SUPPLEMENT TO

The Free Press.

HAVE A SMILE.

Is it proper to tell fish stories in Lent.

When a soldier is ill he becomes a six-shooter.

Rats are in the grain-carrying trade this winter.

Get a cow with a dreamy eye if you want a good milker.

A railroad man will not allow his daughter to wear her back hair down. It reminds him of a miss-placed switch.

A Hamilton woman sneezed her jaw out of place lately, and the married men of the place have been buying snuff ever since.

A child being asked what were the three great feasts of the Jews, promptly and not unnaturally replied: "Breakfast, dinner, and supper."

If many of us knew the extent of the Lord's information, we should take less trouble to inform Him that we are poor miserable sinners.

When a girl is twenty she feels very easy on that score. It's only when the scores another that she begins to wonder who invented wrinkles.

The only object a rooster can have in crowing at midnight is to give the hens away. Everybody has a clock, and everybody knows the hour.

A York county father who has five grown-up daughters has sued the county. He claims that his residence has been used as a court-house for the past two years.

The mild winter is a sign to fruit-growers that next season will bring forth such crops of fruit as have not been known for years. Get your sugar and cream ready.

There is a woman in Hamilton who has been married fifty-eight years and who has never missed building the kitchen fire. Her husband is probably the oldest fire escape on record.

The man who can't see that "every indication points to an early and vigorous spring trade" ought to be run into a cave and walled up. There is even a strong movement in ice.

When any office-hunter puts himself into the hands of his friends, and his friends don't set him down before a woodpile and a saw-buck they are not doing their duty—not by a long shot.

An electric light, strong enough to render the walls of houses transparent, is now predicted; but, so far as we can see, the only advantage to be derived from it would be to drive out lovers on the roofs.

It is now the fashion in high circles in Chicago to forget names. A lady who has been to Niagara Falls must try and try to remember where it was that the saw water pouring down and an island with a goat on it.

Perhaps it was sentiment that actuated a Nevada editor when he wrote of a dead orator: "Death has turned off his gas." If he had written in sarcasm, he would have put it: "The King of Terrors has stopped his wind-mill."

When a New Yorker had his house burgled he goes down to the detective head quarters and asks them if they've go any clues in stock that will fit his case, and if they have, they send a man around to hitch 'em on.

In the report of a "swell wedding" it was written: "Her dainty feet were encased in shoes that might have been taken for fairy boots," but the compositor made it read, "shoes that might have been taken for ferry boats."

How exhilarating it is to go groping about the bedroom just after your wife has extinguished the light and carelessly lay hold of the hot lamp chimney. Then it is that the soul seems to rise up in the darkness and exclaim: "What is home without an Edison horse-shoe burner."

A clergyman asked his Sunday school: "With what remarkable weapon did Samson at one time slay a number of Philistines?" For a while there was no answer, and the clergyman, to assist the children a little, commenced tapping his jaw with the tip of his finger, at the same time saying, "What's this? what's this?" Quick as thought, a little fellow innocently replied: "The jaw-bone of an ass, sir."

"No man shall ever kiss me except my future husband," she said as he was about leaving her at the gate. "Suppose I agree to kiss you," she said, eagerly; and she did! Her mother was informed that he had proposed, and the old lady called round next day to fasten matters, and before he knew it he was eternally booked. It was a mean advantage, but a bird in the hand is worth two on the front gate.

Advice to the young lover: Fancy, if you will, that the aureola of amber locks that envelops your idol's head makes her resemble a saint, but never be rashly betrayed into thinking that she is one. There may come a time when the menacing grip of her lovely hand on the parlor poker, or the sharp whir of a flying slop bowl will impart a melancholy interest to your self-deception.

A man may keep a clean conscience in a variety of ways, but it must not be forgotten that cleanliness and dirt are relative terms and that what to a cleanly man is insufferably dirty, to a naturally dirty man may be relative cleanliness. At any rate, it seems to be absolutely necessary to pursue our gains by such methods as opportunity affords and to find the proper excuse for so doing. A Bavarian who was a good Catholic, as nearly all the Bavarians are, went to the priest and confessed that he had been in the habit in his grist mill of mixing bad corn with the good. The priest condemned the practice in no measured terms and told him that he should keep an eye on him in the future. Some months afterward the miller went to confession again, and almost the first question asked of him was, "Well, do you still continue to mix bad corn with the good?" "No, father," was the reply, "you have entirely cured me of that bad habit." "How, then, do you manage to get rid of your bad corn?" was the next question. "Oh, very easily," was the cheerful reply. "I wouldn't for the world put the bad corn with the good since you have reproved me for it, so now I mix a little good corn with the bad and it sells very readily.

Roulette and Number 17.

Croupiers do not seem more interesting than bank clerks to the world at large; but their ways and their society have a kind of fascination for confirmed gamblers. They know many stories of fortune's freakishness for example, the curious absence of the number 17 at Homburg, which ruined the half of Europe. For ten days, at a certain roulette table, 17 never came up, never took its turn with its 35 bretheren. The strange news was telegraphed to Baden-Baden and Ems, and the public crowded to Homberg to back 17, "which must come up soon, you know," as people say. Few people could wait till 17 did emerge, and the bank in consequence of this craze did a really good business. It is an amusing trait in the natural history of the croupier that the functionaries of the card-tables are much greater men than their comrades of the roulette-table. The former are *messiers*, the latter, simply *hommes*. In private life they are often good friends enough, but their wives do not visit each other. When he is not spinning the little ball or dealing out the cards, the croupier often has some respectable trade, which he exercises at home; he is a tailor, a waiter, perhaps a fencing-master. Rather a good story is told of the impassiveness of the croupier. It was at Baden-Baden, between Sadowa and Sedan; the ruler of Germany was walking in one of the alleys with the Emperor of France. The crowd had deserted the tables to stare at these great monarchs. Some one asked the senior croupier, *la pere* Martin, why he did not take a holiday and see the crowned heads. "King William we are always seeing," said the old man, "he is no novelty here." "And the Emperor Napoleon?" "Ah, the Emperor, he *still owes* the bank 25 louis."

The Baby's Picture.

"We must carry our beautiful baby to town
Some day when the weather is fair," we said;
"We must dress him up in his prettiest gown,
And wave the hair on the top of his head;
For all his cousins and all his aunts,
Declare it is shameful and every way blameful,
We have had no picture of him this year."

He was three months old when we took him before,
And he lay like a lamb on his mamma's lap;
And the darling now has a twelvemonth more
Of bewildering graces from sock to cap.
Just look at his dear little laughing face!
At the rosebud mouth, at the violet eyes!
Why, the photograph taker, that vanity shaker,
Will think this time we have brought him a prize!

We carried our child to the town one day,
The skies was soft and the air was cool,
We robed him richly in fine array—
Ribbons and laces, and Swiss and tulle.
He looked like a prince in the artist's chair,
Sitting erect, and brave, and grand,
With his big red apple, he scarce could grapple,
Held close in the palm of his dimpled hand.

"He is taking it now! We held our breath!
We furtively peeped from behind the screen!
"What a pose!" we whispered, then, still as death,
Waited—and baby was all serene
Till the critical moment, when, behold,
The sun was catching that lovely look,
Such a terrible roar, it shook the floor!
And that was the picture the swift sun took:

A wrinkled face and close shut eyes,
And a mouth that's opened so very wide,
That our dear little sister, aby-lorbe,
Declares she can see the cry inside.
Aunts and cousins and grandmother's dear,
Haven't got over their anger yet;
But we thought it was funny, and paid our money,
For that strange phrase of our precious pet.

Ah! children, older than baby, think,
Dear little children little and smart,
With your curls of gold, and your cheeks of pink,
And your naughty tempers, pickles and [illegible]!
What an awful thing it would be for you
If an artist should happen along some day,
And observing the pouting, the frown or, the howling,
Should take a picture of you, that way.

A LINK OF LOVE.

[CONCLUDED.]

Not being able to leave my business, I wrote the next day to Ethel, invited her and her little boy to come and stay with us. She accepted the invitation, and they were soon installed as our guests. The five years had ripened the beauty of the child-wife. The artless simplicity of the girl had merged in the steady self-possession of the matron. She greeted me somewhat nervously, and glanced anxiously round the room, as if expecting to see some one, giving a little sigh of disappointment at finding no one but Mary and myself.

Mary generally takes time by the forelock; so, without any preliminaries, she at once attacked Ethel upon the subject of her husband, and grew quite eloquent as she described the warmth of his love. A bright colour flushed the young wife's cheeks. "Do you really think that he loves me?" she asked in an eager voice. Then hurriedly answering her own question, she continued, in a saddened tone—"No—I am too young—but I *do* love him," and she bowed her head over her child's chestnut curls and wept passionately. The poor little fellow, alarmed at her grief, tried to pull her hands from her face. Finding his efforts ineffectual, he burst into tears and gave a loud cry for his father. As the word smote her ears Ethel angrily thrust the child from her lap. "You have no father, child," she cried, clenching her hands. Her eyes flashed, but filled with tears, as she added, in a pained voice, "And I no husband. The love that belongs to your poor forsaken mother is given to another."

"Oh, you wicked, ungrateful girl, to dare to say such unfounded things of a father to his child!" cried Mary, warmly, as she drew the weeping boy to her and tried to calm his grief.

"Unfounded! Would that I could say so; but what can I think when I read this!" Ethel drew a half-sheet of blotting-paper from her pocket. "I found it in his study after he had left."

She handed it to me, bidding me hold it to the light. I did so, and recognized Cuthbert's handwriting. It was the conclusion of a letter. It was impossible to decipher every word; but the following were very distinct:—

"I shall be in London on Thursday . . . expect me about lunch time. Mrs. Heriston stays at Marsland. I enclose you a cheque for £50, payable to your order, to meet immediate expenses. Hoping to hear that brighter days are in store,—Yours,

"C. Hemerton."

"Well," I said, cautiously, "I do not see very much in this. It might have been written to a gentleman."

"Is 'Mrs. Sylvester, Post-office, Blackheath. To be left till called for,' a gentleman?" quietly asked Ethel, pointing to the words at the bottom of the page, evidently where the direction on the envelope had been blotted.

"All very well," I answered. "But how do you know that *that* letter was inclosed in the envelope bearing that address? He might have written more than one letter, and that address may refer to something very different."

"True," she replied, "and so at first I argued to myself; but all doubt is now dispelled, for I inquired at the bank and I learnt that yesterday a young woman presented a cheque of my husband's for £50, and that the name she signed on the back was 'Harriet Sylvester.'"

I felt rather posed at this, and, I expect, must have looked so, for Mary, who had been impatiently fidgeting while I was reading the latter, exclaimed sharply—

"What a stupid you are, John! It is all stuff and nonsense!" Turning to Ethel, she continued, "Take the advice of an old woman, my dear. Go to your husband—open your heart and tell him everything. You are a regular pair of geese. There is nothing that is not capable of explanation, and I'll stake my word on Cuthbert's honour. He may be queer tempered, but he's a gentleman. What is the good of knocking your heads against a wall when the gate is standing ajar?"

Mary's arguments seemed to have some effect. At one time I thought Ethel's pride was softening, but an unfortunate reference of mine to the letter which had been found in her old dress awoke an amount of obstinate resistance with which we were quite unable to cope. She proudly declined to give any explanation, and as Cuthbert, when appealed to by me, also refused an explanation about Harriet Sylvester, our efforts to bring about a reconciliation came to a standstill.

The green-eyed monster and his worthy relative, Pride, had taken possession of Marsland and its unhappy owners. Very reluctantly I prepared the deed which was to separate those who, in the sight of God, had vowed to cleave together, for better, for worse, as long as life lasted.

It was the last day of the year. The merry Yule tide had passed by, robbed of its wonted brightness, for a cloud hung over us. The old year, with its burden of past joys and sorrows, was about to die.

The deed I had prepared was a very simple one. A yearly sum of £800 was reserved to Cuthbert, and the rest of his wealth was settled on Ethel and her boy. I was to occupy the responsible position of guardian—a position I would have shirked could I have found any excuse for doing so.

I felt very sad as the hands of the clock approached the hour of eight—the time fixed for Cuthbert to call and sign the deed. The parchment, with its stiff, formal writing and large seals, was spread out on the table, and everything was in readiness for the finale to the short-lived marriage. As a last hope, I had determined that the husband and wife should meet once again before parting, perhaps, for ever; for on the morrow Cuthbert was to sail for the Far West in a vain search for forgetfulness.

Cuthbert at last was announced. He entered, clad in his travelling wraps, and, with his tall, commanding stature, looking very manly. His handsome face was pale, and the stern features set with a look of rigid determination. After a few constrained words of greeting he took up a pen to sign the deed, excusing himself for his haste by explaining that he had but very little time to spare, as he had to catch the nine o'clock train to Liverpool. Bidding him wait, I rang the bell twice—the signal for Mary to send Ethel to us.

Trusting to Ethel's ignorance of the law, I had made her believe that it was necessary that she should sign the deed in the presence of her husband. But for this stratagem I feel certain that she would have refused to meet him.

In a few moments Ethel glided into the room. Cuthbert started at her—to him—unexpected appearance, for I had not told him that she would be present. Very pale and lovely she looked as, with stately grace, she slowly approached the table, acknowledging her husband's presence by a slight inclination of her queenly head. Her soft, wavy hair was brushed from the face and fastened at the back in a small coil. She had discarded all jewels and ornaments, simply retaining her wedding ring. Afterwards Mary told me that she pulled it half off, but suddenly checking herself, had restored it to its place, saying, "No; my husband put it there, and there it shall remain till he removes it."

My heart beat hopefully as I observed that her dress was the same she had worn six years ago, when she had surrendered her life and happiness to Cuthbert's keeping. The plain, well-fitting black dress—notwithstanding that it was somewhat old-fashioned—suited her marble paleness and statuesque beauty.

I resolved to make a last appeal to their better feelings, and, in a few moving words, I did my best to arrest them from a step which I felt was the maddest folly. I was very much agitated as I entreated them, if not for their own sakes, at least for that of the little one who called them father and mother, to join hands again, and, letting the past bury the past, start anew in the battle of life, and, by mutual concessions, each one lend the other that loving support that even the strongest of us must at times require.

Ethel seemed moved at my words. Her bosom heaved, and with difficulty she restrained her emotion. I watched Cuthbert anxiously. The corners of his mouth twitched nervously, but he remained silent. Ethel raised her eyes pleadingly to his, and her lips slightly parted as if she were about to speak. One answering look and her arms would have been round him. In vain! He resolutely averted his face. A faint flush came into Ethel's cheeks as her spirit rose at this silent rejection of her appeal. Seizing the pen which Cuthbert had dropped when she entered the room, she dipped it into the ink, and, turning to me, asked, in firm, indignant tones, where she should sign the deed. Her pen was on the parchment, and she was preparing to follow my instructions, when the door of the room slowly opened. She paused, and we all raised our eyes to ascertain the cause of the interruption. The door was now wide open, and—as in a frame, set off by the surrounding darkness—stood a little figure, clad in white. The tiny feet, bare of covering, peeped out beneath the robe which was held up by the child's hands, and the short chestnut curls swept back from the wistful cherub face in wavy billows. With shy looks the child advanced slowly into the room, till, raising his eyes, he caught sight of his mother. With a glad cry he ran to her and threw himself into her arms. Then—a bright look animating his pretty face—he called to his father.

It was enough! The ice was broken. Love was triumphant, and pride—the destroyer of the peace of so many homes—defeated. Cuthbert opened his arms and cried in a voice of wondrous love, "My wife!" His cry was echoed by Ethel as, with happy tears, she was drawn within his arms and pressed in his fond embrace. With willing love she was crushed to his heart, that beat in passionate unison with her own; her eager lips resealing the solemn contract but a little while back so nearly broken. And thus, in Heaven's sight, again their troth was plighted. No word of explanation as to the past. Each one believed in and trusted the other.

With my eyes in rather a watery condition, I groped my way to the library, where I found Mary on the verge of hysterics.

"Oh, John, I'm so happy!" she cried, throwing her arms round my neck and kissing me. "I saw it all—from the stairs."

After her excitement had somewhat calmed she explained to me how it had happened. I appeared that after Ethel had left her she could not rest, and had wandered uneasily from room to room. Hearing the child moving in his crib, she had hastened to his side, and while soothing him had conceived the idea which had proved so successful in its result. Acting with her usual impulse, she snatched the lad from the bed and carried him down the stairs, and, setting him without the door—the handle of which she gently turned—had left him to the guidance of One before whom we poor mortals are but as dust.

We waited patiently, but no sound came from the room where we had left Ethel and Cuthbert. Slowly the hours crept on, and we began to get not only very impatient, but sleepy.

"Good gracious, John, what a smell of burning!" cried Mary, awaking, as the clock struck eleven, from a little doze into which she had fallen. "It smells something like burnt feathers. Perhaps Ethel has fainted. Oh, depend upon it she has, and Cuthbert is burning my beautiful feather screen to bring her to!" and away bustled the little woman to the rescue of the cherished screen. I followed, expecting to see Ethel in a death-like swoon. But no such thing. She was sitting by the fire—in *my* arm-chair—looking very bright and happy, despite her swollen eyelids, for tears come to women as readily in joy as in grief. Little Cuthbert was peacefully sleeping in his mother's lap, his hands clasped in one of hers. With her other hand she was holding her handkerchief to her nose. And well she might do so, for Cuthbert, the poker in one hand and the tongs in the other, was forcibly pushing the *ill-fated* deed of separation between the bars of the grate. No wonder that our olfactory nerves had objected to the smell. Burnt parchment certainly cannot be considered an agreeable scent.

With silent graspings of the hand—more eloquent than speech—we drew our chairs round the fire and watched the last writhing curls of the blackened deed as it spluttered and hissed out its brief existence.

"Cuthbert, *dear*," at last exclaimed Ethel, breaking the silence with a low-toned but happy voice, "you have been very generous; you have not asked a single question about George Rex." A slight blush suffused her cheeks as she spoke. "I value your silence, dearest," she continued, "because it shows that you trust me; but I think I ought to speak, and in the presence of these dear friends, to whom an explanation is due, almost as much as to yourself."

"Stop, Ethel!" cried Cuthbert, holding up his hand. "As far as I am concerned, I am willing to remain in ignorance about George Rex. In my madness I thought that you did not love me, and that another had sought—and perhaps gained the heart which I feared had never been mine. Now my folly is at an end, and I know that which I pride most in life—my wife's love—is, and always has been, mine. Do not recall my madness. Let it be as a painful dream from which I have been aroused."

I saw the struggle that was taking place in his mind between his generous resolve to show implicit trust in his wife and his natural desire to have the mystery explained. I think Ethel also perceived it. With womanly tact she said, smilingly, "Yes, but in the meantime some unknown young man lies under the imputation of having written me an impertinent letter. I *must* clear his reputation; so, to begin"—she gave an amused, merry glance, adopting a dramatic tone—"George Rex is not a young man; but a *lady*, and not very young!" She fairly burst out laughing at our astonished looks.

"What a goose I am, to be sure!" said Mary, "I declare my memory is getting like a sieve; everything runs out. I know whom you mean; that ugly old frump of a woman's rights woman that I can't bear, and who hates all mankind, and yet lives and acts as if she were one of the despised sex. Despised sex indeed! Ugh! I've no patience with her."

"You have guessed rightly," assented Ethel, with a laugh. "She has seen Cuthbert but once, and as during that interview he was very silent—according to his usual polite custom with strangers—and as he also did not seem very much struck with Miss King's mental superiority, he may congratulate himself that he did not receive a worse name than that of 'Old Grumps.'"

"But is 'George Rex' a woman's name?" I asked.

"Oh, no; her real name is Georgiana King, but with rather feeble wit she has made a pun of her signature."

"Well, good people," cried Mary, "since explanations are flying about the room, perhaps we shall hear one about Mrs. Sylvester."

Cuthbert moved uneasily, as if reluctant to speak, but Ethel came to his relief. Leaning forward, she placed her hand, with a loving gesture, upon her husband's arm, and said in a voice moved by deep feeling, "I know all. How, when Ralph Sylvester sank from bad to worse and was discarded by his relatives, his old schoolfellow remembered the past, and for its sake generously strove to reclaim the black sheep, and, notwithstanding disheartening ill-success, stood by him till death stopped his evil career. I also know who it was that restored the poor girl the dead man had called a wife to the home from which she had been lured. It was through poor Georgy Rex that I learnt this."

The hand that pressed his was tenderly clasped. "This link shall always bind us together, dearest," he gently whispered, as, first kissing the mother, he impressed a kiss on the silky curls of the child sleeping in her arms.

Magnitude of the Afghan War.

(From the Spectator.)

We wish to bring strongly before the public a fact in connection with the Afghan war which demands the closest attention of the country, and which neither party will, we believe, attempt to deny on any party ground. This is the magnitude of the operations, which has not yet been sufficiently realized. Modern Indian wars, those beyond the frontier excepted, notwithstanding a general impression to the contrary, have hitherto been usually short. The first Sikh war lasted only a few months, the second Sikh war was over within the year, the conquest of Pegu was substantially effected in a few weeks, and the last Persian war could almost be computed in days. Even the great war with the mutineers only lasted two years. This Afghan affair has already involved two campaigns, separated only by a few weeks of nominal truce; and a third is to begin in the spring, while the force involved is perpetually growing larger. The officials in India state as little as they can, and we do not pretend to know the secrets of the Cabinet, which possibly may be rather dragged than leading in the matter; but every account from the spot represents a third campaign as already resolved upon. General Roberts, besides holding Cabul, making his long communications with India safe, and clearing the hill country around him, which is swarming with possible enemies, is to attack and capture Ghuznie, a fortress which is the last stronghold of the Afghans in the south, and may be tenaciously defended—we do not say it will be, for we will not assume that Afghans will act like other soldiers—and if defended will require a heavy siege train for its reduction. He must also either simultaneously or subsequently ensure the obedience of Bamian. At the same time, Sir Donald Stewart, with or without Persian auxiliaries, is to occupy Herat, a fortress unusually strong for Asia, as Eldred Pottinger's defence of it showed, held by some 100,000 Afghan troops, and likely to be protected by any force that Abdurradman Kham, the heir of Dost Mahommed, may succeed in getting together in the country round Balkh. We, of course, vouch for none of these statements as to coming operations; but they are repeated on the spot in every variety of form, and are supported the facts officially acknowledged—that a strong reserve division is being formed at Peshawur; that the gaps in General Roberts' and General Bright's columns are being supplied; that a corps of observation is being pushed forward from Candahar to Girishk, obviously to command the crossing of the Helmund; and that another strong brigade has been despatched from Bombay, where troops are not just too plentiful. If these accounts are correct, and these designs are entertained, the subjugation of Afghanistan is to be continued, and the forces employed across the Indus cannot be reduced. Lord Lytton himself, in a formal proclamation to the people of India, estimated the strength of these forces at 42,000 men of all arms; and though he had an interest in quoting the paper strength rather than the real strength, still, a reserve division and a new brigade have been added, and Sir F. Haines will have had three months in which to push up recruits and absentees. Heavy drafts of men leave England by every steamer, and all officers on leave serving with regiments beyond the Indus have been ordered to rejoin. It is the duty of the Indian Government to see that its forces in front are strengthened to its utmost limit that transport and commissariat difficulties will allow, and we do not suppose the military departments, badly as we think of their policy and their judgment, have lost all their military traditions. We are therefore justified in believing ourselves well within the truth when we say that it is intended this spring to employ a well-appointed army of 45,000 men in reducing Afghanistan, in garrisoning its fortresses, and in maintaining its communications intact through an unusually difficult and dangerous hill country, pierced by few passes, and occupied by tribes who, on the best official evidences, dispose of 100,000 fighting men.

A Famous Eye-Water.

A Compound that Beats Col. Sellers Great Remedy all out of Sight.

(From the New York Times.)

For ways that are dark and tricks that are not vain the Yankee peddler can give the heathen Chinee points. A bright young fellow who was driven not long ago to travelling country roads with a basket over his arm, selling a little article on which there was just a trifle of 2,000 per cent. profit, fell in, down in the wilds of New Jersey, one day, with one of these interesting specimens. "That man," said the young fellow, "taught me more about peddling in the few days we travelled together than I ever knew before. He could turn a jack-knife into a horse and wagon. Late one afternoon we were making for a little tavern, kept by an elderly woman, where we intended to pass the night. The Yankee, as we passed a little pile of pebbles, stooped down and picked up two round white ones, one about twice as large as the other. 'I am going to pay for my supper and lodging,' said he, 'with these two pebbles.' He put them in his pocket, and I thought no more about them till, after we had eaten our supper, we were seated in front of a comfortable fire—the Yankee, the landlady, and I. He was a spectacle-peddler, and carried his wares in a little green box. He had a charming habit of saying to people whenever he got a chance, 'Your eyes are in a pretty bad way. They won't last you long.' He said this to the landlady, and she replied that she was afraid that was true, for they had been troubling her a good deal lately.

"Then the spectacle-man brought out the larger of his two pebbles. 'Look at that, madam,' said he. 'What do you think of that?'

"The landlady said she thought it looked like any other white pebbles that could be picked up anywhere. The spectacle man, laughing at the poor woman's ignorance, said if she could pick up a few stones like that she'd soon make her fortune. It was a genuine eye-pebble imported from Germany. 'I make an eye-water from those pebble,' said he, 'that strengthens the eye and restores the failing sight. That stone will dissolve to nothing in ten minutes in salt and water.' The old lady was incredulous, and for some time nothing more was said about it. Presently she asked: 'Is that eye-water of yours very expensive?' 'No,' he said, 'not very expensive.' 'Then,' said she, 'I guess I'll have to get you to make me a bottle of it.'

"The peddler told her to bring in a tumblerful of luke warm water, with a table-spoonful of salt in it, and a teaspoon. The articles were soon brought, and the peddler, dropping the larger pebble into the glass, began to stir it with the teaspoon with great deliberation. For fully five minutes he continued to stir, the pebble, of course, showing no sign of dissolving.

"'I thought,' said the old lady, 'that that there little stone wouldn't dissolve.'

"'It does seem a little stubborn, that's a fact,' said the spectacle man, 'but the trouble is you haven't put in quite enough salt. Just get me a teaspoonful more salt and it will soon be all right.' The old lady left the room to get the salt, and the peddler quickly whipped the large pebble out of the tumbler, and dropped in the small one. 'I declare,' said she, when she returned and saw the diminished size of the pebble, 'it is takin' hold, after all, ain't it?' 'Certainly,' said the spectacle man, looking very wise, and pouring in the remainder of the salt, 'it will be ready now in about five minutes, and you'd better have a bottle handy to put it in, for it spoils it to stand in the air.'

"The landlady had him this time, for the bottle was standing on the mantle-shelf. It was necessary to get her out of the room once more to remove the little pebble, so he asked: 'Haven't you a coloured glass bottle?' 'No,' she said, she hadn't one in the house. 'Then,' said he, 'you had better paste some dark paper around this one, for the light weakens the eye-water, and in time spoils it.' The old lady went out in the kitchen to hunt some thick paper, and out came the little pebble. The eye-water was made.

"'Rub your eyes well with this three times a day,' said he, as he corked the bottle, 'and by the next time I come around you'll have a new pair of eyes in your head.'

"Next morning, as we were about to pay our bills, the landlady inquired how much she owed for the eye-water.

"'It will be a dollar for the pebble, just what it costs to import them from Germany,' said he. 'I won't charge you anything for making it.'

"A dollar was just what he owed the hotel. He and the landlady were 'square.'"

The German Army.

Some idea of the increased efficiency in the early stages of a campaign which will accrue to the German army through the training in time of peace of the first-class of the ersatz reserve, may be gathered from an examination of the losses suffered by different regiments during some of the earlier actions of the war of 1870-71. In the battle of Worth the First West Prussian Grenadier Regiment lost 30 officers and 876 men, and the First Silesian Regiment 34 officers and 982 men. In the battle of Spicheren the Second Bradenburg Grenadier Regiment lost 35 officers and 771 men. The King's Grenadier Regiment lost at Wissenberg 23 officers and 329 men, and at Worth 16 officers and 551 men, or, together, 39 officers and 980 men, in three days' time. During the fighting on the 16th of August, 1870, in the neighbourhood of Vionville and Mars la Tour, the Sixth Brandenburg lost 1,202 men, the Fourth Brandenburg Regiment 1,099 men, the Second Silesian Grenadier Regiment 1,119 men, and the Fourth Thurlingian Regiment 852 men. These large gaps should have been at once and were ultimately filled up with men drawn from the ersatz reserve in time of peace has comprised only untrained men, and as when the battles mentioned above were fought sufficient time had not elapsed since war had been declared, to allow the comparatively raw levies to be converted into trained soldiers, the much-needed re-inforcements could not be at once sent to the front. When the new Army bill comes into force, however, all the men of the first-class of the ersatz will be ready to at once take their place in the ranks.

The bishop of Manchester was lately presiding at an examination of the Latin class in a ladies' college, where the new-fangled pronunciation was in vogue, and one of the fair scholars came to the word "vicissim" (pronounced we-kiss-'im.) "What word is that?" said the bishop. "'We-kiss-'im,' my lord, in turn." "Oh, do you?" replied the bishop. "I do not much wonder now at the fondness of you young ladies for the new method of pronounciation."

Ballooning to the Pole.

The new English scheme of Arctic exploration derives its interest from its proposed use of a new appliance—to a steamer and sledges it adds balloons.

The possibilities of aerial navigation in the polar seas have been discussed for years; but only since the disheartening reports brought by the expeditions of Lieut. Weyprecht and Captain Nares of the impenetrable ice barriers that blocked their way has ballooning been raised from the status of a possible adjunct to an appliance of prime importance.

Even now many of the people who favour Commander Cheyne's expedition, which proposes to leave England in the naval storeship *Discovery* next June, provided the money for preparation, $150,000, can be raised, do not pin their faith chiefly on balloons. In the meeting recently held at the Mansion House London, to forward the scheme, Captain Bedford Pim limited his belief in balloons to their manifest uses in spying the condition of the ice around and ahead, and thought it was idle to trust to anything but the sledge for reaching the Pole.

So Mr. A. H. Beesley, who for twenty years has taken an interest in polar exploration, and who, should a well-judged expedition be sent out, will contribute to its funds, suggests to the London *Times* these doubts about the use of balloons:

The use of balloons, is, it is stated, to be one of the main features of the new expedition, I should like to know what the weight of these balloons uninflated, will be. The first requisite for sledge travelling is that the sledge shall carry the maximum of food with the minimum of luggage for man and dog. Would not the carriage of a balloon be practically impossible? Again, supposing the balloon to have reached the North Pole with a favourable wind, how will its occupants get back again! How, unless the wind veers just how and when they want it, will they support life when out of the balloon?

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that much of the new enthusiasm for the new project in England and in Canada—and the earnest support given it in the latter country has caused it to be called the British-Canadian Arctic expedition—is directly due to the hope that in some ways smaller or greater balloons will add that new mechanical element of success without which there is very little ground for assuming that new voyagers will push much further than the brave and persistent men who have preceded them.

Commander Cheyne, who, by the way, is not only an officer of the royal navy, but a veteran of three Arctic expeditions, is downright in his reliance on balloons. It is true that he has also other sources of hope. For example, he says that the late British expedition came back broken down with scurvy, not for want of lime juice, but of sufficient ventilation between decks and sufficient exercise: but this he hopes to change for the better. But his main reliance is evidently in the employment of balloons, and this was the plain that he laid before the Mansion House meeting:

"He proposed to use balloons first for ascertaining which of two channels was most open, and finally for reaching the Pole. With three large balloons, lifting over a ton each, the start would be made from near the ship upon the curve of a roughly ascertained wind circle, this being obtained by meteorological observations taken at three points, namely, at the ship and at stations twenty miles on each side having telegraphic communication. Should the wind curve deflect before arrival at the Pole, then, by manipulation of the gas between the balloons and condenser tank, they could chose the requisite altitude for a continued favourable air current. The Pole would probably be reached in about thirty or forty hours' time, hills being surmounted by reacting with the gas. After taking the necessary observations he proposed to wait for a favourable wind, drop on the same parallel of latitude as the ship, and then reach it by sledge."

So it is clear that Commander Cheyne proposes to take with his balloons a complete outfit not only of men, but of dogs, sledges, and provisions for man and beast, besides his scientific instruments. He would need, then, balloons strong and large enough to lift very heavy weights. The general opinion of his supporters is that to get back from the Pole after reaching it or its neighbourhood will be the hard work and the labour. However, the new project is likely to be backed up with the required funds. In that case the unprecedented sight will be afforded of Swedes, Austria, America, Holland, Denmark, England, all together in Arctic waters, in a race for the Pole.

Lucifer in the Lock-Up.

(From the London Telegraph.)

One evening, Maria Ascharowna, the wife of a distinguished State officer, was driving homeward from a party through the dimly-lighted Ssarotnaja street, in St. Petersburgh, when she suddenly felt herself grasped from behind, and, turning round, beheld with horror Satan himself, "in his habit as he lived," perched at the back of the sledge, gnashing his teeth ferociously, and glaring at her with his gleaming eyes. Screaming to the saints for protection, she clutched her istvostchik round the waist, and clung desperately to him, while the evil one climbed into her place in the sledge, and drew him toward him with such irresistible force that, after a brief struggle, she found herself, to her inconceivable consternation, actually seated in the enemy of mankind's lap. Fortunately, at this moment a policeman hove in sight, whereupon the istvostchik, scarcely less frightened than his mistress, pulled up, and the gorodovoi promptly conveyed Lucifer to the lock-up. It is painful to relate that the infernal potentate was found to be so drunk that he was unable to explain his extraordinary conduct or to give any satisfactory account of himself. Next morning, however, sobered by a night's repose in the watch-house, he confessed himself to be one Mr. Michael Spliantieff, the son of a wealthy Petersburg merchant, and stated that, having assumed the garb of Satan with a view to attending a masquerade, he had dined with some joyous companions, indulged in too copious libations, and sallied forth into the public streets. Further his remembrance extended not. It is to be hoped that the especial patron of the forger's guild did not defraud Russian justice by paying his fine in spurious notes.

Formerly, English shops of all descriptions had signs, although nowadays they are only borne by public houses. Longmans, the great publisher, had, in 1739, the sign of the Ship and Black Swan. Messrs. Hoare, one of the chief banking houses in London, still carry their old sign above the door of their splendid establishment in Fleet street.

A hen always kicks backward after laying an egg. A Bridgeport Yankee is reported to have turned this fact to account in inventing a device to prevent the sale of stale eggs. When the hen kicks she hits an electric disk, to which is attached a rubber stamp, and the apparatus stamps the date on each egg.

The Little Rock Joker.

An Army of Diseases that old Jerry knew Would be Mustered against a Child.

(From the Little Rock Gazette.)

About two months ago, Mrs. Eliza Bobeton presented her husband with a very fine boy, and as Mrs. Eliza was the former young mistress of old Jerry, she sent for that coloured philosopher, yesterday, to ascertain the old man's views on the new piece of flesh. The old man came, and dropped his hat near the door, and after turning around and stamping at a little dog that took it up and started off, he entered, and advancing, stood near the cradle containing the baby.

"I want to show you the prettiest and sweetest baby in Little Rock, Uncle Jerry," said Mrs. Bobeton, pulling aside the covering and lifting the child so high up on the pillow that it assumed anything but a graceful position.

"Dat am a putty human bein' shoah," said Jerry, regarding the infant with interest. "I 'members mighty well, Miss 'Liza when you was 'bout hits rementions."

"Don't you think that he is the prettiest child in town, Jerry?"

"Since I fixes my eyes squah on him, an' reserbes de political reconstruction an' new constitution ob his face, I believes dat he is."

"Don't you predict a bright future for him."

"I doan perseckly ketch the drif' ob yer discussion."

"Don't you believe that he will be a great man?"

"As I fixes my eye closer on his haid, I calculates dat he won't disappoint yer."

Just then the baby set up a squall, evidently frightened at the close scrutiny of Jerry.

"Why, don't cry," said Mrs. Bobeton, taking the child in her arms. "Why here's Uncle Jerry. Don't you see him? Uncle Jerry won't come to see you again. That'll do. Now, then, that's a good boy. Uncle Jerry says you will be a great man. Get him to tell you what you ought to be. Uncle Jerry, tell him."

"Since I fixes my eyes on his mout, I concludes dat he would make a tolerable fair auctioneer. Miss Liza, I'se sorter in a hurry dis mornin', but afore I santers off, I'd like to ax yer ef yer's weighed de sponsibilities ob raisen' chilen. Hit's a mighty serious thing ter be a chile. Dis chile is fresh now, but he's got ter go through the brine barrel ob ailment's eddycation. He got to hab the scaldhead, de sore head, sore years, sore eyes,"

"Hush, Uncle Jerry."

"You son't for me, now let me talk. An' de chaffin; an' den he'll be 'tacked by the chicken-pox; den the ring worms will take session ob him; den he'll hab do run aroun'."

"For gracious sake, hush, Uncle Jerry," exclaimed Mrs. Bobeton, pressing the child to her bosom as though to protect it from an army of diseases that seemed to be making ready for a charge on the fortress of the child's little constitution.

"Oh, I'se bleged ter talk! An' de mumps will ketch him on the jaws, an' de colic will double him up, an' de huppin' cough will make a pass at him, an' de croup will snatch de staffin' outen him, an' de measles will make him ruff as a nutmeg grater."

"I won't stand to be insulted in this way. My poor little baby," and Mrs. Bobeton flew out of the room with the little innocent, who, by this time, was yelling at the top of his voice.

Old Jerry went out and mused as he walked away: "Ole man, yers 'haved yerself mighty bad. Hit must bab been dat pine top whisky what flung yer, but fore de Lord, dat 'oman will fine out, eben ef she did neter be my youn' missis. I doan kere how white a chile is, he's got ter hab de scald head right along wid a nigger. Dem's facks, an' I believes I'll take some moah of dat pine top whisky."

Affection for Musical Instruments.

It is curious how attached people become to their piano-fortes, or in fact to any musical instrument they have long had in possession. The thing very soon becomes more than a mere insensient piece of matter; it is a companion, a friend, and the longer it is had the stronger becomes the attachment. This feeling may arise from the fact that the instrument was the gift of a very dear friend, a father, or mother, or favourite brother, or sister; or it may arise from the associations that have grown up and clustered like flowers around it; for when time has separated our loved ones from us by distance or death, the piano-forte, or the violin, or the flute, around which they were wont to gather at evening, is the link between the past and the present, the talisman that conjures up forgotten scenes, recalls the absent friend, and even, let it be said with reverence, raise the dead. But be the cause of the feeling what it may, the feeling itself is indisputable.

We once knew a family that was suddenly reduced from affluence to want. One by one their household effects had to be sacrificed to keep away the remorseless demon, hunger. Among the household gods was a pianoforte, the gift of the father to his elder daughter, a fair and gentle creature. The girl parted with her silk dresses and jewels without a murmur, and held on to the pianoforte to the last. She was an exceptionably good performer, and many a pang of wounded pride at the neglect of summer friends was soothed away, no doubt, by the music she could extract from the instrument. But at last the fatal day arrived; she could keep the piano-forte no longer; it was a question of bread or no bread. The poor girl mourned over the loss of her piano-forte as she would have mourned over the loss of a bosom friend. Her mirthfulness went with it, though she never complained, yet for a long time after, a sudden pallor of the cheek whenever the subject was referred to, betrayed how much of a wound had been made at her heart.

Quite as strong attachments are known to be entertained by professional musicians for their instruments. An incident related to the writer by a member of a travelling opera company, exemplifies this fact. One of the violinists attached to the troup, while running one day with the narrator to catch a train, dropped the case containing his violin. Observing that he trembled violently as he picked the case up, his companion asked what was the matter. "Oh!" he exclaimed, with genuine anxiety, "I'm afraid it's broken!" It was a long time afterwards before he summoned courage to open the case and examine the violin, and his delight at finding it uninjured was almost ludicrous. The same man some weeks later, while visiting Watkins' Gen, slipped and fell on the edge of a precipice. Although he made a very narrow escape from a frightful death, his composure was not in the least disturbed.

But two months have scarcely elapsed, and yet a Philadelphia girl is already disgusted with leap-year. The other evening as she began, "Will you—" her young man, without waiting to ascertain whether or not she was going to propose, sprang from the sofa, rushed off, and has carefully avoided the house ever since. And yet, aware that she possessed a very large mouth, she was merely about to ask, "Will you please shut your eyes while I gape?"

To convince his Mohammedan neighbours of his friendly feeling, the Czar has granted them permission to erect a mosque at St. Petersburg. It will be situated in the central part of the city, near the Newski Perspective in Tolerance street, where there are already a number of edifices belonging to religions tolerated nowhere else in the empire.

"How do you get on with your wife nowadays?" was the question asked on one of the boulevards. "Splendidly," was the reply, "we have just discovered a secret and it works admirably." "And pray what is it?" was the next question. "Why, you see," was the reply, "my wife and I are never at home at the same time. When she comes in, I go out, and when I come in, she goes out. The plan works admirably, and we are both very happy."