

THE LEARNED ASTRONOMER.
I knew a learned astronomer
Who taught all things earthly and purposed,
And wandered through this pleasant land
With countenance upturned.
From early youth his habits were
To hold aloof from men;
He thought this old world's happenings
But little worth his ken.

He saw no wonders in the trees
Or in the waving grass.
He never thought it worth his while
To woo a pretty lass.
And not a whit this good man cared
For potentate or pope;
To him the greatest man was he
Who made the telescope.

But sun and moon arose and set
Precisely when he said:
He knew whence each comet came
And where each comet died;
And for his plan to wipe the spots
From off the glorious sun,
Among the brethren of his ilk
His much renowned had won.

This good soul died and went on high,
But much to his concern
He found the knowledge gleaned while
here
Left nothing more to learn.
With telescope, from o'er a cloud,
He now peers down to earth,
And finds out strange and wondrous
things
About his place of birth.

—The Baltimore Sun.

Mrs. Comstock's Campaign.

BY D. A. CHAUNCEY.

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When Chester Comstock announced himself as a candidate for congress everybody said his wife was back of it. Comstock had never been suspected of political ambitions—or any other sort except to live up to his ideals of a cultured gentleman. He was born of a wealthy family, educated in the universities of two continents, and possessed tastes which permitted him to enjoy to the utmost the good things of the world. He had a positive aversion for business in any form and no desire whatever to increase the estate which he had inherited. He lived a life of luxury, was widely known and universally liked.

If he lacked in ambition his wife did not. After their marriage and the joining of their fortunes she had assumed a position of social leadership. As the years slipped by she became restless. Then came a winter at Washington and she had returned home filled with a longing to return there as the wife of a congressman or other official that would give her established standing. All the arts of a dominant nature had been brought into play to instill into her husband's mind the fire of political ambition. Finally out of sheer good nature he told her he would acquiesce to her desires if it could be managed so that he would not be annoyed with the details of politics.

"If it will add materially to your happiness for me to be a congressman or a Senator or President or what not," said he, "I am willing and I will try to attend to the duties that may fall to me in such manner as not to reflect discredit on my name. But positively I know nothing about politics. If you wish me to go into this sort of thing the figuring must come from your head."

She secured an alliance at once with Maurice Fox, the man reputed to be the sharpest politician in the county. Mrs. Comstock was perfectly frank with Fox, told him her ambition and that money was no object and that she wanted to secure his assistance. She was somewhat surprised to learn that Fox would not accept cash.

"All the money I would touch in a campaign would be the actual expenses. I am very much inclined to help you, however, for reasons of my own. I can see how your husband might be a very strong candidate. Together with other men I have been somewhat successful in politics in

were in constant conference. Comstock was not much perturbed at first, as his wife and Fox decided all questions. But as the fight waxed warmer Comstock's exclusiveness began to tell against him and it became necessary to take the minor politicians to him, particularly as these men were being promised divers and sundry fat from the crib. As Jack Murphy expressed it:

"I'm from Missouri. Show me. I want to see the old man himself and hear him make his spiel."

So Comstock's library was invaded by a noisy and ill-smelling crew which put feet on the tables and poisoned the atmosphere with black cigar smoke. Comstock grew rebellious. Then Mrs. Comstock gave two or three dinners that drew from him the only protest he had ever made to her since

saving of my soul? Do you esteem my honor so lightly as to believe that I would allow my name to be tarnished as you and your disreputable associates have sought to tarnish it? Do you believe that I would have retained an office secured by such means, or permitted you to gratify a foolish vanity by such a sacrifice? Had your plan succeeded it would have been impossible to have longer lived with you. My name will not go before the convention tomorrow. I will never touch the dirty pool of politics again. If Fox ever enters my house again I will cane him. Weldon's pension will be doubled. Good morning." And he strode heavily out of the room.

The member who answers to the roll call from the thirty-ninth district can turn a jack four times hand-running while looking you squarely in the eye and drink a dozen "highballs" at a sitting. Mr. and Mrs. Comstock remain at home.

TESTED WITH SALT.

How an Apache Chief Selected Warriors for a Hard Campaign.



"Madam, you must be mad."

their marriage. The dinners were attended by a motley crowd whose presence and whose conversation was an offense.

"This will not do," he said, sternly. "We must not lose our self-respect to accomplish result, however greatly we desire it. I never will sit down to dinner with that sort of a crowd again."

At last the caucuses were held and the result was not decisive. One ward sent an instructed delegation to the county convention, as did several of the country towns. It became a fight to get these uninstructed delegates. Meantime Fox had fixed up a deal with the controlling forces in two other counties to nominate Comstock if he went to the convention with his own county and able to deliver its votes.

A delegation of manufacturers called on Comstock and pointing out that they could deliver five of the uninstructed delegates, asked for a pledge that he would stand for a certain tariff schedule on wood. Again it required all Fox and Mrs. Comstock could do to get his consent to such an "arrangement."

"Must I go to congress as an automaton," he protested; "with my vote pledges on all subjects?"

Fox explained that the tariff schedule always was fixed in a party caucus and he could go on record in the caucus in some way that would not do violence to his convictions.

Then came the denouement. Fox announced two days before the convention that victory was won. "We have one vote more than the opposition and they can't touch our phalanx. It has cost a pile of money but it is our meat."

The next morning Comstock received a call from John Weldon, an old man who had been in his service for many years and in the service of his father before him. Some time before he had been retired on a pension.

"Mr. Comstock," said Weldon, with tears in his eyes. "Forgive me, sir, for disturbing you, but I can't let it happen without making one appeal to you. I make bold to do so, sir, because you have always been kind to me as your father was before you."

In astonishment Comstock asked the old man what it was all about and in broken accents Weldon told him that one day before Mrs. Comstock had come to his house and told him that Comstock was about to be defeated for the nomination. There was but one way to save the day. Tim Maloney, the saloonkeeper, was in love with pretty Mary Weldon, his granddaughter. He was an uninstructed delegate to the convention. He had been rejected by Mary and had figured out in his cunning head that the Weldons were absolutely dependant on the Comstock pension and a bribe should be the price of his vote. Fox had been approached and had induced Mrs. Comstock to play this last desperate card without letting Comstock know of it.

"I would go to the poorhouse willingly, sir," said Weldon; "but the girl won't hear to it and she has consented to do as Mrs. Comstock asks of her. The poor thing cried all night for isn't she in love with Tom Burns, as clever and honest a lad as ever stepped? But she won't budge in her decision and I came to plead for her."

There was an expression in Comstock's face which no man had ever seen there in all his life. He rang his bell sharply and sent the servant to ask Mrs. Comstock to come into the library. When she entered he started back in amazement at the spectacle of her mild-mannered husband standing behind his table with blazing eyes. She saw Weldon and knew what was coming. She threw up one arm as if to avoid a blow and sought to speak. Before she could do so the words came from him as from some live volcano.

"Madam, you must be mad. Do you think I am so poor a thing that I would accept any result by such means as you have been using—even to the

saving of my soul? Do you esteem my honor so lightly as to believe that I would allow my name to be tarnished as you and your disreputable associates have sought to tarnish it? Do you believe that I would have retained an office secured by such means, or permitted you to gratify a foolish vanity by such a sacrifice? Had your plan succeeded it would have been impossible to have longer lived with you. My name will not go before the convention tomorrow. I will never touch the dirty pool of politics again. If Fox ever enters my house again I will cane him. Weldon's pension will be doubled. Good morning." And he strode heavily out of the room.

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LIKE A MAGIC LAMP

New Mineral that Emits Perpetual Light.

That the alchemist's dream of a magic lamp which never goes out will shortly be realized is indicated by some remarkable experiments lately made by Washington scientists, says a capital correspondent in the New York Times. Some months ago Secretary Langley of the Smithsonian Institution received from Europe a mysterious little box, which he took to the dark room of his astro-physical observatory, and there opened in the presence of several savants invited to inspect the valuable contents. The removal of the lid revealed two small cylinders of straw-board aglow from what appeared to be fire, hidden within. Inside these wrappings were discovered two hermetically sealed phials—about the size of your little finger—from which issued an unceasing greenish-white light, which gave the surrounding packages a peculiar glow, like that from X rays. These phials had remained hidden from light at least two months before they had been opened. Brought to the light, one was seen to contain a white, starch-like powder, finely pulverized; the other a similar substance, broken up into little cubes about a tenth of an inch in dimension. Returned to the darkness both bodies continued to glow sufficiently bright for a page, held nearly, to be easily read thereby. Yet the glass of the containing bottles was cold. Asked what the mysterious phials contained, the admiring scientists explained that the precious substance was "radium," a mineral lately discovered by Mme Skłodowska Curie, a Polish chemist, studying in Paris. Mme. Curie found radium to be contained, as a supposed impurity, in the salts of another mineral known as uranium. Chemists have thrown it away for years, never dreaming that it was destined to become one of the most valuable minerals known to science. Radium, with its mysterious source of light, emits two distinct sets of rays; one like those of ordinary daylight; the other like X rays. T. W. Smillie, in charge of the Smithsonian's photographic department, was given for examination the two phials of radium, each containing about a dram of the powder. He took them to his dark room and there made a series of interesting experiments, which demonstrated that the substance

possesses the two sources of light to a marvelous degree. Radium costs no less than \$1,000 an ounce. Its great expense is due to its present scarcity. As soon as chemists learn how to extract it readily it will grow much cheaper. Moreover, only a small percentage of it contains the mysterious luminous element. When the raw material can be more cheaply obtained it will certainly become a much sought commercial article. Geologists will meanwhile locate the earth's deposits of uranium, the crude material from which radium is extracted. It can probably be found in sufficient quantities to supply any reasonable demand. A half ton of the residues of uranium minerals now produces only a little more than two pounds of the radiant powder. But this loss is due to the fact that no one yet knows how to extract radium economically. Radium will revolutionize all lighting methods when cheaply produced. If a mere dram of the crude powder will show such power as Mr. Smillie observed, a hundred pounds of the refined materials will doubtless work marvels. Mr. Smillie estimated that a half pound of the powder will light an ordinary room. This it will do if thinly spread out. Like a magnet, radium retains its energy indefinitely. It will give off light for years without showing any loss. Mr. Smillie says he has reason to hope that the discovery of radium may result in the perfection of a luminous paint of a lasting quality. The householder of the future will coat the ceiling or walls of his rooms with luminous paint made from radium and will thus light his home without resort to lamps, gas jets, or electric lights. To darken such a room it will be necessary to merely draw a light-proof screen across the illuminated surface. But at its present price the half pound mentioned as sufficient to light an ordinary room would cost \$8,000. Yet, if such a supply would last a million years, a single lamp, even at this price, would shine upon thousands of generations, and would more than pay for itself in saving gas, oil, and electric light bills. When radium can be found in abundance it will undoubtedly afford man his cheapest light—light which will never fail.

Fired by Petroleum Sprays.

Helped a Poor Artist.

The million left by Sam Lewis, the notorious London usurer, and the benefactions that have come to light since his death continue to be a nine-days' wonder among his acquaintances in London. Beginning his career as money lender comparatively late and very humbly, he made money with marvelous rapidity. One reason for this was that he never lost any, or hardly ever, even at the gaming tables, where he was delighted to take his turn. To the poor people who constantly applied to him for loans he always replied that a poor person could not afford to borrow. An artist not long ago paid a visit to the financier and told his story over the cigar and glass of wine which Sam Lewis had always at hand. The artist's request was a modest one—he wanted only £50. "I could not afford to lend it to you," said the prince of usurers, "but I don't mind asking your acceptance of it"—and he handed the astonished applicant a £50 note.

This story, which the narrator vouches for, seems to belie the assertion lately made that in Sam Lewis' case only "the dead hand" has parted with possessions on which the living hand opened never.

Russia's Many Waterways.

No other country is so prodigally endowed with navigable rivers as Russia. The rivers of Russia have their sources within a comparatively few miles of each other, all of the great streams rising within the area of the broad plateau of the north, so that it was no difficult feat to connect the headwaters of the numerous rivers. The construction of less than 400 miles of actual canals, made it possible to travel by barge from Archangel on the Arctic, to Astrakhan on the Caspian, a distance of more than 3,000 miles, from St. Petersburg to the foot of the Urals, and from the Baltic to the Black Sea by three distinct routes, to say nothing of Moscow and numerous other inland cities which were brought into direct water communication with all parts of the empire.—Engineering Magazine.

Probate Court's Technical Task.

Some time ago Anthony Holland, a highly respected resident of Tallahatchie county, Mississippi, was found dead in a wood near their home. They were a most devoted couple and the conclusion arrived at was that Mrs. Holland was accidentally shot, Mr. Holland through grief committing suicide with the remaining barrel of the shotgun which he carried. The estate was settled on the basis of this supposition, but on appeal to the courts it was shown that when the bodies were found that of the wife was still warm, while Mr. Holland's was cold. Therefore the woman must have survived her husband and the court so decided.

Corkscrews have sunk more people than cork jackets ever saved.



"I think it can be arranged."

Bryon county and have had and have considerable influence in determining candidates and policies. What I want is more power—not money. I think I see evidences on the part of some of my former colleagues to curtail my influence. In which event I must protect myself. If your husband will give me control of his candidacy and the assurance that I shall handle the patronage of the district in case of his election, I will put him in congress. Of course, it will cost a great deal of money—more because all the boys know he has got it.

"I think it can be arranged," said Mrs. Comstock. "Mr. Comstock has no political ambition and I am certain that he would consider the placing of the offices as a source of annoyance and embarrassment." So it was arranged.

The other politicians at once detected Fox's game and made a night to keep the county from electing a Comstock delegation. This complicated matters and Fox and Mrs. Comstock

being moved over the surface until the whole is ignited, which usually requires about fifteen minutes.

According to the rabbis, Solomon had a beard three feet long. Among the Jews the beard was considered synonymous with wisdom; the longer the beard, the greater the profundity of intellect.

HIS REPUTATION CAPSIZED.

Sir William White Deposed Because Royal Yacht Proved Cranky.

Information has come to the naval intelligence office that England's most famous ship designer, after years of conspicuous service, covering a period of greatest naval development, has been removed from office because of some mistakes made by his subordinates, which have caused much discussion both in naval circles and the royal family in the last six months.

Battle ships, armored cruisers, fleet

torpedo boats and other types of war

ships had been successfully designed

and constructed under his direction,

and no serious fault or flaw discovered

in any of them could be attributed to poor design. Probably no naval architect was more widely known than Sir William White, the British chief constructor, an official with high rank and large pay, but in the latter part of his career troubles came upon him in the simple design of a royal yacht.

Several months ago the \$1,000,000 yacht

built for the queen capsized at her dock

because of want of proper distribution

of weights, and calculations made

showed that gross carelessness had

been displayed in her design, which

resulted in her being topheavy and al-

together unsafe. British officials were

shocked that such an accident could

occur to a vessel built for royal per-

sons, and all the blame was at once

placed on the chief constructor. He

was held responsible for the lack of

proper attention being given the plans

that led to a vessel being built that

would turn over alongside her pier,

especially in the case of a ship that

should be more seaworthy and safe

than, perhaps, any other built for

service. The injuries to the yacht re-

ceived in capsizing rendered her unfit

for further consideration. Sir William

was at once detached from service,

and recently it has been decided to

place some one else at the head of the

construction department. In the Brit-

ish service the construction corps has

already been antagonized by the line

contingent, and while seniority in pro-

motion is recognized the chief con-

structor is usually taken from civil

life, and has come, in the past, from

some of the great shipbuilding yards

of the country. Mr. Watts, one of the

famous designers of the Armstrongs,

has been tendered the office of chief

constructor, and will probably be the