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The Weston Democrat.

IT'S THE TRUTH THAT HURTS.

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The Democrat.
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The New Year Bills.

Oh! the bills, New Year bills,
What a world of misery
Their memory instills!
As the merchants with their quills
Stick behind their ears polite,
So caressingly invite
Your kind and prompt attention
To their bills.
How they dun, dun, dun,
As they kindly urge upon
You earnest attention to their blessed little bills,
Little bills!
With a power of perforation,
And a man that never fills
What a sad dissimulation
To call them little bills!
While all the tin that tinkles
In your pocket, only sprinkles
A little liquidation on the bills.
O! The destiny that fills
All our holidays with bills,
When the New Year dinner
Of the poor indebted sinner,
Might be cooked with the fuel of his bills.
Oh! the bills, bills, bills,
Nothing else but bills!

MR. HENSLOW'S FAILURE.

In the middle of September, 1873, the Algeria steamed into the New York waters with a company of summer absentees, joyful at their nearness to home. The passage had been less comfortable than could be wished; but this day was bright and fair, and the few Europeans on board were being told, in every variety of form, that "We were now getting into New York weather." The pilot was eagerly looked for, and at length came on board, among the cheers of the well-dressed group on deck. He brought a few newspapers, which were soon distributed and headings read. What a change of tone they produced! "*Panic Continuing! House after house down! The following suspended,*" etc. So the words ran. A gentleman stood up and read aloud for all; and one might see the effect on this and that countenance, of successive announcements. Some never uttered a word, but dropped away from the crowd. There was a newspaper in the writer's hand. A gentleman stepped up and timidly asked a look at it. I shall never forget the expression of that face as he handed it back without a word, and crept away to his cabin, as if he had done something criminal. Indeed I shall never forget that whole scene. Perhaps because its impression was so strong; perhaps because subsequent events have so often recalled it. "I had a dream which was not all a dream;" but how much was dream and how much reality, it is not needful to say. At least I am wide awake now, when putting on paper what I hope may be, in spirit and essence, if not in form, realized in many a home.

Mr. Charles G. Henslow seemed, if not rich, at least a "comfortable" man, as he brought back his family, early in September, 1873, from a pleasant run to the White mountains, and that lake which it is more agreeable to sail over than to spell or pronounce—the smiling Winnipiseogee. You could not help thinking that a happy group that entered his snug up-town residence—his comely wife, a grown-up daughter, Carry, Henry, who meant to be an artist, and two little girls, who ran up stairs and down, shouting to each other and to all the house, reports on the canary, the cat, the cook, and their own little room. Tom, who was well through his course, had gone directly to college.

Mr. Henslow soon got "under way," down-town; but one week at home seemed to undo all the benefit of the summer trip. Pale, silent, and moody, he strove in vain to respond to the gladness of his children, when he was at home in the evening. It was one week from the day of their return that he came back earlier than usual and called his wife to his room. She had feared something very bad; she was not surprised when he said, with a choking voice, "The worst has come; my darling, we are poor, almost penniless. The house has suspended, and we junior partners, who had little in it but our labor, have nothing."

Mrs. Henslow neither shrieked nor fainted, nor fell in hysterics on his neck. She kissed him quietly, patted his shoulder a bit, and said, "Well, Charles, we did all for the best, and we are in God's hands. He will set you right again. We need not fear his goodness failing."

"The poor children!" said he. "How shall I tell them? Must we let them know?" And various contingencies and considerations were hurriedly talked over, coming back to the question, "Shall we tell them?"

"Why, certainly," said the mother. "We never hid anything from them that they could understand, and, thank God, there is nothing they ought not to know."

We shall not follow the history of many a sad family council held that fall; nor the negotiations that led to quitting the house, and finding another at a manageable distance from the city, at a small rent. Nor shall we linger on details that seemed formidable at the first blush, but with which "familiarity bred contempt." That Carrie's German and music lessons should be stopped; that Tom should not be able to traverse Europe, cultivating the acquaintance of old masters, and new; that "the girls" should not have the maid who did the sewing and waited on them; these things looked mere trifling privations in a month. Happy is it for us that a loss that looks gigantic when set up and looked at by itself, is dwarfed and lost in a crowd of calamities.

By the end of the year the little rented house was very home-like—that mother could have made a home in "a hollow beech-tree"—and every one had a niche, and was tolerably happy in it. A letter had been sent to Tom calling him home, and giving the reason. But the newspapers had been beforehand; a kind-hearted professor had told a friend of what was likely to come; and he had offered to advance the money for Tom's expenses till he graduated and could repay it. Mr. Henslow took a situation as a book-keeper, and gave his after-hours' time to working on the accounts of the embarrassed firm. Carrie wanted to "go out" and teach. "Certainly you can teach," said her mother. "I am going to engage you for two little girls I have, called Bessie and Bertha, and after lessons you shall help me with the sewing. Salary not so much an object as a pleasant home, you know, dear;" and, partly laughing and partly crying, she hugged Carrie, according to the approved womanly way of expressing deep emotion of a tender kind. Henry, like a manly, good fellow as he was, turned his back on dreams of Italy and the old masters, and was mastering the art of converting hardware into paper currency, in the old established house of Brassy & Co., in a Western city.

Please to imagine the months of 1874 come and gone. There were no "parties," to be sure, yet Bessie and Bertha had good health, and did not seem to miss the pantomime. There was no trip to the mountains; so no consultations were needed with the lady who had such "sweet things in silk" for the country. Carrie did the work of governess well; and her mother's dexterity in transforming dresses was the perpetual amazement of her evenings. Tom and Harry never before received, or wrote such home letters, and the amount of "potting lavished on Charles Henslow, when he returned in the evenings, was perfectly amazing. He did not miss his club, or anything else in the city. So the year passed, and the eve of New-Year's-day came.

There had been many conferences about the day. Tom was coming home for vacation. Henry was to have his first holiday. That was a double joy. "Shall we receive, mother?" said Carrie; "I think we had better not." She did not wish mother to think it would be a trial to her to give up "receiving."

"Why certainly, Carrie; why not? Are we not just as good as ever we were? If anything, we are better, for we can all do something now. If any of our neighbors come, we shall welcome them; and we shall be all the happier to see them if they come this year." So it was settled.

* * * * * * *

That again was a pleasant group that gathered about the breakfast-table on January 1st, 1875, as it was seen in the dream. It was the first complete gathering since their reverse. Mr. Henslow took the Bible—he had left his wife to read and pray with the children when they lived in town—and read a Psalm. They knelt down and he prayed—a simple, thankful, humble prayer. They rose from their knees, Henry, who had never heard his father pray, wiping tears from his eyes that were full of nothing but joy. He had joined the church in the city in which he worked; because "he saw he must be one thing or the other, be thoroughly good, or go to ruin;" and a clergyman whom he consulted put him into a gentlemen's Bible class. The rest had followed.

"I have some good news to tell you all," said Mr. Henslow, "which I kept for this morning. The house"—they all knew the house—"is going on again hopefully, and I begin again as before with this year; and if Tom likes, after he graduates next commencement, he can get my place."

After general congratulations, and some of the aforesaid hugging, it was Tom's time to answer the looks of inquiry.

"Well, father, I'm not vain enough to think I could take your place. They have a notion at college that there is something in me; mostly, I suspect, because I have dropped cigars and parties, and cut fewer recitations than I used to; and there is a talk of my getting an exhibition that will enable me to go to Germany for a year and study; and then I may develop into a lawyer, or a professor, or something 'poor but honest;' for I doubt if my nervous system could stand the fluctuations of commerce;" and Tom glanced slyly over a broad chest and very muscular limbs, adding: "Henry here will make a pile—and one millionaire is enough in the family." This was Tom's way of describing the brilliant success he won in college since he wakened up to the idea that he had to make his own way. The reader can imagine more hugging, etc.

It was now Harry's turn to say a word—taking out a roll of notes and putting it in his mother's hand. "I was to have nothing the first year, while I was learning the business; but the governor told me in July that I deserved something, and put me on salary; and I brought home the most of it, and"— Poor Harry! He had something else to say, but he had not got rid of the crying, in his heart, over his father's prayer, and he broke down.

"Poor me," said Carrie; "I wish I was a man; I can do nothing, and have no story to tell."

"But you have, my daughter, and I will tell it. We paid over six hundred dollars a year for the children at school in town, and their dressing for school cost at the very least two hundred dollars a year more; and you have saved all that, and a penny saved is a penny won, if Benjamin Franklin told the truth; and the girls never learnt so much in a year, and never had so good a governess."

"And, mamma! sure, we'll never go to school again, but always learn lessons with Carrie!" chimed in Bessie and Bertha, to whom Carrie had made lessons (she called them "her little busy B's"), more a pleasure than a toil.

"Don't be too sure about that, Bessie," said Tom. "There's a dreadful bird of prey I have seen prowling about this nest, that I am afraid wants to carry off your governess."

We do not pretend to say why Carrie is blushing and frowning on Tom, and giving him a blow on the upper part of his cheek that does not hurt him much; nor why a Mr. Eagle, who owned a nice mansion close by (his father was a rich broker), who was among the first new-year callers, staid so long, and appeared so awkward and timid as he was leaving. Your true man, as a rule, is a little sheepish when in love; it is the empty-headed coxcomb who worships himself, and imagines he honors anybody to whom he offers his precious self, that is as easy, self-possessed, and impudent as one of those cock-sparrows in the square.

But Mr. Eagle left a letter, addressed, "Charles G. Henslow, Esq., present;" of which we can give the reader a copy:

"MY DEAR SIR:—I hope it will not seem to you, and to Mrs. Henslow, presumptuous in me to ask your consent to my union with your daughter. Since you have come to reside here, I have come to love her for that real worth, which I only knew in part when you lived in the city, and, yet, which I respected even then. Through the kindness of my late and dear father, I have means enough to secure comfort, and I do not mean to be an idle man. If you will give me this gift, I am sure, with God's blessing, I shall be happier and more useful, and I shall try to be like your other sons. I shall await a line from you at your convenience, and before venturing to speak to Miss Henslow, and with what anxiety, I need not say. Permit me to be, with great respect,

Yours, most faithfully,
"FRANK P. EAGLE."

We shall not describe the other callers; nor intrude on another family council; nor say how this "bird of prey" was regarded by Carrie; but we noticed that she takes Tom's puns and jokes in excellent part, even when he declares "it is the Eagle that is Carried away." There may have been more hugging; for that mother and daughter had become more to each other in days of trial than ever they would have been in prosperity. As the family parted at late bed-time, Mr. Henslow said, as he kissed Bessie and Bertha good-night, "This is the happiest New Year's day of my life.—*Ledger.*

The Cost of Living.

A comparison of the prices of the staples of the country in wholesale markets in November, 1859, 1864 and 1874, says the Philadelphia *Ledger* shows, that prices are nearly as low, and in some cases lower, now than before the war, if they are reduced to the gold standard. Wheat is selling at about the same prices in currency as it sold for in gold in 1859. Corn is selling for half what it did in 1864 (the year when gold touched 285), and about the same price, gold values, as it did in 1859. Cotton is worth a little more than in 1859, but is about one-ninth the price reached in 1864. Provisions, sugar and coffee show a heavy decline, but the present currency quotations are above the gold prices of 1859. Dry goods show a great decline since 1864, prints being below the prices of 1859. Beef was rather higher in the local market before the war than to-day. Sales were reported in November, 1858, for seven to nine cents per pound. The corresponding cattle report published this year quotes sales at from 4 to 7 and a half cents. But before these articles reach the consumers items of cost are added to them, which have not been reduced in proportion to the reduction in prime cost. The tax rate of 1859 on real estate was $1.75 on a very low valuation of property; to-day it is $2.20 on a cash valuation.

A house which was worth $1,500 in 1859 could not be bought for twice that amount now, and rents are from two to three times as high now as before the war. While it is true, therefore, that what are often called the "necessaries of life" have been reduced in price at wholesale to nearly the prices which ruled in 1859, it is not to be inferred that the cost of living to working men has been correspondingly reduced. Provisions consume about one-third to one-half working men's incomes. The other half is expended for rent, clothing, fuel, lights, and other expenditures of all kinds, and in many of these there has been no reduction from ante-war prices. But with a reduction in the prime cost of provisions, there will undoubtedly come in time a reduction in the value of things for which corn, beef, wheat, etc., are exchanged; in other words, a reduction in all the many things which together make up the real cost of living.

Great Britain Accepts.

The U. S. Secretary of the Interior received from the State Department copies of the official letters announcing the acceptance by the British government of the invitation of the United States to participate in the Centennial. Lord Derby's letter to Minister Schenck is as follows:

FOREIGN OFFICE, Dec. 3, 1874.

SIR: With reference to my letter of 25th August, I have now the honor to inform you that her Majesty's government accept with much pleasure the invitation of the United States to take part in the International Exhibition, to be held at Philadelphia in 1876. I shall have the honor to acquaint you herewith with the arrangements which will be made in order to carry this decision into effect. Her Majesty's government trusts that this exhibition will fully realize the objects which the government of the United States and the promoters of the undertaking have in view, and they do not doubt that it will tend to the further development of the important commercial relations between Great Britain and the United States.

I have the honor to be, with the highest consideration, sir, your most obedient, humble servant, DERBY.

To Gen. Schenck, etc.

A copy of the foregoing is received from Minister Schenck, and Secretary Fish is also informed of the acceptance by letter from Sir Edward Thornton, who makes use of substantially the same expressions and says he is instructed to convey the information to Secretary Fish, with a request that the President of the United States be made acquainted with the same.

An Editor's Joke.

An Iowa newspaper tells a story of a man in the town where it is published who stood upon the cover of a cistern to peep through a window into a room where he suspected some courting was going on, and who got a ducking by the cover of the cistern giving way, which resulted in a slight attack of the typhoid fever. In the same number of his paper the editor says: "We had quite severe symptoms of typhoid fever last week, but we worried ourselves out all right, though we frequently felt like throwing up the sponge," and a rival newspaper had the meanness to print both paragraphs in such close proximity as to suggest most unpleasant suspicions.

RETURNING.—William Mullett, a prisoner, escaped from the Pittsfield jail several weeks ago. He had served all but four months of a term of two years for forgery, and it was not thought worth while to go to the trouble and expense of recapturing him. One morning recently he knocked timidly at the warden's door, and begged to be taken in. He was cold, ragged, hungry and sick, and his estimate of the joys of freedom had been lowered by sad experience.

"Music Hath Charms."

The following was related to me by one who was an eye-witness—an old man now, but with this scene as vividly fixed in his memory as though it had occurred only yesterday:

In the year 1838, a man named Tappan moved, with his family, from New York to the remote Western country, said family consisting, besides himself, of a wife and six daughters. He had failed in business; was broken in spirit; his children, he thought, needed fresh air; so he accepted as a gift from his brother a large tract of land upon the edge of the wilderness, and settled thereon. Very soon enterprising people began to settle beyond him, and there came to be much travel past his door; and, as an act of humanity, he frequently entertained way-farers. As these calls upon his hospitality became more and more frequent, he enlarged his house to meet the requirements of a comfortable inn, and put up the usual inn-keeper's sign.

Not long after this a party of young men, eight or ten in number, well mounted, were returning, by a roundabout way, from an electioneering expedition. They had stopped at every tavern on their route, and toward the middle of the afternoon they reined up before Tappan's door, pretty well under the influence of various kinds of fiery fluid, and having dismounted and secured their horses, they entered the house, and noisily demanded whisky.

Now it so happened that Mr. Tappan and his wife were both away, and only his daughters were in charge; and it also happened that the host, being a rigid and conscientious tectotaler, had never kept any spirituous liquors in the house. Of this fact the visitors were informed by the oldest daughter, a handsome, intelligent girl of eighteen. But the riotously-inclined invaders had no care just then for female beauty, nor were they moved by the fear and distrust of the frightened girls; but they still demanded whisky, and when they had become assured that they could not have it, they resolved that they would cut down the sign before the door, and the leader so informed the young lady.

"You must do as you please, gentlemen," she said, shrinking, while her little sisters gathered around her for protection; "I cannot prevent you."

"A tavern-sign, and no whisky! Such a sign is a pase fraud."

"Aye—down with it!"

"Where is your ax?"

"You will find it somewhere by the wood-pile, sir."

Three or four of the party made a rush for the wood-pile, cursing as they went, while the leader of the gang, a young man who would have been decidedly handsome if he had been himself, with others of his companions, took a notion to overhaul the house, insisting that there must be "a drop of something" somewhere. And we may here say that the whole party considered themselves gentlemen. They were well-dressed, and respectably connected.

In a small, well-furnished apartment, apart from the guests' room, was found a pianoforte.

"Hallo!" cried the leader, "who plays on this? Can you?"

"It is mine, sir," answered the girl, thus addressed.

"And can you play?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you sing?"

"I sing sometimes, sir."

"Will you sing and play for us?"

"With pleasure, sir."

She opened the piano, and sat down, and played and sang "The Maiden's Prayer." Her voice was clear, musical, and sweetly rich, and the accompaniment was played with rare skill and grace. The little sisters gathered in a semi-circle close around the instrument, and the heretofore riotous men—but riotous no more—drew near and nearer, upon the outside. Some of them had never heard a piano before, and not one of them had ever heard sweeter music. After a pause, at the conclusion of the piece, the leader spoke again, but in a strangely subdued tone.

"Will you sing for us another song?"

And she played and sang that sweet song, "The Old Home."

The men who had gone in search of the ax, hearing the music, had left the wood-pile and entered the house.

Other songs were sung, in several of which two of the younger sisters joined. The riotous spirits were all subdued, and half the party had wet cheeks. Their sympathies were aroused, their hearts opened, and the best part of their natures brought to the surface; and when they had taxed the fair songstress so far that they felt ashamed to tax her more, they thanked her heartily, and withdrew with as much decorum as might have been exhibited had they been retiring from before the throne of a monarch.

A year after this event Mr. Tappan chanced to be in Jacksonville on business, where he was introduced to Philip St. Clair, a rising young lawyer of the place.

"Is this the Mr. Tappan who, one year ago, kept a public-house on the Cloud Hill road?" asked St. Clair.

"The same, sir."

"And I, sir," pursued the lawyer, "was the leader of that party of riotous men who so shamefully frightened your daughters. I suppose they told you of the circumstance?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Mr. Tappan, from that day I have not touched, as a beverage, any intoxicating drink. I would like to see your eldest daughter, and tell her of the blessing her sweet music bestowed upon me."

Mr. Tappan knew St. Clair well by reputation, and cheerfully invited him to call whenever he could make it convenient.

St. Clair once more visited the wayside inn, the result of which was, that in less than another year, the sweet songstress had become his wife.

"My blessed angel," he said, clasping her to his bosom when she was his own to cherish and protect, "never, never can I sufficiently thank Heaven for the providence that led me within your saving influence in that dark hour of my life."

Smith and Jones were at the menagerie, and the conversation turned on Darwin's theory. "Look at that monkey," said Smith. "Think of its being an undeveloped human!" "Human!" said Jones, contemptuously. "It's no more human than I am."

The New Finance Bill.

The following is the full text of the finance bill passed by the United States Congress:

Be it enacted &c.: That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized and required as rapidly as practicable to cause to be coined at the mints of the United States, silver coins of denominations of ten, twenty-five, and fifty cents of standard value, and to issue them in redemption of an equal number and amount of fractional currency of similar denominations, or, at his discretion, he may issue such silver coins through the mints, sub-treasuries, public depositaries, and post-offices of the United States, and upon such issue he is hereby authorized and required to redeem an equal amount of such fractional currency until the whole amount of such fractional currency outstanding shall be redeemed.

SEC. 2. That so much of section 3,524 of the revised statutes of the United States as provides for a charge of one-fifth per centum for converting standard gold bullion into coin is hereby repealed, and hereafter no charge shall be made for that service.

SEC. 3. That section 5,777 of the revised statutes of the United States limiting the aggregate amount of the circulating notes of national banking associations be and is hereby repealed, and each existing banking association may increase its circulating notes in accordance with the existing law without respect to said aggregate limit, and new banking associations may be organized in accordance with the existing law without respect to said aggregate limit, and the provisions of the law for the withdrawal and redistribution of national bank currency among the several States and Territories are hereby repealed, and whenever and so often as circulating notes shall be issued to any such bank association so increasing its capital or circulating notes, or so newly organized as aforesaid, it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury to redeem the legal tender United States notes in excess only of three hundred million dollars, to the amount of eighty per centum of the sum of national bank notes issued to any such banking association, as aforesaid, and to continue such redemption as such circulating notes are issued until there shall be outstanding the sum of three hundred million dollars of such legal tender United States notes, and no more. And on and after the first day of January, A. D., 1879, the Secretary of the Treasury shall redeem in coin the United States legal tender notes then outstanding on their presentation for redemption at the office of the Assistant Treasurer in the city of New York, in sums not less than fifty dollars.

And to enable the Secretary of the Treasury to prepare and provide for the redemption in this act authorized and required, he is authorized to use any surplus revenues, from time to time, in the Treasury, not otherwise appropriated, and to issue, sell, and dispose of, at not less than par in coin, either of the descriptions of bonds of the United States described in the act of Congress approved July 14, 1870, entitled "An act to authorize the refunding of the national debt," with like qualities, principles and exemptions to the extent necessary to carry this act into effect, and to use the proceeds thereof for the purposes aforesaid.

And all provisions of law inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

Grasshoppers in China.

The local authorities, whether civil or military, are held responsible for the stamping out of these insects as soon as their appearance has been reported. They are required to summon a large body of men, and at once surround and destroy the locusts, the expenses of the maintenance of the men and compensation for the crops trodden down during the chase being supplied by the provincial treasury. Should the local authorities succeed in stamping out the locusts within a limited time, their services are favorably reported to the Emperor; but should they fail, and the locusts spread and do damage, they are liable to be deprived of their posts, arrested and handed over to the proper board for punishment. A certain sum per bushel is paid to peasants bringing in unwinged locusts, and half that sum when the locusts are able to fly, while compensation is given for crops trodden down in the chase. The locusts are swept with besoms into trenches dug at the side of the corn fields, in which a vigorous fire is kept up. The best time to capture locusts is when they are feeding at dawn of day, when, their bodies being heavy with dew and their wings wet, they are unable to jump or fly. If the Western States or any parts of them are to be visited by the locusts in the future, as they have been of late years, some defense will have to be adopted. Under existing circumstances the use of men in large numbers is impracticable, and the ingenuity of inventors or scientists is our only hope. The prospect, it must be confessed, is not very cheering, for the vast uninhabited regions afford breeding grounds which effectually defy all attempts at extermination.

A Maniac Captain.

Captain S., says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, died last year in the Central Asylum, Dundrum, from senile decay, being considerably over 80 years of age. He was transferred to that establishment on its opening from the Cork Asylum, of which he had been an inmate for nearly twenty-two years, having been acquitted as far back as 1829, on the ground of insanity, of the murder of seven men—the whole crew, in fact, with the exception of two boys, of a vessel then under his command and on its return from Bermuda. Possessing originally a very decided character, but becoming the subject of mental disease from continuous excitement and want of sleep for a fortnight, he labored under delusions as to an intended mutiny among his shipmates. After inducing them, in proof of their subordination and of the absence of such intention, to allow themselves to be tied down with ropes on deck, in which position they lay for nearly an hour, the first mate showing the example, when approaching the Cork harbor he deliberately murdered them in succession with an iron bar. After some time he recovered his reason in the district asylum, and was, no doubt, sorry for what he had done, for he was remarkable for a uniform kindness of disposition toward his fellow patients; his piety, also, was very conspicuous, and he was constantly engaged in reading the Bible and religious works. Occasionally, however, he had violent relapses, preceded by a taciturnity unbroken for several days, save by quotations of an incoherent character or the repetition of nautical phrases.

SUGGESTIVE FIGURES.—The population of New York city, according to the last census, is 942,292. The transient population is about 30,000, of which, in round numbers, 5,000 are immigrants temporarily staying in the city, 5,000 are seamen, 10,000 guests at hotels, and 10,000 guests at boarding-houses. The estimated number of persons married during the year is 20,000; the births, 35,000; the deaths, 27,000. The money spent for public schools is about $3,000,000; the money spent in public amusements, $7,000,000; the money spent for liquors in saloons and other licensed establishments, about $50,000,000.

Don't Kiss the Baby.

The promiscuous kissing of children is a pestilent practice, the *Scientific American* says. We use the word advisedly, and it is mild for the occasion. Murderous would be the proper word, did the kissers know the mischief they do. Yes, madam, murderous; and we are speaking to you. Do you remember calling on your dear friend Mrs. Brown the other day, with a strip of flannel round your neck? And when little Flora came dancing into the room, didn't you pounce upon her demonstratively, call her a precious little pet, and kiss her? Then you serenely proceeded to describe the dreadful sore throat that kept you from prayer meeting the night before. You had no designs on the dear child's life, we know; nevertheless you killed her! Killed her as surely as if you had fed her with strychnine or arsenic. Your caresses were fatal.

Two or three days after, the little pet began to complain of a sore throat too. The symptoms grew rapidly alarming; and when the doctor came, the single word diphtheria sufficed to explain them all. To-day a little mound in Greenwood is the sole memento of your visit.

Of course the mother does not suspect, and would not dare to suspect, you of any instrumentality in her bereavement. She charges it to a mysterious Providence. The doctor says nothing to disturb the delusion; that would be impolitic, if not cruel; but to an outsider he is free to say that the child's death was due directly to your infernal stupidity. Those are precisely his words: more forcible than elegant, it is true; but who shall say, under the circumstances, that they are not justifiable? Remember

"Evil is wrought by want of thought
As well as by want of heart."

It would be hard to tell how much of the prevalent sickness and mortality from diphtheria is due to such want of thought. As a rule, adults have the disease in so mild a form that they mistake it for a simple cold; and as a cold is not contagious, they think nothing of exposing others to their breath or to the greater danger of labial contact. Taking into consideration the well established fact that diphtheria is usually, if not always, communicated by the direct transplanting of the malignant vegetation which causes the disease, the fact that there can be no more certain means of bringing the contagion to its favorite soil than the act of kissing, and the further fact that the custom of kissing children on all occasions is all but universal, it is not surprising that, when the disease is once imported into a community, it is very likely to become epidemic.

It would be absurd to charge the spread of diphtheria entirely to the practice of child-kissing. There are other modes of propagation, though it is hard to conceive of any more directly suited to the spread of the infection or more general in its operation. It stands to diphtheria about the same relation that promiscuous hand-shaking formerly did to the itch.

It were better to avoid the practice. The children will not suffer if they go unkissed; and their friends ought for their sake to forego the luxury for a season. A single kiss has been known to infect a family; and the most careful may be in condition to communicate the disease without knowing it. Beware, then, of playing Judas, and let the babies alone.

Congress Then and Now.

I entered Congress fifteen years ago, says Senator Conkling. From then till now my opportunity for seeing both before and behind the scenes has been improved with diligence, and nothing is more certain than the change for the better in the executive departments in both wings of the capitol and in the supreme courts. In 1859 a large proportion of the members of the House of Representatives went habitually armed with deadly weapons. Drinking to excess was surprisingly common. Large numbers in both houses were often, long before evening, unfit to do business. Liquor was kept, as far as I know, in every committee-room in the capitol—book-cases doing duty as side-boards. Gambling and other dissipations were very common among public men, and vice and debauchery were the topics of loud and unclean jest. Venal lobbying was too palpable and prevalent to be overlooked, and on all sides lax practices prevailed which now would be scarcely credited. All this is changed for the better, in all respects. Liquor is not tolerated in the capitol. Formerly every cabinet officer, and many others, rode in a public carriage as a matter of course; now every cabinet officer, who merely allows the old custom to go on, finds himself trumpeted through the world as a great offender. George Washington, when President, rode with six horses, and with out-riders. When he wished to use horses he ordered them from the war department, at the republic expense, and the out-riders also.

From a Cannon's Mouth.

Professor Seeyle, in a recent lecture, gives a different explanation of this famous mode of punishment from that which is often entertained. He says:

It is well for us to understand, when we see the papers, as they occasionally do, taking up the subject of English barbarity, what is the meaning of this "barbarity." I have found persons who supposed the punishment of firing Sepoys from a cannon's mouth meant that Sepoys were actually put inside the cannon and fired out. In reality the victim was put about six feet in front of the cannon, which was heavily loaded with powder alone; and I was told that no person unfamiliar with artillery would have any idea of the minuteness of the fragments into which the body was scattered. This was a great punishment, not on account of the manner of death, but because the body was scattered and denied the rites of burial. This is a terrible thing for a Hindoo, and the English report and believe that a rebellion was stopped there just by the sturdy statement of an English officer, who said that if there were any signs of mutiny he would subject all mutineers to this punishment.

Fanny Elsler is still living at her villa near Hamburg, fat, fair, and sixty-five, and said to be worth $2,000,000.

A GREAT BEAR HUNT.

In Which a New-Yorker, a Detroiter and Two Dogs Took a Hand.

Two men named James Marshall and John Ebbitts, the former a drummer for a New York house, and the latter a resident of Detroit, started from North Branch, Mich., on a bear-hunting expedition. Proceeding six miles east, and from thence five miles north, they came upon bear tracks of unusual size. They had with them a gun each of approved patterns, an uncommonly large bull-dog, who was never known to turn back at anything, and of a savage species, and a Siberian bloodhound who weighed not less than 250 pounds. The dogs were the first to scent the game, and with tail and bristles erect they eagerly started on the war-path, Marshall and Ebbitts following as fast as possible. About five miles further on they unexpectedly came upon the bear, who was quietly slumbering in a cavity made by the upheaval of an immense beach tree. The dogs gave a growl and a bark as they discovered the monster, and without another sign, sprang with ferocity on the bear before he had time to fairly recover his consciousness. He was not long in doing it, however, for he immediately rose to a standing position, gave a fierce growl, elevated the corners of his lips, disclosing as ugly a set of molars as ever adorned a Michigan bear, faced the dogs, and raising his right paw he hit the bull-dog in the ribs, knocking him about twenty feet and landing him on the top of a pine stump three feet in height. In the meantime the bloodhound had not been idle. The bear had no sooner dealt his comrade a blow than he seized him by the flank with a ferocity which caused him to whirl around with such force as to break loose. Then bear and bloodhound met face to face. The bear elevated himself on his hind legs and opened his mouth prepared for an embrace. The bloodhound did not decline the proffered hug, and quick as a flash of lightning sprang at the bear, seized him by the throat, and the battle was begun in deadly earnest. The bear was overthrown by the sudden onset made by the bloodhound, and fell on his back, the bloodhound still clinging to his throat. Dog and bear were mixed up in such a manner that the hunters were afraid to fire for fear they would kill the dog, and as the dog up to that moment seemed to have the best of the fight, they determined to let the battle rage without interruption. The bear recovered himself in a second's time, and drew up his hind paws with the evident intention of disemboweling his antagonist. But the dog saw the movement, jumped aside, and unfortunately loosened his hold. The bear quickly rose, maddened with pain, and, seeing the hunters, started for them with the dog at his heels. They emptied their guns into his carcass, but he didn't seem to mind that, and kept on. He was so close that they did not have time to reload, and they turned and ran toward a large beach tree about fifteen rods distant, the bear in close pursuit, and the dog close at the heels of the bear. Just as the latter had cleared the gap between himself and the hunters to within about three feet, the dog again seized him by the flank, and hung on with such force that the bear could not extricate himself. He again whirled the dog loose, and they met, face to face, and came together with terrific fury. The hunters hastily loaded their pieces, walked up within six paces of the bear, took good aim, and fired just as the bear, with a well and powerfully directed blow with his right arm, hit the dog between the eyes, splitting his head open as neatly as if struck with an ax. The bear, when fired at, fell, and after struggling a few moments in mortal agony was dead. On examination it was found that the bloodhound and bull-dog were also dead, the latter having all his ribs smashed in. A farmer was hired to carry the bear to the nearest station, and when put on the scales he tipped the beam at 450 pounds. One of his paws when cut off weighed just five pounds. It took copious draughts of brandy for three days in succession before the nerves of the hunters became steady, so great had been their excitement over the contest. Of course they were not frightened any of the time; they deny that charge with the scorn and indignation that the imputation deserves.

Healing Power of Glue.

Many women do not know that glue a healing remedy is invaluable. For last twelve or fourteen years, says a mechanic, I have been employed in a shop where there are over 300 men at work, and, as is the case in all shops of this kind, hardly a day passes but one or more of us cut or bruise our limbs. At first there were but few who found their way to my department to have their wounds bound up; but after a while it became generally known that a rag glued on a flesh wound was not only a speedy curative, but a formidable protection against further injury. I was obliged to keep a full supply of rags on hand to be ready for any emergency.

"I will here cite one among many of the cases cured with glue. A man was running a boring machine, with an inch and a half auger attached; by some means the sleeve of his shirt caught in the auger, bringing his wrist in contact with the bit, tearing the flesh among the muscles in a frightful manner. He was conducted to my apartment (the pattern shop), and I washed the wound in warm water, and glued around it a cloth which, when dry, shrunk into a rounded shape, holding the wound tight and firm. Once or twice a week, for three or four weeks, I dressed the wound afresh until it was well." The man never lost an hour's time in consequence. The truth of this statement hundreds can testify to. I used, of course, the best quality of glue.

LOST THE CLOAK.—The latest American tourist in Europe took a notion to buy a sealskin cloak for his wife. On nearing New York it occurred to him that it would be a fine piece of economy to avoid paying the duties on it. Accordingly he asked a female acquaintance on board to put it on and wear it ashore as her own. She was only too happy to accommodate. She wore it ashore accordingly, but she omitted to meet the gentleman afterward, and so the wife of a prominent manufacturer of Springfield will have to go without her sealskin this winter.