It was the old grocery store at "the Corners." Winter had been in the land for some weeks and the day was one of December's most unseemly children, half thaw.

The store had been fairly crowded all the afternoon. Some had come to buy something they wanted, and then stayed awhile to visit. Some had come to because they happened to see something they wanted, and many had come with no special purpose and gone with no special purchase. The weather question had been fairly settled, only to be revived again with every new comer. Politics and religion had been laid on the table. The matrimonial happenings probabilities, and possibilities of the neighbourhood had been dwelt on at length, and the personal and mortgaged indebtedness of nearly every inhabitant of the township had been conjectured. It was getting late in the afternoon, and conversation had begun to lag a little when the door opened and Deacon Hunt came in.

"Afternoon, Deacon," said the storekeeper.

"How are ye, Ditus? (Abridged from Epaphroditus.) I fetched ye in a few eggs. Want to trade 'em fur 'lasses an' nutmeg an' a little asserfiddity an' a few other notions."

"All right, Deacon, all right. Ye're lucky to hev aigs jest now. The price is raisin' big. Haow do ye manage to keep yer hens a-layin'?"

The Deacon stepped up to the cheese box, carefully carved a slice, helped kimself to a pocket full of milk crackers, and then, after filling his mouth with a portion of each, replied:-

"Oh, jest keep 'em warm an' persuade 'em with a bit o' this and that an' keep in a sort of a generous hum-

"Deacon's got a way with him the hens likes," volunteered one of the sitters. "Reckon he passes the plate reacund an' makes each hen contribute a aig same's he makes us fellers drop in to church Sundays."

"Wal, I don't see heaow he works it," remarks a seedy looking individual from his perch on the brown sugar barrel. "Years ago my hens used ter lay big, but in these times they don't do nuthin' but eat corn an' scratch up the garding."

There was a short pause in the conversation while the storekeeper asked Uncle Ligey Comfort to take his feet off the box of sugar cookies so that he might make a sale. Uncle Ligey was the oracle of the town; tall, lank, ponderously extremitied, with a patriarchal beard whitened by time and yellowed by tobacco, and an eye denoting solemn thought and philosophical conjecture. He lifted his feet carefully from the part of fair-sized screens, while the crowd waited silently, for they knew by experience that something was com-

Spekin' o' hens," said Uncle Ligey, "ye orter seen a hen my father hed A leetle red hen. Wa'nt none o' yer fancy Brahmies er Coachin Chinies, but jes a plain, common, red hen, an' a ruther ornery lookin' one, too. I was a little feller then, an' it were my job to go spyin' about fer aigs, an' I was a tip-topper at it, I tell ye. They wa'nt no hole raound the maows er stalls er on top o' anythin' or in under nuthin'

but what I knowed. "Dad's hens got so they didn't try to hide their nests away 'cause they knowed twant no use. All but this cussed little red hen. I see one day that she kind a hung raound by herself, 's tho' she were doin' a lot o' thinkin', but I didn't 'spicion what was up till nex' day I couldn't find her nest. Hunted high an' low an' all over but not a aig. Went on for a long while, till finally mother she 'lowed ef I didn't soon hev better luck thar'd be war in Israel, an' I'd hev ter lay in fur repairs. She give me jest three more days, an' ye | day I come to a conclusion that I'd watch that hen the hull day. She kinder 'spected me, an' tried ter throw me off, but finally come layin' time an' she had ter skip. I tagged close an' went in. Dumbed of she didn't go straight to a hogshead as stood in a dark corner, jump up on top, set thar a few minutes, an' then jumps down runs hard as she kin go ter a clump a bushes a hundred foot from the barn, an' thar begins ter cackle fit ter split. I was a leetle puzzled yet, but I went in ter look at the hogshead. Wan't no aig on top, en I says 'Fooled agin," but just 's I was turnin' away I happened ter think, an 'went an' tuk a peep inter the bunghole. It was kinder dark, so I drawed up an' poked my finger in an' felt a aig there. Then I tried to lift the hogshead, but she wouldn't budge. hull big four-bar'l hogshead warn't full, an' all laid by the cussed red hen.

o' aigs. Plumb, pilin', brimmin' full, an all laid by that cussed red hen. run to the haouse pell mell an' tol' mother. She came daown and see it, an' says she'd just leave 'em from cur'osty ter see what the hen 'ud do, an' so we of labour. There we can marry; here let her be. Nex' day I went ter look. an' she was settin 'an' as she sot an' sot an' sot right onto that bunghole fur | should not accept the inducements six weeks. Bein' so many aigs tuk her they have to offer and settle on their twict as long ter hatch aout. One day, arter we'd giver her up, I went inter the barn an' fust I knowed I heerd a | we cannot. Their dress is simple, and an' a cluckin' worser'n a cuckoo clock The women want us, and why should gets near the graound aout run a leetle and false hopes and ambitions? other, an' another, an' may I never go will be a happy little republic, free from the marsh and tacks in her that which have being marsh and the marsh and tacks in her that which have marsh and tacks in her than the marsh and tacks in her that which have marsh and tacks in her than the marsh and tacks in her tacks in when it rains, of that hull hogshead strife and want and care, and with all the music begins, they march and anwan't full o' them leetle red roosters, the comforts that man could desire." other is left out, who takes a seat in of her ears or the back of her neck, ally expect.

three hundred and seventeen of 'em an'

one addled aig. For a moment the store was silent, while the sleet ticked against the windows, then the Deacon, with an eye to business, spoke:

"Say, Uncle Ligey, I'd like ter git some hens o' that breed. What ever become of her, an' what was ye thinkin' of ye didn't raise her chickens an' hev a hull flock o' pullets that ud lay aigs by the bar'l like their mother Ye'd make yerself rich."

"Yes, that's all right," answered Uncle Ligey, "but, Deacon, a man er religion like you be oughter' know they stay awhile to visit, and then bought ain't nuthin' perfeck in this worl', an this hen wasn't no exception. Trouble was she was a crowin' hen, an' never hatched nuthin' but roosters, an' we sold 'em all fur spring brilers, so ye see, havin' no darters when she died, the race kinder run out. Ef ye don't b'lieve the story I've got the addled aig blowed an' the hen's tail feathers on the whatnot ter home. An' speakin' of home, I guess I better run aout an' run home er the old woman won't give me nuthin' but tongue for supper, en that a pretty sharp one, as I've larned by experience." And, turning, up his coat collar he slowly got to his feet and drifted out.

"It's a great pity," said the Deacon solemnly, to the silent crowd, "that that look did not last long, for as they Uncle Ligey never went inter polytics er the law. He'd a made a great hand at it. Yes, sir, it's a great pity." And the others nodded.

CHANCE FOR YOUNG MEN TO MAKE AN EASY LIVING.

Where Men are Wanted-An Odd Scheme Proposed in San Francisco-Will Settle in the Southern Pacific.

A compan yof enterprising young less he was constantly on the watch. men has been formed in San Francisco to charter a schooner and sail to the St. John's group of islands in the South- pointed to the pasture. He would give ern Pacific, where 2,000 women, ruled by a queen of their own selection, are anxiously waiting for husbands. The ship Bonanza recently put into San Francisco after visiting the St. John's Island. Her commander, Captain Bergman, told how the handsome southern beauties who live in this Adamless Eden had boarded the vessel, and how he had difficulty in making them leave and in keeping his men aboard the ship.

Otherwise, said Captain Bergman, the Bonanza, bereft of her crew, would have rotted in the waters of the St. John's Islands, and the crew would have been dispersed on shore, each with a dozen or more wives willing to work for him and support him in idleness. Captain Bergman also told how the men had been nearly exterminated by wars between the islanders and how the remaining few, tired of a multiplicity of wives, had sailed away on a French barque that put in there one day, never to return.

WHO WOULD BE KING?

No sooner had this tale gone the rounds of the sailors' lodging houses of San Francisco than a lively curiosity cooky box, and deposited them on either | was excited as to just what induceside of the stove, where they acted the ments were held out by the St. John's Islanders for husbands. It even appeared that the queen, Pila Waar by name, needed one or more husbands, and that a "likely" man stood a good chance of becoming a king at little expense.

As a result of this, L. J. Reinhart, a carpenter, living at No. 547 Mission street, San Francisco, has organized a company of young unmarried men like himself to go out to the St. John's Islands, and lead a life of ease instead pieces. of one of drudgery which the exacting conditions of civilization now make

necessary on the Pacific Slope. When Reinhart read the story of the captain of the Bonanza, it promptly ocideal spot to found a co-operative colony, where young men unhampered by families could start with little outlay of capital and live happily forever afterward. He calculates that fifty or sixty sturdy young men like himself, with only \$25 each, may fly from want and the struggle for existence that faces so many in the American cities and drop into a life of ease and com-

"It is just this way," said Reinhart. kin bet I poked raound. The third "I am a carpenter, but I cannot get this city—or in America, for that mat- and had just time to get off when the club to this, that preachers could placed in the first grade. Every priter. All a carpenter can get is \$2 a day when he is working, and if he had steady work it would require the utmost economy for him to marry and support a family.

"In my position I cannot think of marrying. I cannot afford it, and all share in the fortunes of the company thing dreadful was coming. Fathr never above five miles an hour, his to the first grade in ten days thereare like myself in that respect. We all have to work hard all day for a bare living, and none of us can enjoy him. the luxuries and comforts of life.

WHAT THEY PROPOSE. "Now we propose to purchase a small "May I be geewizzled ef that than \$1,000. Provisioning the vessel he never forgot the words of advice his feet lost the pedals. The thanks will be a small matter, and with the that followed: surplus we can purchase implements to develop the soil of the islands for can go into a dangerous place; always his eye on the preachers and see what our living. The islands are productive, keep on the safe side." and we can get plenty to eat and plenty to wear out of them, and that is all we can get here with the hardest kind we cannot. The native women are which never fails to amuse children, clamouring for husbands, and why

lands "There we could support a wife; here

YOUNG FOLKS.

NED'S CAPERS.

Perhaps the children who read this paper will be interested in the funny ways of our four-footed friend, which I will describe below. After he had grown to be a large dog he was very fond of riding in a wagon, or anything in fact that he could ride in, or on, no matter what it was, so it was a way to ride and be with the men.

If it was the big wagon, he would spring up on the seat and wag his tail and grin-yes, grin-just as much as anyone ever did over the pleasure he expected to have.

One day the boys were hauling hay, with the hayrack on the wagon, and there was no good place for him to sit, but he was determined to ride anyhow and perched himself on the very and looked back at the house with the most self-complacent look on his big face as they drove away. But alas, started the horses into a trot before he had time to turn around, he turned a back somersault and landed squarely on the back of his neck, which gave him such a shock that he came back to the house, looking as if he had lost

every friend on earth. Another time I looked out of the window and saw one of the boys driving down through the field with a landroller, and on the narrow board seat, which was none too large for one, sat Frank and that monstrous dog. Frank charter member against whom many shock, she generally managed to carry had to put his arms around Neb to drive, which made him so affectionately disposed that he would turn his head and lick Frank in the mouth un-

He loved to go after the cows of evenings, which he would do when Frank gave a peculiar whistle and a yelp and start for them, no matter whether he could see them or not, and always brought only the ones we milked. Sometimes he would miss one, and he never seemed to notice it until he discovered. Then it was noticed that would get them into the lot, then he would look at the cows, then whine and look toward the pasture, and then start in a run and would never fail to bring up the missing cow.

It was funny to watch him bring up the horses, seven or eight in number. He would walk around them slowly and start them home; then he would run around and go in front of them, waving his tail like a victorious banner, looking back now and then, to cle to the left and knock down a letter see if they were all following. If they carrier who had a large family to supwere not, he would run back and start the straggler up again, then once more take his place in front and march along

with all the airs of a general. The dinner bell was an instrument of torture to him, and he would how pitifully as long as any one would ring it. He loved music if any one would play a tune, but a discord would set him wild. The children would tease him with a harp, but he would howl until the people who lived across the river threatened to shoot him, and he would look at the children in the most sorrowful reproachful manner, enough to break a heart of stone. He grew into the house and putting his four feet on the marble top of the bureau, look his head first on one side and then on the other, seeming as much pleased as a young girl trying on a new hat, wag-

RUNNING INTO DANGER.

One day he heard at school that Tom Webb's boat had struck the rocks under the bridge and was breaking to

Jack wanted to see it, so on his way applicants for membership. home he turned off to the railway bridge which crossed the little bridge just where it was full of rocks. It was curred to him that there would be an a rough and dangerous place. Creeping along, the little boy bent over until his head grew dizzy, and if he hadn't jumped up quickly he would have fallen. And something else might have happened too, if he had stayed there two minutes longer; for he had no sooner got off the bridge than a railway train came rushing along that would have crushed him to death in

But Jack thought he had done a very smart thing. He ran home, and at the dinner table boasted that he had been steady work here, because there is not down on the railway bridge and seen the express came along.

> thought they would praise him, but jockey cap perched on one ear, and his permitted to wear the first grade uni-After dinner father took the little man nature more wicked. The minister cure it. The prisoner who during the

> boy into his study. He looked so very of his church rode a bike, but had not time mentioned is reported for one insober Jack began to feel that some- suffered in reputation. His gait was fraction of the rules will be eligible sat down in his chair, drew the boy gaze always fixed upon the horizon, in after. The prisoner who has two re-

were very brave to-day, didn't you? a hole. A preacher might scorch for a But going into danger when there is mile or so, in case a thunderstorm was no need of it so no mark of courage. coming up or a Texas steer got after schooner. There are plenty to be had It is rash and wicked." Then papa him, but he should still preserve his that will answer our purpose for less stopped and Jack began to cry; but dignity even after his hat fell off and

NEW AND OLD GAMES.

Going to Jerusalem.-This is a game be they young or old. Two rows of play. Some one strikes up a march on

the room and watches the progress of but never her face. Did any man ever the remainder. This is repeated until fall in love with a girl from seeing the there are but two persons and one chair back of her neck? Could a girl have left, and the one securing the chair time to fall in love with a man while "gets to Jerusalem." The umpire has she was acting as lookout for vehicles, power to decide all questions as to pedestrians, dogs, loose cobblestones, and

who has secured chairs. when the story is finished the speaker | combat it at every opportunity. cries "and the stage-coach turned over!" at which all must change seats, and in the confusion the speaker tries to secure a seat, and the one left out tells back of the rack on a narrow board, a story. If the speaker fails to get a seat he tells a second story.

How Bluestone Jackson's Cross Eyes Afflicted the Town in Which He Lived.

When the Thompson Street Coloured

Bicycle Club had been called to order, President Toots asked for the report of the committee appointed to examine the case of Colonel Sunset Jones, a complaints had been made by citizens at large. Professor Bluestone Jackson, chairman of the committee reported a singular state of affairs. They had examined the Colonel's wheel and found it all right. They had taken notice of his manner of mounting and pedalling, and no fault could be found. It was only after he had started off for a spin that anything unusual could be his progress was erratic. He would seem about to run down a street car, when he would suddenly swerve and head for a baby carriage on the other side of the street. He would be pointed dead for a lame man on the cross walk, but just as the man opened his mouth to yell, the Colonel would cirport. He would ring his bell for a monument to get out of the way, and dismount in front of a car and beg its pardon. It took the committee a full week to get on to the Colonel, but it was finally discovered that something was wrong with his eyes. When they came to be tested a queer state of affairs was brought to light. Everybody could see that he was cross eyed, but, in addition to this, he was colour blind, and one eye was out of true by over half to be a very large dog indeed, and an inch. A fat woman wearing a green nothing pleased him so much as to get shawl appeared to him to be a street car with a fiery red dash-board, and at himself in the glass, and turning a towheaded boy on roller skates presented the picture of a tall man with a red nose and consumptive cough. In one instance a small coloured boy startging his tail, and smiling at his own ed to cross the street ahead of the through weakness, has violated the image in the most ludicrous manner. Colonel, carrying a parcel under his laws. arm. The boy and the parcel seemed to the Colonel to be two Chinamen,

THEY MUST NOT CAVORT. The Hon. Application Green had some interesting and pertinent statistics one hardly different from the ordinary to submit to the club regarding the suit of the civilian, while the other question, "Shall Preachers Ride the two bear in a greater degree the mark Bike?" He had corresponded with per- of the prison. of coloured preachers in America now present regular stripes, as now worn riding the bike was about four hundred. by all. hand to hear his remarks when the "Jack," said he, "you thought you front wheel struck a stone or fell into "My dear boy, never try how far you Green, and he was requested to keep another year would bring forth. A FALSE IMPRESSION.

Professor Comealong Thompson asked permission of the President to say a few words in correction of a false impression which seemed to exist regarding the tandem. It had been urgchairs are placed back to back and ed by women and by publications inifilled with the persons who desire to mical to the bike that the tandem was productive of romance, and that the girl on the front seat was almost sure the pianoforte and all rise and march to fall in love with the chap on the were a runnin' raoun' es if she had her other in gaudy feathers, like the wo- round the chairs, on the way to Jeru- hind one, and vice versa. He was the were a runnin' raoun' es if she had her other in gaudy leatners, like the worker bead cut off, a peckin' at the hogshead men here. Their country is fertile. salem. As they march to the music and rode a tandem and took a different (or the beat of a tin pan) the umpire girl out every night. Not once had he much's I c'ud, so I goes an' tips the it is offered, and accept a comfortable takes one chair from the end of the fallen in love or come within forty rods hogshead over, en soon's the bunghole and easy life instead of one of drudgery row. Suddenly the music ceases and of it, and he was sure that all the all secure the seat nearest them. One girls could truthfully make the same authorities has been that men are much player is left standing and is declared report. What he saw in front of him more inclined to renounce an evil life ment best suited to our needs, and it out of the game; he missed the boat as they rode out, was a girl's back all and to become good citizens if the at-

open ditches? The idea was absurd. Stage-Coach .- We never get tired of | Even when they dismounted and sat playing the game called "Stage-Coach." side by side each one had to get breath In this game all the players sit in a and wipe the perspiration away from circle around the room, with the ex- back of the ears and look for puncturception of one person who stands in ed tires, and if they had any disposition the center of the circle. Each person to bill and coo a policeman was always sitting takes as his name some part at hand to order them to move on and of the stage-coach or the little dog or get off the earth. Two people up a some article of dress worn by those tree with a hungry bear below, two riding inside. Then the one standing people in the rapids of Niagara floatin the center tells a story about a ing to their doom, a brace of human certain journey of the stage coach from hearts being kicked right and left by one city to another. When the name the same mule might discover the roof any player is mentioned that per- mance of it and fall in love, but two son must rise and turn round or pay people on a tandem-never! It was an forfeit. When the word "stage-coach" erroneous, a false, and wicked impresis mentioned all rise and turn, and sion, and he trusted that the club would

THE COW AND THE BIKE. Judge Wholesale Hooper, who has

made more long distance runs than any other man in the club, said he had a few words to say regarding the country cow. Up to six months ago the cow was the chief obstacle to be met with on the highways. She was no friend of the bike. On the contrary, she never missed an opportunity to show her ill will and make all the trouble she could. One of her favorite pastimes was to walk deliberately across the road when a rider drew near, and she showed many evidences of gratification when the smash came and she heard the broken spokes rattle and a string of cuss words issue forth. She would lie down in the middle of the road as night fell, for no other purpose than to be run over and hear a human being yell out in terror, and if she got up after the the wheel off on her horns. Things were different now, however. The cow had come to recognise the fact, that the bike has come to stay and that it had no relation to the horse fly. Her ribs had been thumped until she was cheerfully willing to give half the road, and if she had that tired feeling come upon her she crossed the roadside ditch to lie down in a fence corner. It didn't take the farmer's dog over a year to learn that there was something red hot about the bike, but the cow had been slower and more pig-headed about giving in. Time had brought her around, however, and on his last century run, the judge had seen only two cows at close range, and then nothing more than their waving tails as they gave him the earth for his own.

CONVICTS CAN DOFF STRIPES.

Those Who Behave Allowed to Don a Business Garb.

The most original experiment in prison reform which has yet been tried has within the last week been put into effect at Ohio's penitentiary, at Columbus. A striking, almost startling, change in the conventional prison stripes of the convict has been made. This, the first announcement of this important departure, will doubtless excite wide attention and comment.

It is in brief, regulating the clothing of the convict by his conduct. Under the system now in vogue in all prisons, every convict wears the same uniform. The prisoner whose instincts are vile, whose ideas are thoroughly steeped in crime, is the same in the appearance that clothing gives, as the man whose instincts are of high grade, but who

Penologists have long held that the intelligent convict could be more thorseven feet high, and in attempting to oughly reformed by mental processes Jack was a venturesome little chap. pass between them he knocked the boy or methods akin thereto, than by the end over end across the street. The physical penalties that prison rules committee advised that Colonel Jones have caused all offenders to suffer. This cease from riding a bike as a member is exactly the idea from which Warden of the club, and recommended a strict E. G. Coffin, of the Ohio penitentiary, examination of the eyes of all future conceived his plan of helping the prisoners to reform by grading their clothing. There are to be THREE GRADES,

sons in various sections of the country, The first grade of clothing is of plain and had interviewed a number of prea- grey cloth, with nothing to indicate chers himself, but had confined himself | that it is anything else than a citizen's strictly to the colour line. What white suit. The second grade will consist of preachers did or did not do was noth- grey and white checkered goods, and ing to the coloured race. The number | the third grade will be that of the

The number who had fallen from grace | A prisoner upon entering the prison during the last twelve months on ac- | will be placed in the second grade, and count of the wheel was eighteen. While after the expiration of six months, withthe question was still an open one be- out being reported for any infraction fore the club, the general opinion of of the rules, will be entitled to be Father and mother looked at each manner, but that the sight of a minis- not reported for the violation of a ter of the gospel skating along with a prison rule until January 1st will be left leg over the handle bar made hu- form as soon as it possible to proup to his side, and put his arm around serious mood, and nobody was ever at ports against him January 1st will not days. If a prisoner has three or more reports against him he will not be placed in the first grade until

THREE CONTINUOUS. months have passed without an un-

favourable report regarding him; Warden Coffin, in talking to the writer, said: "I am fully satisfied that all good citizens will heartily approve the step I have taken. I do not believe that it is right and just that a man who has so conducted himself as to maintain an unblemished reputation for years should be classed, clothed and marched with one who is daily committing infractions against the rules of the prison. It holds out no inducement to the worthy prisoner to continue his efforts in well doing. There should be some mark of distinction to separate the good from the bad. It seems to me the graded uniform is the best method of accomplishing this purpose.

The Ohio penitentiary has long beer known by the fact that the inmates thereof are treated with more humanity than in almost any other State prison. The policy that has actuated the