for three months ought to have the best kind of a chance to become a scientific farmer."—Young People's Weekly.

London has 300,000 one-room dwellers.