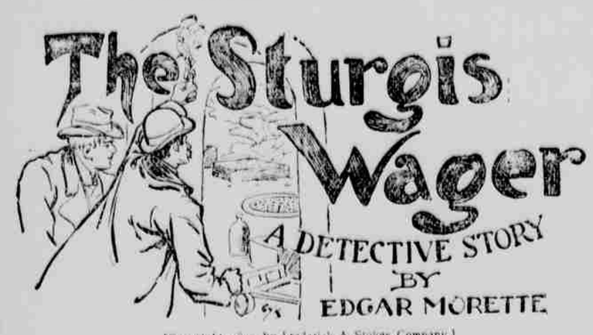

SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Scene of story is in New York city. Time, early evening, last day of year. Cable train collides with cab, throwing to ground cabman and passenger also seated outside. Latter disappears; then, inside the cab, body of man shot dead is discovered. Sturgis, reporter, examines cab and surroundings.

CHAPTER II—Later that evening, at stag dinner party, Sturgis, in impromptu discussion, maintains fallibility of circumstantial evidence. Dr. Murdock, famous chemist, wagers it is possible to find that from any daily paper he can select an insolvable riddle. Sturgis takes bet.

CHAPTER III—Case selected is of two mysterious shots fired that afternoon in or near Knickerbocker bank. Man had been seen running from bank with valise, which he had left behind him, but he was called from back steps and was shot at. Valise contained nothing of interest.

CHAPTER IV—Sturgis secures appointment with Dunlap, president of bank, to look some of shooting. At office meeting, there figures his friend, Dr. Thurston, who came to his rooms while he was arranging data of the two strange cases.

CHAPTER V—From observations made thus far and inductive reasoning thereon reporter has concluded that of men in cab was bookkeeper about 30 years old, fair looking, good student, of sound mind, he had been killed or fired at close quarters, (2) might have shot himself; (3) shooting had not occurred in cab; (4) right arm broken by heavy instrument; and (5) cabman was innocent, and young man who escaped involved in some way in crime. Cab mystery also noted as possible sequel to bank mystery.

CHAPTER VI—Sturgis calls for Sprague, artist friend, to get his company during investigation it back, and introduces him to young man with some fair sitter whose portrait he is making.

CHAPTER VII—Agnes Murdock, in charge of her father's household since her mother's death, finds her father in his study. She, in reply to a question concerning attentions of a Thomas Chatham, shows her dislike of the persistent suitor. Her father intimates she shall not be further bothered.

CHAPTER VIII—Miss Murdock's final plaything for portrait induces artist to ask permission of calling at her home, which she readily grants. Bellboy brings note for Agnes. This is read with evident annoyance, and she drops it. It remains forgotten when she leaves studio.

CHAPTER IX—Promptly at time agreed Dunlap meets Sturgis. Reporter begins long and careful examination in bank. Revolver in bookkeeper's desk shows two empty cartridges.

CHAPTER X—Examination completed, Sturgis questions banker regarding reliability of Arbogast, head bookkeeper, then announces Arbogast to be a defaulter with Chatham, accountant who has frequently examined condition of books, as accomplice. Message Arbogast sent Chatham deciphered from marks on a blotter.

CHAPTER XI—Reporter has now completed diagram showing movements of Arbogast and Chatham and one other whose identity is as yet completely veiled. Arbogast at last moment had found a note which caused him to suspect his accomplice. He fired wounding him in hand and was about to fire again when unknown conspirator rushed in and struck his arm. This action resulted in turning weapon and making Arbogast shoot himself. Dunlap is incredulous, but verifies story in part by later identifying body of Arbogast at morgue.

CHAPTER XII—Banker calls upon Mrs. Arbogast. While with her she receives letter written by her husband telling of defalcation and expected flight. He has by mistake allowed a depositor to overdraw account. Chatham has discovered mistake, and for fear of losing position Arbogast alias himself to be used by Chatham and a Mr. Seymour. By false entries Seymour has drawn $250,000. Change in method of book keeping was about to expose the matter. Arbogast tells his wife to give Dunlap confession as soon as he has escaped.

CHAPTER XIII—The afternoon of crime Chatham had had occasion to use telephone. Sturgis learns he had been connected with the Manhattan Chemical company, a mysterious concern not known to commercial agencies. At office of chemical concern Sturgis places detectives.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LETTER.

There is a magic in the refreshing sleep of youth calculated to exorcise the megrims. When Sprague, arising after a good night's rest, found the world bathed in the sunshine of a crisp January day, he felt the physical pleasure of living which comes from supple muscles, from the coursing of a generous blood through the veins, from the cravings of a healthy appetite.

He remembered the "blue devils" of the day before, and found it difficult to account for them. He was in love, certainly. But that in itself did not furnish a sufficient reason for despondency. It was rumored that the object of his affections was on the eve of betrothal to another. But what dependence can be placed upon a public rumor? As a matter of fact Miss Murdock wore no rings; in the absence of the badge of the betrothed woman, was he not justified in believing her fancy free?

In that case, there was a fair field and no favor. Why should not he have as good a chance of winning the prize as another man? No man, of course, was worthy of Agnes Murdock. That was the fundamental axiom. But in love success does not perch only upon the banner of the worthy. If it did, the human race would soon become extinct.

So the young man's thoughts ran on, while hope once more found a resting place in his heart.

Miss Murdock was not to pose again, but Sprague was eager to work on the portrait. He was about to step into the studio after breakfast, when the housekeeper announced a call from his lawyer, who wished to consult him about some important matters. The entire morning was thus consumed in necessary but tedious business, and it was not until after luncheon that the artist was at last free to set to work.

Uncovering the portrait, he stood off to examine it. As he did so, something white upon the floor caught his eye. He stooped to pick it up. It was a letter in a beautifully regular masculine hand. Mechanically he turned it over and unfolded it. His eyes carelessly swept the written page; then in a flash he realized what it was, and he flung it violently from him.

Only a few words had left their impress upon his retina—a few scattered words and a signature. But these were branded deep upon his brain for all time, in letters of fire which burned their way to his very soul. For he had recognized the letter which had been delivered by the messenger to Miss Murdock the day before, and he had seen enough to know that it was couched in words of passionate love. In that instant was quenched the last ray of hope which had lurked within his heart. Overwhelmed with a sense of utter desolation, he sank back upon a divan, and for a long time remained lost in bitter reflections.

But Sprague, in spite of his dilettanteism, was a man of grit when occasion called for it. Summoning at length his fortitude and his pride, he proceeded to carry out what he conceived to be the duty of a gentleman under the circumstances.

Picking up the letter again, he placed it unread in an envelope, into which he slipped his card, with a brief explanation of the finding of the paper. Then, after addressing the envelope, he started out to mail it himself.

"Thomas Chatham!" he mused, as he went down the stairs; "Thomas Chatham! Why, he is the man who took such pains to inform me that Miss Murdock was betrothed, or on the point of being betrothed—the foolishly dressed young man with red hair who is so regular an attendant at the Murdocks' informal receptions, and who never seems to be invited on state occasions; an insignificant and conceited puppy. Poor girl, what a pity that she should throw herself away upon such a man. But, if he marries her, he shall make her happy, or else—"

The balance of his thought was not put into words; but his face became set in stern lines and his hands clenched in grim determination.

Sprague, with the letter for Miss Murdock in his hand, hurried to the nearest letter box, raised the lid of the drop, inserted the letter in the slot and then tightened his grasp of it and began to think.

The letter, if mailed, might perhaps not reach its destination until the following morning. It might be of importance, since it had been sent by messenger and to the studio instead of to Miss Murdock's house. Besides, Miss Murdock would probably be worried when she discovered that she had lost it. It ought therefore to be returned to her at once.

The letter, by this time, had been withdrawn from the slot of the letter box.

Yes, it ought to be returned by messenger instead of by mail. By messen-

IN A FLASH HE REALIZED WHAT IT WAS.

ger? It was about half a mile to the nearest district messenger office. The Murdocks' house was not much further. Why not deliver the letter himself?

Why not, indeed? The human heart has unfathomable depths. Why should a hopeless lover pine for a mere sight of the woman whose presence only adds to his misery? Explain that who can.

Sprague carefully placed the letter in his breast pocket and started off again, this time directing his steps toward the Murdocks' home.

CHAPTER XV.

TWO LOVERS.

Miss Murdock was seated at the piano in the drawing-room, her shapely fingers wandering dreamily over the keys, when a servant knocked at the door.

"A gintleman to see yer, miss," said the maid.

"A caller!" exclaimed Agnes, in surprise. "At this time of day? Did he give you his card?"

"No, miss. Nor his name, nayther."

"Well, then, Mary," said Agnes, with a mixture of amusement and severity, "why do you announce him? I think you would better keep an eye on the hat-rack."

"He ain't no thafe, miss," said the maid, positively; "he do be dressed up too fone fur that. Besoides, Oi've seen him here before. A hansum young feller wid red hair—Mister—Mister—Cha—Chapman."

"Chatham!" suggested Agnes, with sudden seriousness.

"Yis, miss; it do be the same."

"I cannot receive him," said Miss Murdock, in frigid tones. "I am surprised that John should have admitted him, after the explicit instructions I gave him yesterday. Hereafter I am never at home to Mr. Chatham."

"Your butler is not at fault in this instance," said a voice from the hallway, and before either of the women could recover from her surprise, a flashily dressed young man with intensely red hair entered the room. He carried his left arm in a sling. His face was pale; his eyes glittered with a feverish light; his voice quivered with repressed excitement.

"I was waiting for your father in his office, when I heard your maid go by, and I asked her to announce me. I hoped for, but I can hardly say I expected, a more hospitable reception."

Miss Murdock, after the first shock of surprise, had drawn up her graceful figure to its full height, and stood looking at the young man with undisguised contempt in her flashing eyes.

Chatham paused as if expecting a reply; and then:

"Shall I explain the object of my visit before your servant?" he asked, bitterly.

"You may leave, Mary, until I ring for you," said the young girl, turning to the maid.

The woman reluctantly left the room, casting curious glances upon her young mistress and her unwelcome guest as she went.

Chatham made a motion as if to take a chair; but Agnes remained significantly standing.

"Perhaps," she said, coldly, "you will be good enough to explain as briefly as possible your object in forcing your presence upon me in this ungentlemanly way?"

"I suppose my conduct does strike you as ungentlemanly," said the young man, piteously; "but what could I do? I love you devotedly, madly, and you will not allow me even to tell you so. You instruct your servants to turn me away from the door like a beggar. Is it a crime to love you?"

"No, Mr. Chatham," said the girl, more gently, "it is not a crime to love a woman; but it is at least a serious blunder to adopt the method you have selected of showing your affection, and it is certainly not generous to force it upon her as you are doing."

"What else can I do?" he repeated, dogedly. "Here am I suddenly obliged to leave New York for a long time—perhaps forever—and unable to get a single word with you. I called yesterday morning and was informed that you were at that artist fellow's studio. Then I wrote you a letter, asking for an interview, and I left it there for you myself. The only notice you took of it was to give instructions to your butler not to admit me if I called again. I cannot go away like that, without a ray of hope to lighten my exile, and to leave you here surrounded by a lot of men who are anxious to marry you."

The tender-hearted girl felt a growing pity for the awkward and vulgar young man in whom she began vaguely to discern a genuine suffering.

"I am sorry, Mr. Chatham," she said, "more sorry than I can say. But what can I do? I do not care for you in the way you wish, and affection is not to be coerced. I have done the best I could to discourage you, because—"

"I know you have," interrupted Chatham; "you have avoided me, and snubbed me, and taken every way you could to show that you do not like me."

"It would have been mistaken kindness to do otherwise," said Agnes, gently.

"No, it wouldn't," exclaimed the accountant; "I don't ask you to love me; not at once, at any rate. But give me a show; give me time; give me a little hope—"

"I cannot do that," said the girl, in a low tone.

"Why can't you?" urged the young man excitedly. "I have sacrificed everything for you; I have given up all I had; I have lost my position; I have risked my life—"

"I don't understand you," said Miss Murdock, looking at him in astonishment.

"Your father would," he replied, huskily; "it was he egged me on to this; he promised me that you would have me—"

"My father promised—"

"Yes, your father; and, by G——"

Chatham, who was growing more and more excited, brought down his clenched fist upon a table near which he stood, and with an evident effort repressed the oath which rose to his lips. Miss Murdock, startled and bewildered observed him in speechless amazement.

After a momentary struggle, the accountant suddenly broke forth in piteous pleading:

"I don't ask much now. Tell me only one thing and I shall go away content for the present. Say that no other man has any better chance with you than I have. Say that you do not love anyone else."

The young girl tried hard to avoid his ardent gaze.

"Say it!" he commanded, in sudden sternness.

Agnes drew herself up proudly then.

"I don't know by what right you presume to catechise or to command me," she said, coldly, at the same time making a motion as if to touch the button of the electric bell.

Chatham saw the motion and sprang before her to intercept it.

"Ah! that is the way of it, is it?" he exclaimed, with passionate jealousy. "You are—in love—with another man!"

The words seemed to choke him in the utterance. The blood rushed to his head; the veins on his temples stood out in purple vividness, and, as he clutched spasmodically at his collar, a wild light came into his eyes.

Agnes caught their mad glitter and shrank back in sudden terror.

"I have been duped!" he shouted, frantically. "I have been a cat's-paw, and now that I have done all that was wanted of me I am to be turned off like a dog, with a kick. The dirty work is done, is it? We'll see about that; we'll see what your father has to say. But, at any rate, you can be sure of one thing."

His voice sank to a hoarse whisper and the words fell with impressive distinctness:

"If I don't marry you, no one ever shall!"

As he spoke he leaned forward upon the table which stood near him, and his fingers closed nervously upon the handle of a jeweled paper knife. There was murder in his eye at that moment, and the frightened girl quailed before it.

Suddenly her ear caught the sound of footsteps in the hallway. She opened her lips to call for help, but before she could utter a sound the door opened, revealing the anxious face of the housemaid, who had heard enough to realize that it was time to interrupt the tete-a-tete without further ceremony.

"Mr. Sprague, miss," she announced, with a comforting nod at her young mistress, whose pale face and frightened eyes had not escaped her attention.

Sprague stood on the threshold in evident embarrassment, looking from Agnes to Chatham, and uncertain how to act.

"Yes," replied Sturgis, "I was observing that. Have you a duplicate of this that you can spare?"

"Yes; keep that one if you wish."

"Thank you; I am very glad to have it. Did you succeed in extracting the bullet?"

"I have not tried yet. I had to develop the photograph first."

"Of course. When do you expect the red-haired young man to return?"

"He promised to come back yesterday, but he failed to do so," replied Dr. Thurston. Then, suddenly:

"But who said anything about his being young or red-haired?"

"Not you, certainly, old man," replied Sturgis, smiling. "Don't worry; you have not voluntarily betrayed any professional secret. But, for all that, your patient is wanted by the police. He was bound to fall into their hands before long. The only effect of this discovery will be to hasten the denouement. I had traced him to your house, and I knew how he was wounded; so that I recognized him as soon as you mentioned his case."

"Who is he?" asked Thurston. "I am sure I have seen him somewhere before, but I cannot remember where."

Whereupon the reporter related the story of Chatham's connection with the Knickerbocker bank case.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE QUARRY.

Half an hour later Sturgis was walking briskly down Broadway, with his usual air of absent-minded concentration. Presently he turned into a side street and at once slackened his pace. He now sauntered along like a lounger at a loss how to kill a long, idle day. The show window of a bric-a-brac shop arrested his attention. He stopped to examine its contents.

A little farther up the street was a liquor saloon, outside of which stood a group of boisterous young rowdies. An older man, evidently in his cups, was seated on an adjoining stoop, where, with maudlin gravity, he seemed to be communing with himself.

On the opposite side of the way stood a low, dilapidated brick house. A painted sign over the windows of the ground floor bore the name: "MANHATTAN CHEMICAL CO."

The drunken man rose unsteadily to his feet and approached Sturgis with outstretched hand.

"Say, Jimmy, get on ter his nibs strikin' de broke fur a nickel ter git med'cine fur his sick mudder!" exclaimed one of the young ruffians.

The wretched-looking individual thus designated seemed hardly able to stand as he steadied himself against an iron railing; but the eyes he turned upon Sturgis were bright with intelligence and the words he spoke were uttered in a low, firm voice:

"He's been here—been here twice."

"Twice?" echoed Sturgis, surprised. "Where is he now?"

"I don't know—"

"You don't know?"

"No, sir; but I guess Conklin does. This is how it was: It was my watch yesterday afternoon, when Chatham came the first time. He went into the Manhattan company's place through the basement at a quarter after five. So I just settled myself out here and waited. Well, I waited and waited, but there wasn't any sign of Chatham, and when Flagler came along to relieve me at ten o'clock Chatham hadn't come out yet. Flagler he spotted the place until six this morning, and then Conklin took his turn again until two o'clock, when I came on for my watch. Just as Conklin was telling me how things stood, who should come down the street but Chatham himself, large as life."

"Down the street?" exclaimed Sturgis.

"Yes, sir. And up he goes, as if nothing had happened, and into the Manhattan Chemical company's place again."

"He had put up the back-door game on you," said the reporter.

"Yes, sir; just what I said to Conklin. So, quick as a wink, I sent him around the block to keep his eye peeled on the next street, and I waited here. And here I've been ever since. If Conklin isn't on the block above, it must be because Chatham has made tracks again, and he after him."

"I'll go and find out," said Sturgis. "Has anyone else called at the Manhattan Chemical company's office since you have been on watch?"

"No, sir; but a couple of hours ago an express wagon came along and delivered a long wooden box; might have been chemicals for the wholesale department, for it was lowered to the cellar by the hoist in the areaway. The blond young man receipted for the box."

"Very well, Shrady. Hang on a little while longer, and I shall have you relieved just as soon as I possibly can."

So saying, the reporter, who had been pretending to look through his pockets for a coin, ostentatiously slipped a nickel into the outstretched palm before him. The light seemed to die out of the sharp eyes of the detective, and it was the miserable drunkard who staggered back to his place on the stoop next to the station, unmindful of the gibes of the young rowdies congregated there.

Sturgis walked up to the next street, where he found a second detective on duty.

"Anything new, Conklin?" he asked.

"No, sir; he's been lying low; looks like he knew he was spotted this time."

"Good. Stay here until I can notify the police that we have run down the quarry. It will be necessary to obtain a search warrant for the Manhattan Chemical company's place. In the meantime, if Chatham should attempt to make tracks, hang on to him like his shadow and send back word here as soon as you can."

"All right, sir."

Sturgis, after leaving Conklin, walked along the street which the detective was watching and carefully inspected every house on the block. Almost all were huge office buildings; but here and there an old-fashioned brownstone front stood out conspicuously against the broad expanse of brick walls and iron columns. Half-way down the street one of these old houses stood well back from the street line behind a small garden. The reporter stood near this and read the numbers on the adjoining buildings.

"This is directly back of the Manhattan Chemical company's office," he mused. "I wonder who lives here. It looks like a respectable place enough. One could obtain a good view of the rear of the Manhattan Chemical company's office from the back windows. H'm—"

He stood thoughtfully considering what pretext he could use to gain admission to the house, when suddenly he became aware of the presence of a man who had approached with noiseless steps.

"Ah, is that you, Mr. Sturgis?" said the calm, sardonical voice of Dr. Murdock.

The reporter started inwardly, but gave no outward sign of surprise.

"Were you about to do me the honor of calling?" continued the chemist.

"Yes," said Sturgis, deliberately; "I was about to seek an interview with you. Can you spare a few minutes?"

"Who is it that asks for the interview?" inquired Murdock, with quiet sarcasm. "Is it Mr. Sturgis, gentleman; Mr. Sturgis, reporter, or ——"

Sturgis met a cold gleam from Murdock's inscrutable eyes.

"Or Mr. Sturgis, the famous detective?" continued the chemist with an imperceptible sneer.

"I represent the Tempest," replied the reporter, quietly.

Murdock glanced carelessly up and down the street. There was no one in sight.

"Oh! very well," he said, taking out his latchkey and leading the way to the house; "come into my study and let me hear what I can do for the Tempest."

On entering the house Murdock motioned Sturgis to the door leading from the hall into the drawing-room. "If you will step into the parlor for a few minutes, I shall be with you directly," said he.

Sturgis nodded acquiescence, and while Murdock walked toward his study, which was at the extreme rear of the hall, the reporter opened the drawing-room door. He did not open it very wide, however, neither did he enter; for although the room was rather dark, his quick eye caught a passing glimpse of a feminine head coquettishly nestled upon a distinctly masculine shoulder, the owner of which had his back turned to him. Bachelor cynic though he was, Sturgis had not the heart to interrupt so interesting a situation; and, as the couple were so absorbed that they had not noticed the intrusion upon their tete-a-tete, he discreetly retreated and softly closed the door.

By this time Murdock had passed into his study, so that Sturgis found himself alone in the hall. He was glad of a short respite during which he might collect his thoughts; for, having been taken by surprise, he had not had time to select a plausible topic for the interview which he had solicited from Murdock. Not knowing that the house was that of the chemist, his sole object had been to gain admittance, so that he might be able to observe the Manhattan Chemical company's offices from the rear, and if possible to ascertain how Chatham had managed to give the detectives the slip the first time he appeared to them.

Now that he was in the house the reporter was confronted with the necessity of explaining his presence there without betraying his true purpose. This would not have been a difficult matter had the inmates of the house been total strangers; but he felt that it would be by no means so easy to offer an explanation which would be satisfactory to a man of Murdock's keen perception. And Murdock was the last person to whom he would have confided the true reason of his visit; not only because the chemist, as his opponent in the wager concerning the Knickerbocker bank mystery, was interested in thwarting rather than in aiding his investigation, but chiefly because he felt a strong instinctive distrust of the man.

As these thoughts were passing through the reporter's mind, he slowly paced the long hall, back and forth, with his hands behind his back. In so doing, he passed a door which was slightly ajar and caught a glimpse of long rows of bookshelves loaded with beautifully bound editions. The place was evidently the library. It occurred to him that a library is a public room and that he would be more comfortable in there than in the hall.

He pushed open the door and looked in. The room was empty. He entered.

The library occupied a space between the parlor and the rear room into which Murdock had entered, and it was separated from each of these rooms by folding-doors over which hung heavy portieres.

Sturgis was a lover of books; his interest was at once aroused in the collection before him. It was admirably selected from the standpoint of a philosopher and a man of science. Every department of history, of philosophy and of science had its section in which the volumes were classified and arranged with intelligent care. But curiously enough, poetry and art were but meagerly represented.

One section specially attracted Sturgis' attention. It was devoted entirely to the history of crime in all its phases and in all ages. Criminal statistics, criminal jurisprudence and the psychology of crime, as well as the biographies of all the noted criminals of ancient and modern times, were completely represented. Almost the only works of fiction in the collection were in this section, and included every book imaginable concerning criminals and their deeds. Many rare and curious volumes were there—some of them so rare that they could be found in only a few of the great libraries of the world.

Here Sturgis was in his element. He had himself collected a valuable library on the subjects kindred to his profession; but here were books many of which none but a Croesus could ever hope to own. He was soon absorbed in an examination of some rare volumes which he had often longed to possess.

While thus engaged he became aware of the murmur of voices from the rear room. As the words spoken could not be distinguished, he paid no special attention to them; but, instinctively, he noted that one of the voices flowed in the calm, even tones so characteristic of Murdock's speech, while the other, whose [illegible] modulations were unknown to him, betrayed the repressed excitement of the speaker.

It soon became evident that Murdock's interlocutor was fast losing control of himself; for he gradually pitched his voice in a higher key, until occasional words began to reach Sturgis' ears. The reporter was not the man to wantonly play the part of eavesdropper; therefore, although the isolated words which reached him brought no connected sense, he judged that it was time to move out of earshot of the conversation to which he was becoming an involuntary listener. Replacing upon its shelf the book which he had been examining, he started toward the hall door. As he did so, he heard the now thoroughly excited individual exclaim in loud tones:

"I don't care a damn for the money. I only went into the scheme because you promised she'd have me; and, by God, if I don't get her, I'll give the whole cursed thing away."

Sturgis, who had reached the hall door, pricked up his detective's ears at these words. But in another second he heard the knobs of the folding doors rattle, as though some one had placed his hands upon them.

Quick as thought he opened the door and glided out into the hallway. He had not time to pull the door quite to behind him when the folding doors opened and he heard Murdock say in his calm, frigid tones:

"Perhaps you have done that already with your dulcet voice."

Did Murdock see him? The reporter asked himself the question. Probably not; for he heard the folding doors close once more.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A CHANGED MAN.

Utilization of a Phonograph During the Period of Courtship.

"No, I never have a bit of trouble with my husband," remarked the frail little woman with the intelligent face. "In fact, I have him right under my thumb."

"You don't look very strong," doubtfully commented the engaged girl.

"You mistake me, my dear. It's a mental, not a physical subjection."

"Would you mind telling me how"—

"Not a bit! Always glad to help any one steer clear of the rocks. First of all, you must know that a man in love is the biggest sort of a fool and says things that makes him almost wild when he hears 'em in after life. I realized it and from the very beginning of our courtship I kept a phonograph in my room, and every speech he made was duly recorded. Now whenever my husband gets a little bit obstreperous I just turn on a record or two. Heavens, how he does rave! But he can't deny it. They always will, though, if you don't have proof positive."

"Thank you," gratefully murmured the engaged girl. "I'll get a phonograph this very day."

Why He Kept Silence.

At an evening party a gentleman related an adventure in which he had been the principal actor, and, seeing unmistakable shadows of doubt on the faces of his hearers, he appealed to a friend who was present and who had witnessed the circumstances to corroborate his statement.

To his utter confusion his friend denied all knowledge of the affair.

Meeting some time afterward the suspected Ananias said:

"Is it possible that you can have forgotten the circumstance to which I referred at Mrs. A.'s party the other night?"

"Certainly not, my dear fellow," replied his friend, "but I could see that every one present looked upon you as an incorrigible liar, and I had too much regard for my character to risk being taken for another."

Grouchman and the Milkman.

"You use lots of milk, don't you?" querier the milkman as he peered through the screen and saw Mr. Grouchman at the breakfast table.

"Yes," growled that individual; "I eat lots of bread and milk."

"Well," said the milkman, trying hard to be pleasant, "it's pretty healthy, I guess."

"Yes," answered Grouchman, "and there's another thing in its favor. It affords me such an elegant opportunity to cast my bread upon the waters."—Indianapolis Sun.

Another Wrong Righted.

"No," said old Mr. Rockingham, after his daughter had put in her plea for Charley, "I can't give my consent. I like him well enough personally, and he's good hearted and all that, but he ain't steady. He ain't"—

"Why, pa," she interrupted, "how can you say he isn't steady? He hasn't missed a single night in the past four months."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Honors Even.

She—You know, John, you promised me a sealskin wrap, and—

He—And you promised to keep my stockings darned, and you haven't done it.

She—Well, you don't mean to say you'll break your promise on that account?

He—Well, it's just this: You don't give a darn, and I don't give a wrap.—Philadelphia Press.

Some Sights Not For Her.

"I've come to town," said the old farmer, "to see all that's worth seeing—all that's interesting."

"You have?" returned his rapid city nephew inquiringly.

"You bet I have."

"In that case," said the city nephew, "you ought to have left your wife at home."—Chicago Post.

His Failing.

"Mr. Litewate, have you any objection to my joining a military company?"

"I dunno as I have. But I'll tell you one thing, I'm afraid you'll be as poor a soldier as you are a grocery clerk."

"In what way, sir?"

"No earthly good at taking orders."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Modernized Form.

Sunday School Teacher—Now, children, what did Pharaoh say to Moses?

Children—We don't know.

Teacher—Oh, yes, you do. He told Moses to go and do something. Now, what did he say?

Class—Go way back—and sit down!—Baltimore American.

Her Suggestion.

Mrs. Gusher—I've written some verses to Miss Ann Teek, but I hardly know what to call them. "Ode on Ann's Face" expresses the idea, but that doesn't sound right.

Miss Pepprey—Why not make it "Lines on Ann's Face?"—Philadelphia Press.

So Delightfully Modern.

"Is your new rector an agreeable man?"

"Indeed he is—real nice; plays golf and squash, owns a naphtha launch and automobile, and he's so jolly! Oh, he isn't a bit rel-

GODS FOR PLAYTHINGS.

The Strange Significance of Dolls Among the Moqui Indians.

It is a curious feature of the religion of the Moqui Indians, the "snake dancers" of New Mexico, that during one of their famous dances dolls representing katcinas or gods are distributed to all the village children. In the Peabody museum at Harvard university there is a collection of nearly 100 of these grotesque idols which were once the playthings of children, but now form an exhibit of peculiar interest to the student of ethnology.

The dolls, although they appear to be of all sorts and sizes, are nevertheless shaped and painted according to an unvarying rule applicable to that particular one of the 60 or 70 katcinas which each is intended to represent. On them are depicted a great variety of arbitrary signs indicating, for example, the lightning or the thundercloud or the hail or the rain storm or some animal. Often the rainbow is carved over their heads, and many of them bear a curious headdress in the form of a thin tablet of wood, which is cut in an archaic but symmetrical pattern of much elaboration and ornamented with eagles' and owls' feathers.

Most of the special symbolism is to be looked for in the carving and making of the masked heads, while the bodies belong to more or less general types. Sometimes they are painted on both sides alike and sometimes differently. Some of them are naked and some of them wear blankets or the dance kilts. Most of them vary in height from six inches to a foot and a half. But there are several in the Harvard collection which are nearer four feet. One of these latter is a composite figure, one doll bearing another on its head, with a third above the second.

Not only does the religion of the Moqui appear in the universal masking of the dolls, but also in the selection of the tree from which they are made, the cottonwood being sacred since it grows along the water courses, the most precious possession of the Indians. The dolls are carved from the root, which is very light and so soft that it may be cut with the greatest ease. The dolls are now whittled out with jackknives, but in the old days before the white man came stone knives were used, and even now the smoothing and polishing of the dolls is mainly done with a piece of sandstone. On account of their religious significance they are treated more respectfully than most dolls, and doubtless the little Moqui girl would often be glad of a less solemn toy for her plaything.

WHAT MONEY IS.

The dusts that blinds all eyes.

Ammunition for the battle of life.

A tangible expression of fickle fortune's smile.

Mrs. Grundy's standard of respectability.

The "mint" sauce which suits every palate.

The honey pot that has all the world for flies.

A sign language that holds good throughout the world.

A "curse" which everybody is most happy to be blessed with.

That which it is man's mission to get and woman's mission to spend.

A commodity the value of which is best appreciated by those who haven't got any.

That which every one desires to obtain in order to have the pleasure of parting with it.

A most useful commodity, capable of transmitting to its fortunate possessor everything but health and happiness.

Money to a man is like water to a plant, only useful as long as it promotes and facilitates growth; like water in the fountain or water in the tank, keep it flowing and it blesses, keep it stagnant and it injures.

An Obedient Patient.

An old doctor, whose memory was beginning to fail him, was called in to see a young man who was ill. On arriving at the house he found his patient in bed with nothing the matter with him but a slight cold. After prescribing the usual remedies, he said:

"Now, my dear sir, you must stay in bed till I come again."

He went away and forgot all about his patient. The time flew by. One day the doctor came across the young man's mother in the street. The sight of Mrs. Jones brought his patient to his mind, and with a start he said:

"By the bye, how is your son getting on?"

To his amazement Mrs. Jones replied that he was still in bed, obedient to his commands. He had been there three weeks!

THE LIMIT REACHED.

Matters Had Gone Too Far and He Wanted a Divorce at Once.

"Now, then," said the attorney to the witness who wanted the divorce, "please tell the court just what the trouble between you and the defendant was."

"Well," the unfortunate man replied, "I built an addition to my house so that her mother could come there and live at my expense. I paid the private detectives she hired to shadow me while she was away during the summer; I took a smaller office so as to be able to let her join a golf club; I gave up horseback riding for my health in order to make it possible for her to entertain musical celebrities who came to town; I gave up smoking and quit eating lunch at my club so that she could keep a footman. I did all these things without a word of complaint. I won't deny that I sometimes considered it rather rough to have to make such sacrifices, but I had taken her for better or for worse, and I didn't want to weaken on the contract if I could help it."

"Yes; go on. What was the thing that finally brought you here?"

"When she put my new silk lined fall overcoat on her confounded old rubber plant because the weather man had predicted frost and left it out all night I made up my mind that worst had come to worst, and here I am."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Those Wise Children Again.

George is five years old, and his father read him the impressive story of George Washington and the cherry tree and the subsequent frank admission. Noticing the look of astonishment on the child's face, his father asked, "Don't you think he was a very good boy?" "Good, papa?" said George incredulously. "Why, of course he knew his father had got wise anyanow!"

That reminds us of the story of the mother who, after reading "Casabianca" to her little daughter, remarked, "Now, wasn't he a good little boy?"

"Yes," sighed the child. "He was awfully good, but he wasn't one bit smart."—New York Sun.

Without Foundation.

Towne—I hear Jenkins had a fight with another fellow yesterday.

Browne—Impossible! I was with him for an hour today, and I didn't notice a mark on him.

Towne—But the story goes that he simply wiped the ground up with the other fellow.

Browne—Still more impossible. Didn't I tell you I was with him for an hour and never heard a word about it? Dig-