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CLEMENT SULIVANE, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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The Deacon's Prayer.

In the regular evening meeting
That the church holds, every week,
One night a listening angel sat
To hear them pray and speak.

It puzzled the soul of the angel
Why some to that gathering came,
But sick and sinful hearts he saw,
With grief and guilt aflame.

They were silent, but said to the angel,
"Our lives have need of Him!"
While doubt, with dull, vague, throbbing pain,
Stirred through their spirits dim.

You could see 'twas the regular meeting,
And the regular seats were filled,
And all knew who would pray and talk,
Though any one might that willed.

From his place in front, near the pulpit,
In his long-accustomed way,
When the Book was read, and the hymn was sung,
The Deacon arose to pray.

First came the long preamble—
If Peter had opened so,
He had been, ere the Lord his prayer had heard,
Full fifty fathom below.

Then a volume of information
Poured forth, as if to the Lord,
Concerning His ways and attributes,
And the things by Him abhorred.

But not in the list of the latter
Was mentioned the mocking breath
Of the hypocrite prayer that is not prayer,
And the make-believe life in death.

Then he prayed for the church; and the pastor;
And that "son's might be his hire"—
Whatever his stipend otherwise—
And the Sunday-school; and the choir;

And the swarming hordes of India;
And the perishing, vile Chinese;
And the millions who bow to the Pope of Rome;
And the pagan churches of Greece;

And the outcast remnants of Judah,
Of whose guilt he had much to tell—
He prayed, or he told the Lord he prayed,
For everything out of Hell.

Now, if all of that burden had really
Been weighing upon his soul,
'Twould have sunk him through to the China side.
And raised a hill over the hole.

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'Twas the regular evening meeting,
And the regular prayers were made,
But the listening angel told the Lord
That only the silent prayed.

OUT OF WORK.

"If you please, sir, John Yates wants to see you"

"John Yates," I said to myself, "John Yates! What can he want? I thought he was at work for Coombs & Plank."

"Show him into the library, Jane; I'll be there directly."

"Well," sir, said John, as I came in, "I'm out of work, that's what it is, and the missis and two of the little 'uns is down with 'fluenza, or fever, or something of that sort; and truth is, sir, I ain't got a penny, let lone a shilling, to bless mys lf with. I can bear it myself, sir; it ain't for that as I'm come; but they ain't had a bit nor a drop this blessed morning."

"How long have you been out of work?" I asked.

"About a month, sir; leastways, a month come Saturday."

"A month!" I exclaimed. I was going to say, "Surely you ought not to be so bad off as this, only a month out of work."

"What wages have you been earning?"

"Well, sir, in a regular way, it's five and-twenty shillings a week; but I'll tell you all, sir, as you say. I made a good deal over-time in the Summer, and maybe, then, it was thirty, more or less."

"About that, take one week with another?"

"Yes, sir."

"Haven't you laid up anything against a rainy day, John; anything in the savings bank, now, or building society?"

John winced and said, almost surlily, "I shouldn't h' come to you if I h d, sir." Then, as if he felt he hadn't been quite polite, he added: "P'raps I ought to have done, but a growing family is very expensive, sir."

"It is," I replied. "I know that myself; still, it's for their sakes after all that we save. Suppose now, John, that you had five, ten or even twenty pounds in the bank?"

"Well, sir, I only wish I had; but how's the likes o' me to lay by? What with rent being so high and meat and bread and ever thing else, and clothes and firing, a man's wages is gone afore he knows what he's about."

He was beginning to talk more freely now, and I tried to encourage his doing so. "I know it is so, John," I said. "The times have been hard for most of us. I know it's been tight work for me, anyhow, this last ye r. But there will be bad times as well as good times, and we must make hay when the sun shines. Come, now, times haven't always been so bad, have they?"

"Well, no, sir, I've no call to say they have, I've had regular work, thank God, for a good many years; and been able to pay my way, mostly, somehow or other, but there wasn't so many in the family then."

"But I suppose you had something laid by, or how could you have lived this last month?"

I knew pretty well how it was, and how he had never laid anything by; but, for his own sake, I wanted him to tell me.

"Well, sir, there, the truth must out! Most of the things is gone up, sir, and there ain't no more to go. I'm ashamed on it, sir, and it's hard to me to say it, but there's the truth."

Thirty shillings a week—a month out of work—no bread in the house—and everything of value pawned! We both sat silent for a time. Then I got up, and, telling him to wait, went out of the room and sent a basket to his house. When I came back—there was no mistake about it—John had been crying, but he tried not to let me see it, and taking my pocket-book diary off the library table, I pretended to be looking at the almanac. I was really trying to think how I could best put John in the way of helping himself. I knew pretty well how it was with him, and a good many others like him. Honest, hard working, good fellows, but neither thinking nor caring about the future, so long as they can meet the demands of the day, and whose money is always burning holes in their pockets. But I wanted to bring this fact home to him.

"John," I said, putting my hand on his arm, "I want to say a word or two to you very plainly. May I do so?"

"Certainly, sir, if you please."

"Well, then, I want you to tell me how you have spent your money. I don't ask from mere curiosity, but in order to help you. You are free to tell or not tell; but you come to me to help you in your difficulties, and I want to do so in the most effectual way."

"Well, I don't know as I've spent different from others," he replied. "Thirty shillings a week ain't much for seven of us, come to pay rent and schooling out."

"Is the rent all paid?" I asked.

"He hesitated, and then said, "No, sir; and that's one thing as troubles me, for the collector says if it ain't paid soon, out we goes."

"How much is there owing?"

"It's two months a'most," he answered, hanging down his head.

"A month's rent was due when you were thrown out of work," I said. "Do you owe anything else?"

"Well, there's where it is, sir. We might ha' gone on for a bit longer, but last week they at the shop told my missus that they couldn't go on no longer unless she paid something."

"Is that much?"

"Well, sir, it's a goodish bit, I must allow."

"This is a serious matter, John. When a trader uses other people's money to speculate with, loses it and pays ninepence in the pound, you workingmen are very free with your comments; and when a nobleman outruns the constable you take him to pieces pretty sharply, don't you?"

"I can't deny it, sir."

"Well, what is wrong with a hundred thousand pounds is wrong with a few pounds. *You have not been honest, John.*"

He started and looked really angry, and his face flushed indignantly. "Stay," I said, "and hear me. If, instead of two months' rent for a small tenement, you owed it for a mansion in Belgravia; and if, instead of a bill at the shop, you owed thousands for the maintenance of an expensive establishment and for luxuries, and had no means of paying, because you had already spent all your income, would that be honest?"

"I can't say as it would, sir."

"Well, it's clear as day that you have been living beyond your income, somehow or other, or else where's the money gone to? And so you are not only in difficulty because you are out of work, but because you are in debt too. It's clear it hasn't been sending your children to school has ruined you. There are only three of them old enough to go, and sixpence a week for them can't make a man poor that earns thirty shillings a week. How much do you spend in beer, John?"

"I'm not a drinking man, sir, as you knows, though I ain't a teetotaler. A man must have something to work upon; leastways, I must."

"I won't dispute that point with you now," I replied, for I knew that to do so would be to lose the hold I had, by attempting too much. "But come, how much, about?"

He looked ashamed now, and said, "Well, for the matter of that, I might do with less, I don't doubt."

"Two pints a day, perhaps?"

"Yes, that is when I'm in work."

"Three sometimes, and an extra one, or a glass of gin and water on Saturday night, perhaps?" I said.

"Well, I won't deny it."

"Six or seven shillings a week then, when you're in work?"

"You like a spree now and then, don't you, John? And now and then a trip on a Sunday down to Greenwich or Richmond? Or to Brighton and back for three shillings?"

"A man must get out a bit sometimes," he replied, doggedly; "and the missis and children, too."

"Right," I replied; "by all means. But a man shouldn't drive a carriage and pair when he can only afford a donkey-cart. Now, come, how much do you spend when you go out for one of these trips on a Sunday?"

I helped him to make the calculation, and it came to this, that it couldn't well be less than four or five shillings, at the cheapest; and, of course, to Brighton and back a good deal more. He confessed to having once spent a pound in this way.

John's eyes began to be opened.

"And you go pretty often, in the Summer time, don't you?"

"Well, we do go pretty often, sir, and I don't say it's right at all times; but there, all the while there's money in the pocket, sir, it will go."

"Now, John," I said, "I am not going to send you away with good advice—'jaw' you'd call it, perhaps—and nothing else. I have a small fund at my disposal for deserving cases," (I thought he looked a little confused at the word deserving), "and I shall give you something out of it for present necessity. Make the best use of it you can, and I'll see you again soon. I've sent something down to your house for the children; and my wife will call and see your's soon. Good-bye, John."

I went to his house a day or two after this, and found him at home, sitting despondingly by the grate, in which was a mere handful of fire, though it was a cold, raw day. The room was almost bare of furniture, and had a poverty-stricken look.

"Well, John," I said, "how is it? Any work in prospect?"

"No, sir, nothing; and the governors, leastways the foreman, told me this morning it warn't likely there would be, not for some time to come. Things, he said, was as bad as they could be; so many of these banks and companies had gone to smash."

"Do you know why John?" I asked.

"Well, not to say exactly, sir."

"Raising money on false pretenses and spending it before they had got it," I said. "They have been going too fast, John; steam full on, and not caring whether the fire was clear or no; and now they've run into another train, and there's an awful smash; and one train comes after another and makes it worse, and they can't do anything to prevent it."

"It's a great shame, sir, as so many should suffer, though."

"You love your children, John," I said.

He looked at me and tried to speak, but could not. It was no use his trying to hide it; and at last he fairly sobbed.

"Now, John," I said, we must try and rub through these bad times as best we can, and I'll do what I can to help you. But how is it to be for the future? With thirty shillings a week, you ought to lay by, ought you not?"

"It seems as I ought," he replied.

"Well, now make up your mind to begin as soon as ever you get afloat again. Of course you must first of all pay what you owe. I have seen the agent who collects your rent, and he will take the back-rent in instalments of two shillings a week. A pint of beer a day will about pay that. The shop will do the same, and it may be paid from the same fund.

"Will you undertake to do that as soon as you get into work again?"

"Indeed I will, sir, and thank you heartily. You've behaved most kind to me, sir, and I shall never forget it."

"I don't wish you to do so, John; but I wish you to remember it for your own sake, and turn over a new leaf when you once get a fair start. Come to my house to-morrow, and there will be a paper for you to sign if you approve of it.

Twelve months passed away, and the dreary Winter came round again, when I had another visit from John Yates. Of course I had often seen him during the year, for we were better friends than ever. He was nearly another month out of regular work, and was often very hard up, and he and his wife talked a good deal over "what the parson said," as he told me. At first she was rather high and mighty about it, and thought it was interfering in their affairs, for she had been upper housemaid before she was married, and was inclined to be "genteel." But John's good sense prevailed. He reasoned the matter out for himself, and soon came to see that going on as they were, they were fast going to the parish, or worse. The pinch of poverty, too, which she had never felt before, was a forcible argument with her; and they both of them made up their minds to work hard and save carefully, (especially as there was another little mouth to be fed by this time), and try and get straight, and have a little put by for a rainy day. He found his beer an expensive luxury, and a temptation, too, so he gave it up, and gets on just as well, if not better, without it. And he made up his mind that to go on Sunday excursions, and come home late and tired, and half stupid with bad beer and gin, was not recreation, and that he might get rest and recreation in better ways. All these things I found out or observed in the course of the year. The children, too, came to school regularly, clean and tidy. Now John wanted to see me again.

So he came into the library (it was on a Saturday evening), in his working-dress—but looking clean and trim, and certainly not smelling of either beer or stale tobacco, as many do at that season—and with his honest face radiant with a smile, which was almost a broad grin.

"I thought you'd excuse me, sir, but I wanted to show you something," he said and so saying, handed me his savings-bank book.

"Five pounds thirteen shillings and sixpence!" I exclaimed. "Well done!" I knew all the debts had been paid besides.

"It shall be ten more next year, please God," he rejoined proudly. Then, holding out his hand as the tears stood in his eyes, he said, "God bless you, sir!" And I replied with all my heart, and you, too, "John!" and I think my own eyes were a little dimmed.

John went on well. He had to endure, of course, a good deal of chaffing from his shopmates, but he took it for the most part very quietly, as was his way: and week by week his account at the Savings Bank—the Postoffice Savings Bank it was—grew larger. He was fairly working his way up to a better position and might at no distant period have looked to be a foreman, when suddenly, unexpectedly, as great blows do come upon us, he and many others were struck to the ground by an event which was deemed important enough to have a newspaper paragraph to itself.

"We regret to hear that the large building contractors, Messrs Combs and Plank, have at last succumbed to a pressure which has already fallen so heavily on many smaller houses. They stopped payment only yesterday afternoon and the principal works in ——— street are now closed. More than 400 men are thus at once thrown out of work, to add to the already great distress of the district, and to the daily increasing number demanding parish relief. The liabilities of the firm are, we hear, not less then £150,000; probably more."

John's improved character and position in the works could be no protection against such an event as this; and in the stagnation of trade which was then prevailing, in consequence of the collapse of so many seemingly prosperous speculations, there was little chance for even the best men to find employment. John was therefore again "Out of work." We were very good friends now, and so when I heard of the sad affair, I made up my mind to go at once and see him.

He stood up to greet me as I entered his house and held out his hand "Trouble again, sir," he said, "as I suppose you've heard. But anyhow you are welcome. Bring a chair, Besse. Please sit down a bit, sir. We've been talking as I'd better go and see you."

"And I'm first, you see," I replied, as cheerfully as possible, for it was a sad affair. But I knew it would not help to be grievous over it. "I am very sorry, indeed, Yates," I said. "What is to be done!"

"Ah! there it is, sir," replied he. "I'm sure I'd sweep the streets, or break stones, or anything, sooner than be out of work for long. But where's the work to be found? It breaks a man's heart a'most to be— He was obliged to stop here and make believe to put the fire to rights—"to be slaving hard to get on and put by a bit, and then to be flung like this."

I put my hand on his shoulder, and said, "You remember coming to me—how long was it?—a year ago and more—when you were out of work before?"

"I do, sir," he said with emphasis. "It was one of the best day's work as ever I did."

"I am glad to hear it," I answered. "Now I want you to fulfill the promise of that time. You have done well, nobly, hitherto. Never despair!"

"That's what I says," struck in his wife, who had been busy about some household matters before but now came and took her seat by his side with the baby on her lap. "It'll never do to go back, and we must hope for better times; 'hope, and hope ever,' I says."

I gave her a look and a nod of encouragement, and then turning again to John I said:

"John there was once One who knew a working man's lot, and his trials and temptations, too. He knows yours and is willing to help you. Don't forget Him."

John bowed his head, but made no reply.

"And then," I went on, "just think how differently you stand now to what you did then. Why how much have you in the bank John? you had nothing then."

"Well," he said, recovering himself, "it may be a matter of some twenty or five and twenty pounds, but I had put that by for this here boy, to apprentice him;" and he put his hand affectionately on the head of a bright-looking boy who stood by him.

I liked to see that. I like a man who can sacrifice and save for his children. "God bless him," I thought. "His boy shall not suffer from this disaster." I sat silent for a while, and then said—

"John, you must draw on the bank, there's no doubt about that, but don't be down-hearted. Believe me your friend, and wait till I see you again. Your boy will be willing to wait, and help his father and mother I know."

I must cut my story short, or I shall weary my readers. John's hoard, I was sorry for it, dwindled away while that long and weary time of "Out of work" continued, and I could see by his worn look and anxious eyes, how great a trial he was suffering. But he bore it nobly. He saw it was inevitable, and braced himself up to it.

One morning he came to me and asked me to look at an advertisement he had just seen in one of the local papers: "Wanted a good experienced hand as foreman. Apply at the Albion Works." "I think, sir, I might perhaps do for that post, if I may be so bold as to ask your good word."

I laughed back. "My good word. Your good character, John, is a deal better than that. I know the proprietor of the Albion Works, and will write at once. I only hope you may be successful."

He *was* successful. He got his boy on also without any difficulty. His employer was pleased with his skill and integrity, and I only hope that no disaster may occur to throw him again "*Out of Work.*"

A Chinese Deathbed.

The Chinese have many customs peculiar to their nation, which strike the "outside barbarian" as being strange and unnatural. Their religious traditions are deep-rooted and so strongly fostered by superstition as to give little encouragement to missionary laborers. The most striking of these superstitions are those pertaining to the disposition of their dying and dead relatives. Very often the dead bodies of Chinese men and women are found in untenanted buildings in the Chinese quarter of this city, and those unacquainted with their superstitions are prone to set the desertion of dying friends down as acts of selfishness. This, however, is not so, as the Chinese believe that if persons die in a house that they lived in before death, their spirits will haunt the places ever after, and give unpleasant evidence of their presence to all who remain. In order to prevent the manifestations of the restless spirit, as soon as the doctor gives it as his opinion that the patient will die, he is taken to another place and left alone to die. Yesterday a case of this kind was reported to the Coroner. A young Chinawoman who had been given up by the attending physician, was carried to an untenanted house in Ellis Place, off Pacific, above Dupont. They then dressed her in her best clothing, spread a new matting upon the floor, and laid her on it. They brought in preserves, meat, fruit, candies, boiled rice, etc., lighted some punks and retired, leaving her alone to await the coming of the common destroyer. During the day she died, and was found last night Coroner Letterman removed the body, and it is now at the morgue awaiting the further action of the relatives, who will probably leave her to be disposed of by the city, as is generally their practice in such cases. Many Chinamen—those of the wealthy classes—do not desert their dead friends, and for the furtherance of this desire there are several hospitals fitted up in order that those about to die may be removed there until they have paid the debt of nature, after which they are buried with all the ceremonies of the disciples of Confucious.—*San Francisco paper.*

Manufacture of Knives.

Few people have any idea through what a number of hands their pocket knives have passed in the process of manufacture. A bar of steel destined to furnish a number of blades is heated to redness. A length is cut off, and the forger speedily "moulds" this—that is, shapes it roughly into the form of a pocket-knife blade. Another heating is then required to fit the end for being fashioned into the tang, and yet another before it can undergo the further operation of "smithing," the last stage of which is the stamping of the mark of the thumb nail to facilitate opening. The tang is then ground and the blade marked with the name of the firm. The slight bulge on the reverse side caused by this operation is removed by fire or the grindstone. The blade is then hardened by heating it to redness and then plunging it into water up to the tang. The tempering process follows next, the bluish yellow tint being considered as indicating that the proper degree of heat at which to immerse the blade once more in cold water has been attained. After this the blades are classified in the warehouse, and undergo sundry grinding operations to fit them for being hafted. Twelve distinct processes have by this time been gone through, and many more are necessary before the knife is completely finished, although the number of hands which it has now to pass through depends in a great measure on the finish to be given to the handle, according to the quality of the blades with which it is fitted, and the price which the completed article is intended to realize.—*Engineering and Mining Journal.*

A BLOODY FIGHT.—Details of the recent bloody fight in Eaton Rapids, Mich., between some of the town-people and the attaches of a menagerie, show that it was caused by the refusal of the door-keeper to admit a little girl on a half-price ticket. She came with her father and mother. The refusal given rise to some words, and the door-keeper knocked the father down. He immediately went to a neighboring brick-yard and collected a crowd of men, who proceeded to the canvas, and soon succeeded in getting into a row with the attaches of the concern. One of the attacking party was hit on the head with a brick and instantly killed, and several others were desperately wounded. Nearly at the end of the fight one of the menagerie men made an attack upon an inoffensive farmer standing by, threw his arm around the old man's neck, and proceeded to pound him on the head with a stone. This rascal was arrested upon a charge of "assault, with intent to kill," and he was the only man taken in charge by the Police.

THE OLD STORY.—Once more, the old, old story. Miss Wilkerson, of Salem, Ill., was to have been married last week. Her lover came from St. Louis with his wedding suit in his carpet-bag. She took a fancy to see his wedding garments, and he gratified her. In the valise was also a pistol. This she carelessly handled, it was accidentally discharged, and she was killed instantly.

Home-Made Ices.

Given a "Five-minute Freezer" and a shilling's worth of ice, and other material costs almost nothing. With lemons at ninepence a dozen, Sicily oranges fourteen for a quarter of a dollar, currants and rasberries reddening in the garden, and strawberries at every corner, a mould of ice costs less than a pudding or a pie, and involves less heat and trouble in preparation. A bit of carpet and a mallet, a few minutes' pounding and stirring—your freezer is ready—your mixture poured in and covered over; you come and go leaving it to itself, with now and then a twirl of the dasher—half an hour and it is ready. The ghost of last winter has entered your kitchen and done his spiriting deftly.

The varieties of material are many. They sound the gamut of the seasons. There is an ice for every month in the year, and a dozen for those in which ice is most palatable and welcome.

As, for instance,—all the winter long, lemon and orange ices can be had, made simply of the juice of the fruits, cold water, and sugar. A little sweetmeat, or the left-over syrup of a can of peaches, may be added to enhance and vary the flavor, and the stiffly-beaten white of an egg makes the composition lighter and more delicate. Later, pineapple ice comes on; then strawberry, raspberry, cherry—made precisely in the same way. Currant juice well-sweetened and frozen without water forms a ruby cone delightful to look and taste. Frozen peaches sliced into cream and well sweetened, are not to be derided. In fact, there is no fruit or mingling of fruits which will not blend harmoniously under the magic influence of the freezer. The most unlikely things turn out the most toothsome. We distinctly remember once eating a mixture of wonderful goodness, which proved on investigation to be compounded of milk, flour, a little melted butter, a very little cream, sugar, sliced peaches, and the juice of stewed pears! After that, who shall hesitate?

One word more. Pound your ice very fine, and add plenty of rock salt, packing it close with a stick or broom-handle. These precautions taken, the freezing becomes a very easy affair.—*From "Home and Society," in Scribner's Magazine for August.*

Touching Devotion of a Child.

One of the most tearful cases ever told on paper is this, of a little boy, a mere child, who travelled 1,400 miles, taking care of the dead body of his mother all the way.

An expressman, upon reaching his office one cold morning in January, observed on the sidewalk a long, heavy box, which his practiced eye at once identified as containing a corpse. Upon the end of the box, shivering with cold, sat a half-clad boy about seven or eight years of age. Addressing him kindly, he said:

"My lad, don't sit there; you will freeze. Come in and sit by the fire."

Bursting into tears, the little fellow replied:

"No, I can't come. My mother is in this box, and I promised her I would not leave her until we got home."

Deeply affected with the touching devotion of this brave little boy, he finally succeeded in convincing him of the entire safety of his precious charge, and taking him to a restaurant, gave him a warm breakfast, and then learned the particulars of his story.

His father died but a year previously, in a remote village in Minnesota, leaving his mother in poor health and nearly destitute. She died but a few days before the boy's sad journey, charging the little hero with the sad duty of conveying her remains to her friends in a distant State, and furnished him with (all she had) a sum of money barely sufficient to carry them both to their destination.

The little fellow had actually ridden night and day in a freight car with his melancholy trust, never for a moment losing sight of it.

HIS SUCCESS.—A story comes from Delaware of an eccentric philosopher who has paid the penalty of his criminal attempt to enlighten mankind. To some extent he did enlighten that abstraction, but not as he intended to do. He had some theory or other in regard to the use of parachutes which he absurdly connected with pyrotechnics, and so, on the Fourth of July, shortly after dusk, he clandestinely erected in his yard a huge sky-rocket, to the head of which was attached his parachute, in such a way that while the rocket was seeking the moon it would remain closed, but when its upward motion ceased it would theoretically open like an umbrella, and thus waft him safely to the ground. He attached himself to the lower end of the stick with the fuse turned away from him in such a way that the fire from the rocket would not injure him. Then he blazed away and went whizzing through the air, dangling and bobbing as he sped, with fire fastening itself upon him—somewhat "like the pale martyr in his shirt of fire." If his parachute ever opened he did not know it, for presently those who beheld the wondrous engine saw it turn sharply in mid-air, and it fell. The poor fool was found burnt and mangled not far from his own philosophy-shop.

NOT A PRETTY PLAYTHING.—A boy near Omaha the other day struck upon a rattlesnake near his father's house, and as he was temporarily in charge of his little sister, he gave her the reptile to play with. Presently the snake, tired of the child's fondling, began to hiss viciously and rattle. The boy discovering then its venomous nature, snatched it from his sister and attempted to fling it away. The snake fastened about his wrist and threatened to bite. The boy alarmed his father who was not far off, and by caution the latter succeeded in enticing the reptile so that it left the boy. When killed, the rattlesnake was found to be full grown, over two feet long, and with six rattles.

WHAT IT WILL DO.—There is a sharp rivalry just now in Alabama among different guano dealers. One of them, by way of showing the superiority of his guano over any other, says that a farmer recently put a sample of it into his pocket, in which there happened to be a carpet tack, and started home on horseback. Before reaching his house his steed broke down, and the farmer was at loss to discover the cause until he found that the carpet tack had grown to be a long bar of railway iron.

A Petroleum Exploration.

Colonel Forney writes to the Philadelphia *Press* from the oil regions of Pennsylvania a long account of the present condition of the petroleum field. He says:

There are now forty-seven oil-districts. In the month of May last these forty-seven districts produced 408,797 barrels, equal to 13,187 per day, which, at $4 50 to $5.00 per barrel, will give you some idea of the revenue derived from this new branch of industry. Many changes have taken place, but no revolution has been so effective as the substitution of wrought-iron pipes, some two and a half inches in diameter, for the original plan of conveying oil in barrels from the wells to the tanks on the railroad cars.

These pipes are frequently carried over a distance of three or four miles. They are manufactured in Philadelphia, and are composed of sections, which screw into each other. They are spread over the most irregular ground, up and down hills, and when fastened into the tanks, at both ends the steam-engine is applied, and the oil is forced to run down at a very rapid rate until the railroad tank is full. There are said to be over 2,000 feet of this pipe now laid in the district. Under the former process the cost of conveying the oil was equal to one dollar a barrel. It is now not one-fifth of that amount—an almost incalculable economy, when we consider that there is no longer any necessity for spending money for barrels. Another great advantage of the new system over the old is the utilizing of the gas which is found in large quantities in many localities while boring for oil-wells. Pipes are applied to this gas, and it proves a first-class substitute for fuel, being employed to run engines, &c. It is estimated that a single well is capable of supplying gas enough to illuminate a city the size of Franklin.

The question may be asked why, if such fortunes were realized when oil commanded only $1.25 a barrel, it cannot be obtained at the same price now? The answer is that the article has appreciated, owing to the increasing demand for it; and as the trade is in the hands of certain united organizations, they slacken operations the moment the demand moderates, or store their oil in vast tanks on their estates, some of which hold 10,000 and even as high as 20,000 barrels. You will perceive, therefore, that while there are many failures, while many a poor fellow vainly bores for the precious liquid, the average profit is enormous, and that one or two good producing wells is a sure fortune.

The Steam Plough.

Ploughing by steam is carried on to a great extent in England. A correspondent says:—The engine used is a traction engine, that is, moves itself like a locomotive. When ploughing or harrowing is to be done, steam is started, the engine rolls out of the barn and proceeds leisurely to the field, dragging after it a train of wagons containing the ploughs, ropes, &c. The working force consists of three men and three boys. The engine takes up its station on the road, at one end of the field. The plough, with its four shares, is run on to the land, beside the engine, and facing away from it at right angles. The wire rope is carried to the opposite side of the field and passed through a block, on a movable anchor, having disc wheels that cut into the ground at the headland. The rope is connected with the plough and with the drum under the engine. The engineer mounts his locomotive. The man at the anchor stands ready to move it as the plough cuts its wide path through the soil. The assistants take their places along the ropes with iron frames, over which it runs to prevent friction, and the ploughman mounts his strange machine. This is a pair of wheels, having two huge iron arms, each containing four ploughs, each set facing the other. The ploughman (the foreman of the gang) waves a white flag to start. The engine puffs lustily. The ropes tighten and groan. One arm containing four ploughs sinks into the ground while the other, slightly elevated in the air, goes backward in front. The dust flies, and with tremendous force the soil is ploughed up and turned completely over to a depth of six inches, and at a speed of an acre an hour. As the plough goes tearing through the land, the boys remove the "porters" over which the rope runs and replace them as the plough passes.

A wave of the flag and the engine slows down. Another signal and it stops with the plough at the opposite side of the field. The ploughman changes his seat, the anchor is moved slightly and the engine starts forward a few feet. The flag waves, the rope tightens, and the plough starts on its return journey, making four new furrows.

A Fight With a Rattlesnake.

A Minnesota paper says: "Last week Sunday, as a Norwegian girl, living some four miles from this place, was walking along the road, she passed directly in front of and very close to a huge rattlesnake that was just coming out of the grass into the road. This uncourteous action seemed to make his snakeship very wroth, and he immediately sounded the battle alarm by rattling his gong. The girl well knew that sound, and turned to ascertain the exact location of her ugly foe, which she soon did, and, instead of running, screaming, or fainting looked about for something with which to defend herself. She could find nothing, nor had she a long time to look, for the snake, with eyes glistening and rattles in motion, mouth wide open, and his tongue darting back and forth, was close upon her. But she was pluck to the back-bone, and did not propose to surrender the field without a fight—in fact, a retreat was now out of the question, for the snake was within arm's reach of her—so keeping her eye steadily on the snake's head, she commenced the fight with her foot, moving it back and forth, up and down in every direction, the snake following the motions with his head to get a chance to bite, This performance lasted perhaps but a minute—hours to her—when, by a quick movement, she got the advantage, and down came the foot and heavy shoe upon the snake's head, where she held him until he was dead. She then found a stone and pounded off the rattles to keep as a trophy. There were nineteen rattles, and she says it is the largest rattlesnake she ever saw."

The Ship.

And see! she stirs!
She starts—she moves—she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!

And lo! from the assembled crowd
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud,
That to the ocean seemed to say—
"Take her, O bridegroom, old and gray,
Take her to thy protecting arms,
With all her youth and all her charms!"

How beautiful she is! How fair
She lies within those arms that press
Her form with many a soft caress
Of tenderness and watchful care!
Sail forth into the sea, O ship!
Through wind and wave, right onward steer!
The moistened eye, the trembling lip,
Are not the signs of doubt or fear.

Sail forth into the sea of life,
O gentle, loving, trusting wife,
And safe from all adversity
Upon the bosom of that sea
Thy comings and thy goings be!
For gentleness and love and trust
Prevail o'er angry wave and gust;
And in the wreck of noble lives
Something immortal still survives!

Facts and Fancies.

Nevada is vegetating in minerals of all kinds.

Mobile exports more oranges than Messina.

St. Louis has forty-eight school-houses, valued at $1,730,000.

A Toledo genius starts baulky horses by blowing in their ears.

Boston sells 40,000 bean-poles a year to suburban agriculturists.

An Illinois man preaches Sundays and drives stage week days.

In Heligoland all foreigners are called "skit," which in their dialect means dirt.

In New Orleans recently, a woman chocked herself to death with a pair of suspenders.

The Empress Eugenie is in treaty for the sale of her diamonds, which are valued at £320,000.

If you are afraid you should scream when your tooth is being pulled, you should hold your jaw.

A Philadelphia judge has decided that a procession has no right to interrupt the ordinary travel on the streets.

An exploring party in Wichita county Texas, found an arrow head of pure gold and very fine specimens of copper.

A man, commenting upon the ruins of Pompeii, said that it was a very imposing city, but very much out of repair.

A little boy, after watching the burning of the schoolhouse until the novelty of the thing had ceased, started down street, saying: "Golly! I's glad the old thing's burned; didn't have my jogfry lesson nohow!"

A Virginia paper is puzzled to know whether whiskey should be spelled with an *e*. Spelled any way it is a bad spell for most people, and it would not be bad to drop all the letters and so get rid of the word, in hope the thing itself would follow.

It is said that when Brigham Young was asked the other day which son he had at West Point, the conundrum so staggered him, that he was obliged to refer to the family record to solve it. "Do they miss me at home?" is not much sung in that family.

Varlin, who was Minister of Finance of the Commune, was one of those who died with the greatest courage. But, as a singular phenomenon, it is related that his hair, which had been raven black, turned white in the interval between his arrest and execution.

A man was urged to take out a policy for the benefit of his wife to the amount of five thousand dollars. He asked his wife's opinion, when she replied with charming frankness. "Why, my dear, you will, of course, act according to your own judgment; but, in case of your decease, it would make me a more desirable widow."

The *Illinois Independent*, edited by Mr. Steele, says: "A printer last week proposed to go into partnership with us. His name is Doolittle. The firm name would sound very bad, either way you put it—'Steal & Doolittle,' or 'Do Little & Steel.' We can't join. One of us would soon be in the poorhouse and the other in the penitentiary."

A herd of two hundred and fifty buffaloes was recently driven into the Missouri river, near the Whetstone Indian Agency. A few reached the left bank in safety, a few others were killed in the river, and the remainder of the herd perished in the rapid, treacherous river, which at the time was swollen by the flood, and their bodies floated with the current.

AN ALLEGED MURDERER HANGED BY A MOB.—A dispatch from Watseka, Iroquois County, Ill., says that a mob of citizens from that town and the surrounding country, to the number of nearly 1,000 including men, women and children, proceeded to the jail in that place, and took therefrom Martin Mera, charged with the murder of his son, a lad of 10 years. Mera was taken to a convenient place near at hand, where, after giving him 20 minutes to pray, a rope was placed around his neck, thrown over a limb of a tree, and hundreds of ready hands hauled him up, and held him there until he was dead. The leader of the mob and his abettors claim that Mera, could only have been convicted of manslaughter, and for that reason they were justified in putting the murderer beyond the reach of mercy.

THE TEXAS CATTLE TRADE.—The Abilene (Kansas) *Chronicle* gives the following as the most accurate figures of the Texas cattle trade this season. There are now near the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad 125,000 head; passed Red River station to be driven on that line, 100,000; for Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, 50,000; for Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad, 75,000; for the Union Pacific, 50,000; to be wintered in Kansas and Colorado, 50,000; total, 500,000. This is lower than all previous estimates, though larger than any previous year.

REPORTS from all parts of California show that the wheat crop is much better than was anticipated. The total product will be little short of that of last season. The California farmers are shipping potatoes to Denver, Colorado, where they sell at the rate of $250 in coin per car-load of 10 tons.

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