

BILL NYE

BILL NYE AND
BOOMERANG. OR, THE
TALE OF A MEEK-EYED
MULE, AND SOME
OTHER LITERARY GEMS

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Nye B.

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MY MULE BOOMERANG,

Whose bright smile haunts me still, and whose low, mellow notes are ever sounding in my ears, to whom I owe all that I am as a great man, and whose presence has inspired me ever and anon throughout the years that are gone.

THIS VOLUME,

this coronet of sparkling literary gems as it were, this wreath of fragrant forget-me-nots and meek-eyed johnny-jump-ups, with all its wealth of rare tropical blossoms and high-priced exotics, is cheerfully and even hilariously dedicated

By the Author.

THE APOLOGY

{ In my Boudoir,
{ Nov. 17, 1880.
Belford, Clarke & Co.:

Gentlemen: – In reply to your favor of the 22d ult., I herewith transmit the material necessary for a medium size volume of my chaste and unique writings.

The matter has been arranged rather hurriedly, and no doubt in classifying this rectangular mass of soul, I have selected some little epics and ethereal flights of fancy which are not as good as others that I have left out, but my only excuse is this: the literary world has been compelled to yield up first one well known historical or scientific work and then another, careful investigation having shown that they were unreliable. This left suffering humanity almost destitute of a reliable work to which it could turn in its hour of great need.

So I have been compelled to hurry more than I wanted to.

It affords me great pleasure, however, to know what a feeling of blessed rest and childlike confidence and assurance-and some more things of that nature-will follow the publication of this work.

Print the book in large coarse type, so that the old people can get a chance at it. It will reconcile them to death, perhaps.

Then sell it at a moderate price. It is really priceless in value, but put it within the reach of all, and then turn it loose without a word of warning. The Author.

Laramie City, Wyoming.

OSTROPHE TO AN ORPHAN MULE

Oh! lonely, gentle, unobtrusive mule!
Thou standest idly 'gainst the azure sky,
And sweetly, sadly singeth like a hired man.

Who taught thee thus to warble
In the noontide heat and wrestle with
Thy ceep, corroding grief and joyless woe?
Who taught thy simple heart
Its pent-up, wildly-warring waste
Of wanton woe to carol forth upon
The silent air?

I chide thee not, because thy
Song is fraught with grief-embittered
Monotone and joyless minor chords
Of wild, imported melody, for thou
Art restless, woe begirt and
Compassed round about with gloom,
Thou timid, trusting, orphan mule!
Few joys indeed, are thine,
Thou thrice-bestricken, madly
Mournful, melancholy mule.
And he alone who strews
Thy pathway with his cold remains
Can give thee recompense
Of lemoncholy woe.

He who hath sought to steer
Thy limber, yielding tail
Ferninst thy crupper-band
Hath given thee joy, and he alone.
'Tip true, he may have shot
Athwart the Zodiac, and, looking
O'er the outer walls upon
The New Jerusalem,
Have uttered vain regrets.

Thou reckest not, O orphan mule,
For it hath given thee joy, and
Bound about thy bursting heart,
And held thy tottering reason
To its throne.

Sing on, O mule, and warble
In the twilight gray,

Unhidden by the heartless throng.
Sing of thy parents on thy father's side.
Yearn for the days now past and gone:
For he who pens these halting,
Limping lines to thee
Doth bid thee yearn, and yearn, and yearn.

A MINERS' MEETING – MY MINE – A MIRAGE ON E PLAINS

Camp on the New Jerusalem Mine, May 28, 1880

I write this letter in great haste, as I have just returned from the new carbonate discoveries, and haven't any surplus time left.

While I was there a driving snow storm raged on the mountains, and slowly melting made the yellow ochre into tough plastic clay which adhered to my boots to such an extent that before I knew it my delicately arched feet were as large as a bale of hay with about the same symmetrical outlines.

A miners' meeting was held there Wednesday evening, and a district to be called Mill Creek District, was formed, being fifteen miles each way. The Nellis cabin or ranch is situated in the center of the district.

I presided over the meeting to give it an air of terror and gloom. It was very impressive. There was hardly a dry eye in the house as I was led to the chair by two old miners. I seated myself behind the flour barrel, and pounding on the head of the barrel with a pick handle, I called the august assemblage to order.

Snuffing the candle with my fingers in a graceful and pleasing style, and wiping the black off on my pants, I said: "Gentlemen of the Convention: In your selection of a chairman I detect at once your mental acumen and intelligent foresight. While you feel confident that, in the rose-colored future, prosperity is in store for you, you still remember that now you look to capital for the immediate development of your district.

"I am free to state that, although I have been but a few hours in your locality, I am highly gratified with your appearance, and I cheerfully assure you that the coffers which I command are at your disposal. In me you behold a capitalist who proposes to develop the country, regardless of expense.

"I also recognize your good sense in selecting an old miner and mineral expert to preside over your meeting. Although it may require something of a mental strain for your chairman to detect the difference between porphyry and perdition, yet in the actual practical workings of a mining camp he feels that he is equal to any emergency.

"After the band plays something soothing and the chaplain has drawn up a short petition to the throne of grace, I shall be glad to know the pleasure of the meeting."

Round after round of applause greeted this little gem of oratory. A small boy gathered up the bouquets and filed them with the secretary, when the meeting proceeded with its work. Most of the delegates came instructed, and therefore the business was soon transacted.

I located a claim called the Boomerang. I named it after my favorite mule. I call my mule Boomerang because he has such an eccentric orbit and no one can tell just when he will clash with some other heavenly body.

He has a sigh like the long drawn breath of a fog-horn. He likes to come to my tent in the morning about daylight and sigh in my ear before I am awake. He is a highly amusing little cuss, and it tickles him a good deal to pour about 13 1/2 gallons of his melody into my ear while I am dreaming, sweetly dreaming. He enjoys my look of pleasant surprise when I wake up.

He would cheerfully pour more than 13 1/2 gallons of sigh into my ear, but that is all my ear will hold. There is nothing small about Boomerang. He is generous to a fault and lavishes his low, sad, tremulous wail on every one who has time to listen to it.

Those who have never been wakened from a sweet, sweet dream by the low sad wail of a narrow-gauge mule, so close to the ear that the warm breath of the songster can be felt on the cheek, do not know what it is to be loved by a patient, faithful, dumb animal.

The first time he rendered this voluntary for my benefit, I rose in my wrath and some other clothes, and went out and shot him. I discharged every chamber of my revolver into his carcass, and went back to bed to wait till it got lighter. In a couple of hours I arose and went out to bury Boomerang. The remains were off about twenty yards eating bunch grass. In the gloom and uncertainty of night, I had shot six shots into an old windlass near a deserted shaft.

Boomerang and I get along first-rate together. When I am lonesome I shoot at him, and when he is lonesome he comes up and lays his head across my shoulder, and looks at me with great soulful eyes and sings to me.

On our way in from the mines we saw one of those beautiful sights so common in this high altitude and clear atmosphere. It was a mirage.

In the party were a lawyer, a United States official, a banker and myself. The other three members of the quartet, aside from myself are very modest men and do not wish to have their names mentioned. They were very particular about it and I have respected their wishes. Whatever Messrs. Blake, Snow or Iverson ask me to do I will always do cheerfully.

But we were speaking about the mirage. Across to the northeast our attention was at first attracted by a rank of gray towers growing taller and taller till their heads were lifted into the sky above, while at their feet there soon appeared a glassy lake in which was reflected the outlines of the massive gray walls above. It was a beautiful sight. The picture was as still and lovely to look upon as a school ma'am. We all went into raptures. It looked like some beautiful scene in Palestine. At least Snow said so, and he has read a book about Palestine, and ought to know.

There was a silence in the air which seemed to indicate the deserted sepulchre of other days, and the grim ruins towering above the depths of clear waters on whose surface was mirrored the visage of the rocks and towers on their banks, all spoke of repose and decay and the silent, stately tread of relentless years.

By and by, from out the grey background of the picture, there stole the wild, tremulous, heart-broken wail of a mule.

It seemed to jar upon the surroundings and clash harshly against our sensitive natures. Some one of the party swore a little. Then another one came to the front, and took the job off his hands. We all joined, in a gentlemanly kind of way, in condemning the mule for his lack of tact, to say the least.

All at once the line of magnificent ruins shortened and became reduced in height. They changed their positions and moved off to the left, and our dream had melted into the matter of fact scene of twenty-two immigrant wagons drawn by rat-tail mules and driven by long-haired Mormons, with the dirt and bacon rinds of prehistoric times adhering to them everywhere.

What a vale of tears this is anyway!

We are only marching toward the tomb, after all. We should learn a valuable lesson from this and never tell a lie.

THE TRUE STORY OF DAMON AND PYTHIAS

CHAPTER I

The romantic story of Damon and Pythias, which has been celebrated in verse and song, for over two thousand years, is supposed to have originated during the reign of Dionysius I., or Dionysius the Elder as he was also called, who resigned about 350 years B.C. He must have been called "The Elder," more for a joke than anything else, as he was by inclination a Unitarian, although he was never a member of any church whatever, and was in fact the wickedest man in all Syracuse.

Dionysius arose to the throne from the ranks, and used to call himself a self-made man. He was tyrannical, severe and selfish, as all self-made men are. Self-made men are very prone to usurp the prerogative of the Almighty and overwork themselves. They are not satisfied with the position of division superintendent of creation, but they want to be most worthy high grand muck-a-muck of the entire ranch, or their lives are gloomy fizzles.

Dionysius was indeed so odious and so overbearing toward his subjects that he lived in constant fear of assassination at their hands. This fear robbed him of his rest and rendered life a dreary waste to the tyrannical king. He lived in constant dread that each previous moment would be followed by the succeeding one. He would eat a hearty supper and retire to rest, but the night would be cursed with horrid dreams of the Scythians and White River Utes peeling off his epidermis and throwing him into a boiling cauldron with red pepper and other counter-irritants, while they danced the Highland fling around this royal barbecue.

Even his own wife and children were forbidden to enter his presence for fear that they would put "barn arsenic" in the blanc-mange, or "Cosgrove arsenic" in the pancakes, or Paris green in the pie.

During his reign he had constructed an immense subteroranean cavernous arrangement called the Ear of Dionysius, because it resembled in shape and general telephonic power, the human ear. It was the largest ear on record. One day a workman expressed the desire to erect a similar ear of tin or galvanized iron on old Di. himself. Some one "blowed on him," and the next morning his head was thumping about in the waste paper basket at the General Office. When one of the king's subjects, who thought he was solid with the administration, would say: "Beyond the possibility of a doubt, your Most Serene Highness is the kind and loving guardian of his people, and the idol of his subjects," His Royal Tallness would say, "What ye givin' us? Do you wish to play the Most Sublime Overseer of the Universe and General Ticket Agent Plenipotentiary for a Chinaman?"

"Ha!!! You cannot fill up the King of Syracuse with taffy." Then he would order the chief executioner to run the man through the royal sausage grinder, and throw him into the Mediterranean. In this way the sausage grinder was kept running night and day, and the chief engineer who run the machine made double time every month.

CHAPTER II

I will now bring in Damon and Pythias.

Damon and Pythias were named after a popular secret organization because they were so solid on each other. They thought more of one another than anybody. They borrowed chewing tobacco, and were always sociable and pleasant. They slept together, and unitedly "stood off" the landlady from month to month in the most cheerful and harmonious manner. If Pythias snored in the night like the blast of a fog horn, Damon did not get mad and kick him in the stomach as some would. He gently but firmly took him by the nose and lifted him up and down to the merry rythm of "The Babies in Our Block."

They loved one another in season and out of season. Their affection was like the soft bloom on the nose of a Wyoming legislator. It never grew pale or wilted. It was always there. If Damon were at the bat, Pythias was on deck. If Damon went to a church fair and invited starvation, Pythias would go, too, and vote on the handsomest baby till the First National Bank of Syracuse would refuse to honor his checks.

But one day Damon got too much budge and told the venerable and colossal old royal bummer of Syracuse what he thought of him. Then Dionysius told the chief engineer of the sausage grinder to turn on steam and prepare for business. But Damon thought of Pythias, and how Pythias hadn't so much to live for as he had, and he made a compromise by offering to put Pythias in soak while the only genuine Damon went to see his girl, who lived at Albany. Three days were given him to get around and redeem Pythias, and if he failed his friend would go to protest.

CHAPTER III

We will now suppose three days to have elapsed since the preceding chapter. A large party of enthusiastic citizens of Syracuse are gathered around the grand stand, and Pythias is on the platform cheerfully taking off his coat. Near by stands a man with a broadax. The Syracuse silver cornet band has just played "It's funny when you feel that way," and the chaplain has made a long prayer, Pythias sliding a trade dollar into his hand and whispering to him to give him his money's worth. The Declaration of Independence has been read, and the man on the left is running his thumb playfully over the edge of his meat ax. Pythias takes off his collar and tie, swearing softly to himself at his miserable luck.

CHAPTER IV

It is now the proper time to throw in the solitary horseman. The horizontal bars of golden light from the setting sun gleam and glitter from the dome of the court house and bathe the green plains of Syracuse with mellow splendor.

The billowy piles of fleecy bronze in the eastern sky look soft and yielding, like a Sarah Bernhardt. The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea, and all nature seems oppressed with the solemn hush and stillness of the surrounding and engulfing horror.

The solitary horseman is seen coming along the Albany and Syracuse toll road. He jabs the Mexican spurs into the foamy flank of his noble cayuse plug, and the lash of the quirt as it moves through the air is singing a merry song. Damon has been delayed by road agents and washouts, and he is a little behind time. Besides, he fooled a little too long and dallied in Albany with his fair gazelle. But he is making up time now and he sails into the jail yard just in time to take his part. He and Pythias fall into each other's arms, borrow a chew of fine-cut from each other and weep to slow music. Dionysius comes before the curtain, bows and says the exercises will be postponed. He orders the band to play something soothing, gives Damon the appointment of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Pythias the Syracuse post-office, and everything is lovely. Orchestra plays something touchful. Curtain comes down. Keno. *In hoc usufruct Nux Vomica est.*

SAD MEMORIES OF THE DEAD YEAR

It is with the deepest regret that I write in advance the obituary of the year 1879, and pay a last tribute to another landmark in our history before it be consigned to the boundless realms of the past. I do not write this as an item of local interest, because the year will fold its icy limbs and die at about the same time to the people of the East as to us. The limit of totality will strike us about the same. But I write of the last moments of 1879, as the subject seems to me.

The year now nearly gone has been fraught with almost innumerable blessings. None of us can look back over it without remembering many moments of pleasure. With what unalloyed bliss at this moment comes back to me the memory of that rich golden day of summer when the first watermelon billed the town and I mortgaged my little home and bought it. Then also I call to mind the day when the first strawberries began to be convalescent and were able to be out, and how forty or fifty of our leading business men formed a joint stock company and bought a whole box, Ah! life gives no richer recompense for its numberless ills than the proud moments when one buys the first box of unhappy dyspeptic berries of the season, and then compromises with one's creditors at ten cents on the dollar.

Then followed the ripe and radiant days of the Indian summer when the peaks of the distant mountains that bound the horizon, melt away into the soft warm sky, and the only sound that breaks the stillness is the merry roundelay of the John rabbit softly cooing to his mate. It is the choice season of the year when there is a solemn hush resting over the whole broad universe, a stillness like that which falls upon a peasant's dance when the "E" string of the leading violin dissolves partnership, and hits the bass violinist in the eye.

There are, indeed, many things for which we individually and as a people should be devoutly thankful. Think, for instance, how many Indians along our frontier have escaped violent deaths. Consider for a moment how a long and bloody war has been avoided by the more gentle sway of peace.

See how the olive branch waves, where a few months ago the tocsin of war echoed from the rugged hills of the West. The saber now hangs idly in its sheath and the alarms of war have petered out. See what a kind and considerate policy toward the wild untutored savage will do toward promoting the advance of universal civilization. By means of the Boston peace plan the opera and pin-pool and other adjuncts of wealth and refinement will be placed within the reach of the most illiterate and worthless sons of the forest.

It is true we are looked upon by other nations as the republic with a warm molasses poultice Indian policy; but right and softness and gentleness have overcome brute force and might. We of the West are too apt to be violent and radical in our treatment of the Indian. When he kills our family, all the family we have got, perhaps, too, and leaves us a lonely widower with the graves of our mangled household to remember him by, we are too prone to be bitter, and say mean, hateful things about him, and run him down and destroy his boom. We do not stop to consider that this is all the fun he has. We should learn to control ourselves, and look upon the Indian as a diamond in the rough. That's the way I do. I look upon Colorow as a regular Kohinoor, if he were only polished. I would be willing to polish him, too, if I had time and felt strong enough. I would hold his nose against an emery wheel, or something of that kind, very cheerfully, if my time were not all taken up.

But I have wandered away from what I was going to say relative to the old year and drifted into the Indian question, thus crowding out many sweet little things which I had mapped out to say of the snowy winding sheet which shrouds the dying year, and some more things of that kind, touching and beautiful in the extreme. I have allowed other matters to take the place of these little poetical passages and make a dull, prosy article of what I had intended to construct into a frail and beautiful fabric, with slender pinnacles, sublime arches and Queen Anne woodshed.

HERE WE COME!

HERE WE COME! HERE WE COME!

13 BILL NYE'S 13

Thirteenth Grand Semi-Annual FAREWELL CIRCUS AND HIPPODROME

He eats nothing but fresh Ohio men.

Do not fail to see our Mammoth Street Parade, the Grand Oriental and Princely Pageant, over nine miles in length, and don't you forget it! It has been pronounced by the crowned heads of the world to be the most Scrumptuous Mighty and Magnificent Confederation of Wonders. Knights in full panoply – ladies without any panoply on. Endless ranks of gold bedizened cages, *recherche* chariots; boss camels, with or without humps; cages of mammoth reptilian angle-worms; lions stuffed with baled hay; petrified circus jokes; preserved seats; gazelle-like elephants, and a bang-up outfit generally.

It is well worth a journey of one hundred miles to see alone our mammoth band chariot, flecked with burnished gold, and costing \$250 per fleck.

We will not be outflecked! Bear in mind the time and place!

GRANITE CANON, AUGUST 14TH. Afternoon and evening, with Grand Matinee for baldheaded men at 5 p.m. each day.

I challenge the world to produce the equal of this highly intellectual and amusing little cuss. He stands on four feet at one and the same time, in the mammoth pavilion, and at one price of admission, eating out of the hand with the utmost docility and reckless abandon. Boomerang is the only living performing trick stallion ever born in captivity.

In connection with the untold and priceless splendor of the glittering pageant, I will introduce the Dynamo, Hydro-phosphatic, Perihelion Electric Light, in comparison with which the mid-day sun looks like a convalescent white bean. In brilliancy and refulgent splendor, it without doubt lays over and everlastingly knocks the socks off all other lights now in the known world.

This statement I am prepared to back up with the necessary kopecks.

The wonderful Tattooed Steer from Stinking Water. If not exactly as represented, your money will be refunded to you as you pass out the door.

This costly and truly picturesque Queen Anne Steer was secured at great cost to the management, and will positively appear every day in the regular programme, and within the mammoth pavilion. If he does not in every respect do as I advertise, and with one hand tied behind him, I will be responsible.

Before and after visiting my Mammoth Show.

The royal Mexican Plug, Billy English, and the truly remarkable mule with the genuine camel's hair tail, Winfield Scott Hancock.

These animals, with almost human intelligence, walk around the ring, stepping first on one foot and then on the other.

They have been procured at enormous expense and may be found only with my stupendous aggregation of trained animals.

They represent the perfect pyramid at each performance as represented in the above engraving.

The steer which performs upon the flying trapeze and horizontal bar.

The only steer that has ever successfully enacted the aerie-dive or eagle swoop.

The wonderful performing steer, Zazel, is the only one-horned, one-eared and bob-tailed steer ever born in captivity; This steer is found alone with Bill Nye's Great Cast-Iron Hippodrome and 27-Karat Utopian Giganticum.

THE PRESS CORDIALLY INVITED

I extend to the members of the press everywhere a most hearty invitation. They will be furnished with luxuriant reclining chairs, porcelain cuspidores, and gold toothpicks to pick out the fragments of lemonade from their pearly teeth.

A special clown will be devoted to the members of the press.

A guide will have charge of visiting journalists to show them the curiosities, and see that they do not forget and carry anything away.

Members of the press will be allowed to sit on the top seats and let their feet hang down.

Do not fool with the animals.

PRESS COMMENTS

The Owltown *Bunghole* says: "No living man has ever heretofore dared to perform all he advertised. Bill Nye certainly has secured the most wonderful and costly galaxy of arenic talent, and the most perfect and oriental conglomeration of grand, gloomy and peculiar zoological specimens from the four corners of the globe. The editor and his nineteen children, with his wife and hired girl, were passed in yesterday by the handsome and gentlemanly, modest and lady-like proprietor of Bill Nye's ownest own and simultaneous world-renowned hippodrome and menagerie."

A CARD

A report has been set in circulation, probably by some unprincipled rival showmen, to the effect that I will not exhibit with my entire show at Granite Canon, but that the main show will be divided, the famous Trakene Stallion, Boomerang, going to Greeley; the Royal Mexican Plug Billy English, going to Whiskey Flat; the Mammoth Reptilian Angeworm going to Last Chance; the famous Trick Mule, Winfield Scott Hancock, going to Tie City, while the balance of the show would appear at Granite Canon.

I pronounce this and all similar reports the most flagrant, lying canards, as I shall not only appear at Granite Canon with my entire aggregation of my own and only jam-up-and-scrumptuous show and North American Boss and Supreme Oriental and Colossal Menagerie, but at all points where I have advertised to appear. I make no show, but I can buy and sell every show on the road before breakfast, and don't you forget it.

I travel on my own special train, and regular passenger and express trains are held while I have the right of way with my elegant drawing-room and palace cars for the animals, and colossal silver chariots for the men.

I exhibit also under my acres and acres of canvas, and two-bits will admit you to all parts of the show.

Special trains will run to and from Granite Canon on the day of the show at regular rates.

Simultaneously yours,

Bill Nye.

LETTER FROM PARIS

Paris, May 30th, 1878

I am going to rest myself by writing a few pages in the language spoken in the United States, for I am tired of-the infernal lingo of this God-forsaken country, and feel like talking in my own mother tongue and on some other subject than the Exposition. I have very foolishly tried to talk a little of this tongue-destroying French, but my teeth are so loose now that I am going to let them tighten up again before I try it any more.

Day before yesterday it was very warm, and I asked two or three friends to step into a big drug-store on the Rue de La Sitting Bull, to get a glass of soda. (I don't remember the names of these streets, so in some cases I give them Wyoming names.) I think the man who kept the place probably came from Canada. Most all the people in Paris are Canadians. He came forward, and had a slight attack of delirium tremens, and said:

uZe vooly voo a la boomerang?"

I patted the soda fountain and said:

"No, not so bad as that, if you please. Just squeeze a little of your truck into a tumbler, and flavor it to suit the boys. As for myself, I will take about two fingers of bug-juice in mine to sweeten my breath."

But he didn't understand me. His parents had neglected his education, no doubt, and got him a job in a drug store. So I said:

"Look here, you frog-hunting, red-headed Communist, I will give you just five minutes to fix up my beverage, and if you will put a little tangle-foot into it I will pay you; otherwise I will pick up a pound weight and paralyze you. Now, you understand. Flavor it with spirituous frumenti, old rye, benzine – bay rum – anything! *Parley voo, e pluri-bus unam, sic semper go braugh!* Do you understand that?"

But he didn't understand it, so I had to kill him. I am having him stuffed. The taxidermist who is doing the job lives down on the Rue de la Crazy Woman's Fork. I think that is the name of the Rue that he lives on.

Paris is quite an old town. It is older and wickeder than Cheyenne, I think, but I may be prejudiced against the place. It is very warm here this summer, and there are a good many odors that I don't know the names of. It is a great national congress of rare imported smells. I have detected and catalogued 1,350 out of a possible 1,400.

I have not enjoyed the Exposition so much as I thought I was going to; partly because it has been so infernally hot, and partly because I have been a little homesick. I was very homesick on board ship; very homesick indeed. About all the amusement that we had crossing the wide waste of waters was to go and lean over the ship's railing by the hour, and telescope the duodenum into the æsophagus. I used to stand that way and look down into the dark green depths of old ocean, and wonder what mysterious secrets were hidden beneath the green cold waves and the wide rushing waste of swirling, foamy waters. I learned to love this weird picture at last, and used to go out on deck every morning and swap my breakfast to this priceless panorama for the privilege of watching it all day.

I can't say that I hanker very much for a life on the ocean wave. I am trying to arrange it so as to go home by land. I think I can make up for the additional expense in food. I bought more condemned sustenance, and turned it over to the Atlantic ocean for inspection, than I have eaten since I came here.

PREHISTORIC CROCKERY

During my rambles through the Medicine Bow Range of the Rocky mountains recently, I was shown by an old frontiersman a mound which, although worn down somewhat and torn to pieces by the buffalo, the antelope and the coyote, still bore the appearance of having been at one time very large and high.

This, I was told, had, no doubt, been the burial place of some ancient tribe or race of men, the cemetery, perhaps, of a nation now unknown.

Here in the heart of a new world, where men who had known the region for fifteen or twenty years, are now called "old timers," where "new discoveries" had been made within my own recollection, we found the sepulchre of a nation that was old when the Pilgrims landed on the shores of Columbia.

I am something of an antiquarian with all my numerous charms, and I resolved to excavate at this spot and learn the hidden secrets of those people who lived when our earth was young.

I started to dig into the vast sarcophagus. The ground was very hard. The more I worked the more I felt that I was desecrating the burial place of a mighty race of men, now powerless to defend themselves against the vandal hands that sought to mar their eternal slumber.

I resolved to continue my researches according to the

Vicarious plan. I secured the services of a hardened, soulless hireling, who did not wot of the solemn surroundings, and who could dig faster than I could. He proceeded with the excavation business, while I sought a shady dell where I could weep alone.

It was a solemn thought, indeed. I murmured softly to myself —

The knights are dust,
Their swords are rust;
Their souls are with
The saints, we trust.

Just then a wood-tick ran up one of my alabaster limbs about nine feet, made a location and began to do some work on it under the United States mining laws.

I removed him by force and submitted him to the dry crushing process between a piece of micaceous slate and a fragment of deodorized, copper-stained manganese.

But we were speaking of the Aztecs, not the woodticks.

Nothing on earth is old save by comparison. The air we breathe and which we are pleased to call fresh air, is only so comparatively. It is the same old air. As a recent air it is not so fresh as "Silver Threads Among the Gold."

It has been in one form and another through the ever shifting ages all along the steady march of tireless time, but it is the same old union of various gaseous elements floating through space, only remodeled for the spring trade.

All we see or hear or feel, is old. Truth itself is old. Old and falling into disuse, too. Outside of what I am using in my business, perhaps, not over two or three bales are now on the market.

Here in the primeval solitude, undisturbed by the foot of man, I had found the crumbling remnants of those who once walked the earth in their might and vaunted their strength among the powers of their world.

No doubt they had experienced the first wild thrill of all powerful love, and thought that it was a new thing. They had known, with mingled pain and pleasure, when they struggled feebly against the omnipotent sway of consuming passion, that they were mashed, and they flattered themselves that

they were the first in all the illimitable range of relentless years who had been fortunate enough to get hold of the genuine thing. All others had been base imitations.

Here, perhaps, on this very spot, the Aztec youth with a bright eyed maiden on his arm had pledged life-long fidelity to her shrine, and in the midnight silence had stolen away from her with a pang of vigorous regret, followed by the sobs of his soul's idol and the demoralizing, leaden rain of buckshot, with the compliments and best wishes of the old man.

While I was meditating upon these things a glad shout from the scene of operations attracted my attention. I rose and went to the scene of excavation, and found, to my unspeakable astonishment and pleasure, that the man had unearthed a large Queen Anne tear jug, with Etruscan work upon the exterior. It was simply one of the old-fashioned single-barrelled tear jugs, made for a one-eyed man to cry into. The vessel was about eighteen inches in height by five or six inches in diameter, and similar to the cut above.

The graceful yet perhaps severe pottery of the Aztecs convinces me that they were fully abreast of the present century in their knowledge of the arts and sciences.

Space will not admit of an extended description of this ancient tear cooler, but I am still continuing the antiquarian researches – vicariously, of course, – and will give this subject more attention during the summer.

SUGGESTION'S FOR A SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

A number of friends having personally asked me to express an opinion upon the matter of an established school of journalism, as spoken of by ex-Mayor Henry C. Robinson, of Hartford, Connecticut, and many more through the West who are strangers to me personally, having written me to give my views upon the subject, I have consented in so far that I will undertake a simple synopsis of what the course should embrace.

I most heartily indorse the movement, if it may be called such at this early stage. Knowing a little of the intricacies of this branch of the profession, I am going to state fully my belief as to its importance, and the necessity for a thorough training upon it. We meet almost everywhere newspaper men who are totally unfitted for the high office of public educators through the all-powerful press. The woods is full of them. We know that not one out of a thousand of those who are to-day classed as journalists is fit for that position.

I know that to be the case, because people tell me so.

I cannot call to mind to-day, in all my wide journalistic acquaintance, a solitary man who has not been pronounced an ass by one or more of my fellow-men. This is indeed terrible state of affairs.

In many instances these harsh criticisms are made by those who do not know, without submitting themselves to a tremendous mental strain, the difference between a "lower case" q and the old Calvinistic doctrine of unanimous damnation, but that makes no difference; the true journalist should strive to please the masses. He should make his whole life a study of human nature and an earnest effort to serve the great reading world collectively and individually.

This requires a man, of course, with similar characteristics and the same general information possessed by the Almighty but who would be willing to work at a much more moderate salary.

The reader will instantly see how difficult it is to obtain this class of men. Outside of the mental giant who writes these lines and two or three others, perhaps —

But never mind. I leave a grateful world to say that, while I map out a plan for the ambitious young journalist who might be entering upon the broad arena of newspaperdom, and preparing himself at a regularly established school for that purpose.

Let the first two years be devoted to meditation and prayer. This will prepare the young editor for the surprise and consequent profanity which in a few years he may experience when he finds in his boss editorial that God is spelled with a little g, and the peroration of the article has been taken out and carefully locked up between a death notice and the announcement of the birth of a cross-eyed infant.

The ensuing five years should be spent in becoming familiar with the surprising and mirth-provoking orthography of the English language.

Then would follow three years devoted to practice with dumb bells, sand bags and slung shots, in order to become an athlete. I have found in my own journalistic history more cause for regret over my neglect of this branch than any other. I am a pretty good runner, but aside from that I regret to say that as an athlete I am not a dazzling success.

The above course of intermediate training would fit the student to enter upon the regular curriculum.

Then set aside ten years for learning the typographical art perfectly, so that when visitors wish to look at the composing room, and ask the editor to explain the use of the "hell box," he will not have to blush and tell a gauzy lie about its being a composing stick. Let the young journalist study the mysteries of type setting, distributing, press work, galleys, italic, shooting sticks, type lice and other mechanical implements of the printer's department.

Five years should be spent in learning to properly read and correct proof, as well as how to mark it on the margin like a Chinese map of the Gunnison country.

At least fifteen years should then be devoted to the study of American politics and the whole civil service. This time could be extended five years with great profit to the careful student who wishes, of course, to know thoroughly the names and records of all public men, together with the relative political strength of each party.

He should then take a medical course and learn how to bind up contusions, apply arnica, court plaster or bandages, plug up bullet holes and prospect through the human system for buck shot. The reason of this course which should embrace five years of close study, is apparent to the thinking mind.

Ten years should then be devoted to the study of law. No thorough metropolitan editor wants to enter upon his profession without knowing the difference between a writ of *mandamus* and other styles of profanity. He should thoroughly understand the entire system of American jurisprudence, and be as familiar with the more recent decisions of the courts as New York people are with the semi-annual letter of Governor Seymour declining the Presidency.

The student will by this time begin to see what is required of him and will enter with greater zeal upon his adopted profession.

He will now enter upon a theological course of ten years. He can then write a telling editorial on the great question of What We Shall Do To Be Saved without mixing up Calvin and Tom Paine with Judas Iscariot and Ben Butler.

The closing ten years of the regular course might be profitably used in learning a practical knowledge of cutting cord wood, baking beans, making shirts, lecturing, turning double handspins, preaching the gospel, learning how to make a good adhesive paste that will not sour in hot weather, learning the art of scissors grinding, punctuation, capitalization, prosody, plain sewing, music, dancing, sculpting, etiquette, how to win the affections of the opposite sex, the ten commandments, every man his own teacher on the violin, croquet, rules of the prize ring, parlor magic, civil engineering, decorative art, calsomining, bicycling, base ball, hydraulics, botany, poker, calisthenics, high-low jack, international law, faro, rhetoric, fifteen-ball pool, drawing and painting, mule skinning, vocal music, horsemanship, plastering, bull whacking, etc., etc., etc.

At the age of 95 the student will have lost that wild, reckless and impulsive style so common among younger and less experienced journalists. He will emerge from the school with a light heart and a knowledge-box loaded up to the muzzle with the most useful information.

The hey day and springtime of life will, of course, be past, but the graduate will have nothing to worry him any more, except the horrible question which is ever rising up before the journalist, as to whether he shall put his money into government four per cents or purchase real estate in some growing town.

THE FRAGRANT MORMON

On Tuesday morning I went down to the depot to see a large train of ten cars loaded with imported Mormons. I am not very familiar with the workings of the Church of Latter-day Saints, but I went down to see the 350 proselytes on their way to their adopted home. I went simply out of curiosity. Now my curiosity is satisfied. I haven't got to look at a Mormon train again, and it fills my heart with a nameless joy about the size of an elephant's lip, to think that I haven't got to do this any more. All through the bright years of promise yet to come I need not ever go out of my way to look at these chosen people.

When I was a boy I had two terrible obstacles to overcome, and I have dreaded them all my life until very recently. One was to eat a chunk of Limberger cheese, and the other was to look at a Mormon emigrant train.

After I visited the train I thought I might as well go and tackle the Limberger cheese, and be out of my misery. I did so, and the cheese actually tasted like a California pear, and smelled like the atter of roses. It seemed to take the taste of the Mormons out of my mouth.

I sometimes look at a carload of Montana cattle, or Western sheep, and they seem to be a good deal travel-worn and out of repair, but they are pure as the beautiful snow in comparison to what I saw Tuesday morning.

Along the Union Pacific track, on either side, the green grass and mountain flowers looked up into the glad sunlight, took one good smell and died. Cattle were driven off the range, and the corpses of overland tramps were strewn along the wake of this train, like the sands of the sea.

Deacon Bullard, Joe Arthur, Timber Line Jones and myself went over together. Deacon Bullard thought that the party was from Poland and went through the train inquiring for a man named Orlando Standemoff. I claimed that they were Scandinavians, and I followed him through the cars asking for a man named Twoquart Kattleson and Numerousotherson. Neither of us were successful.

One of these Mormons was overtaken near Point of Rocks, with an irresistable desire to change his socks (no poetry intended) and before the brakeman could lariat him and kill him, he had done so.

The Union Pacific will abandon this part of the road now and leave this point several miles away rather than spend two millions of dollars for disinfectants.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE OPERA

Most every one thinks that I don't know much about music and the opera, but this is not the case. I am very enthusiastic over this class of entertainment, and I will take the liberty to trespass upon the time and patience of my readers for a few moments while I speak briefly but graphically on this subject. A few evenings ago I had the pleasure of listening to the rendition of the "Bohemian Girl" by Emma Abbott and her troupe at the Grand Opera House. I was a little late, but the manager had saved me a pleasant seat where I could alternately look at the stage and out through the skylight into the clear autumn sky.

The plot of the play seems to be that "Arline," a nice little chunk of a girl, is stolen by a band of gypsies, owned and operated by "Devilshoof," who looks some like "Othello" and some like Sitting Bull. "Arline" grows up among the gypsies and falls in love with "Thaddeus." "Thaddeus" was played by Brignoli. Brignoli was named after a thoroughbred horse.

"Arline" falls asleep in the gypsy camp and dreams a large majolica dream, which she tells to "Thaddeus." She says that she dreamed that she dwelt in marble halls and kept a girl and had a pretty fly time generally, but after all she said it tickled her more to know that "Thaddeus" loved her still the same, and she kept saying this to him in G, and up on the upper register, and down on the second added line below, and crescendo and diminuendo and deuodessimo, forward and back and swing opposite lady to place, till I would have given 1,000 shares paid-up non-assessable stock in the Boomerang if I could have been "Thad."

Brignoli, however, did not enter into the spirit of the thing. He made me mad, and if it hadn't been for Em. I would have put on my hat and gone home. He looked like the man who first discovered and introduced Buck beer into the country. She would come and put her sunny head up against his cardigan jacket and put one white arm on each shoulder and sing like a bobolink, and tell him how all-fired glad she was that he was still solid. I couldn't help thinking how small a salary I would be willing to play "Thaddeus" for, but he stood there like a basswood man with Tobias movement, and stuck his arms out like a sore toe, and told her in F that he felt greatly honored by her attention, and hoped some day to be able to retaliate, or words to that effect.

I don't want any trouble with Brignoli, of course, but I am confident I can lick him with one hand tied behind me, and although I seek no quarrel with him, he knows my post office address, and I can mop the North American continent with his remains, and don't you forget it.

After awhile the "Gypsy Queen," who is jealous of "Arline," puts up a job on her to get her arrested, and she is brought up before her father, who is a Justice of the Peace for that precinct, and he gives her \$25 and trimmings, or thirty days in the Bastile. By and by, however, he catches sight of her arm, and recognizes her by a large red Goddess of Liberty tattooed on it, and he remits the fine and charges up the costs to the county.

Her father wants her to marry a newspaper man and live in affluence, but "Arline" still hankers for "Thad.," and turns her back on the oriental magnificence of life with a journalist. But "Thaddeus" is poor. All he seems to have is what he can gather from the community after office hours, and the chickens begin to roost high and he is despondent apparently. Just as "Arline" is going to marry the newspaper man, according to the wishes of her pa, "Thaddeus" sails in with an appointment as Notary Public, bearing the Governor's big seal upon it, and "Arline" pitches into the old man and plays it pretty fine on him till he relents and she marries "Thaddeus," and they go to housekeeping over on the West Side, and he makes a bushel of money as Notary Public, and everybody sings, and the band plays, and she is his'n, and he is her'n.

There is a good deal of singing in this opera. Most everybody sings. I like good singing myself.

Emma Abbott certainly warbles first-rate, and her lovemaking takes me back to the halcyon days when I cared more for the forbidding future of my moustache, and less for meal-time than I

do now. But Brignoli is no singer according to my aesthetic taste. He sings like a man who hasn't taken out his second papers yet, and his stomach is too large. It gets in the way and "Arline" has to go around it and lean up on his flank when she wants to put her head on his breast.

A SUNNY LITTLE INCIDENT

Thursday evening, in company with a friend, I rode up into the city on the Rock Island train and was agreeably surprised by seeing a Rocky Mountain man, a few seats ahead, sitting with a lady who seemed to be very much in love with him, and he was trying the best he knew to out-gush her. Now the gentleman's wife was at home in Wyoming in blissful ignorance of all this business while he was ostensibly buying his fall and winter stock of goods in Chicago.

The most obtuse observer could see that the companion of this man was not his wife, for she was gentle toward him, and looked lovingly in his eyes. Every one in the car laid aside all other business and watched the performance.

Then I whispered to my friend and said, "That is not the wife of that man. I can tell by the way they look into the depths of each other's eyes and ignore the other passengers. I'll bet ten dollars he has seven children and a wife at home right now. Isn't it scandalous?"

"You can't always tell that way," said my friend. "I've seen people who had been married twenty years who were just as loving and spooney as that."

He was biting a little, so I kept at him till he put up the ten dollars and agreed to leave it with the man himself. It was taking an advantage of my friend, of course, but he had played a miserable joke on me only a few days before; so I covered the \$10, and walking up to the man I slapped him on the shoulder and said, "Hullo, George. How do you think you feel?"

He looked around surprised and amazed, as I knew he would be, but he wouldn't let on that he knew me. So I slapped him on the shoulder again, and gurgled a low musical laugh that welled up from the merry depths of my joyous nature, and filled the car full of glad and child-like melody.

My friend came forward and said, "Mr. Van Horn, let me make you acquainted with Mr. Nye, of Wyoming, who lives in a wild country, where every one goes up to every one else and says, hello, George or Jim, no matter whether he is acquainted or not. You musn't pay any attention to it at all; he don't mean anything by it. It is his way."

It was Mr. Van Horn, who had lived in Illinois for thirty-five years and had been married ten years to the lady who sat with him. That evening my friend and I went to Hooley's to see Robson and Crane, in the "Comedy of Errors." The play is supposed to be funny. Several people laughed at the performance at various stages, but I did not, for just as I would get to feeling comfortable the man who sat next to me, and who claimed to be a friend of mine, would lean over, and say:

"Hullo, George; how do you think you feel?" Then he would burst forth into the coarsest and most vulgar laughter. How few people there are in the world who seem to thoroughly understand the eternal fitness of things, and how many there are who laugh gaily on in the presence of those who suffer in silence, and with superhuman strength stifle their corroding woe.

HE REWARDED HER

A noble, generous-hearted man in Cheyenne lost a wallet on Saturday, at the Key City House, and an honest chambermaid found it in his room. The warm heart of the man swelled with gratitude, and seemed to reach out after all mankind, that he might in some way assist them with the \$250 which was lost, and was found again. So he fell on the neck of the chambermaid, and while his tears took the starch out of her linen collar, he put his hand in his pocket and found her a counterfeit twenty-five cent scrip. "Take this," he said, between his sobs, "virtue is its own reward. Do not use it unwisely, but put it into Laramie County bonds, where thieves cannot corrupt, nor moths break through and gnaw the corners off."

THE MODERN PARLOR STOVE

In view of the new and apparently complex improvements in heating stoves, and the difficulty of readily operating them successfully, a word or two as to their correct management may not be out of place at this time.

Some time since, having worn out my old stove and thrown it aside, I purchased a new one called the "Fearfully and Wonderfully Maid." It had been highly spoken of by a friend, so I set it up in the parlor, turned on steam, threw the throttle wide open, and waited to see how it would operate. At the first stroke of the piston I saw that something was wrong with the reversible turbine wheel, and I heard a kind of grating sound, no doubt caused by the rubbing of the north-east trunnion on the face plate of the ratchet-slide. Being utterly ignorant of the workings of the stove, I attempted to remedy this trouble without first reversing the boomerang, and in a few moments the gas accumulated so rapidly that the cross-head gave way, and the right ventricle of the buffer-beam was blown higher than Gilroy's kite, carrying with it the saddle-plate, bull-wheel and monkey-wrench. Of course it was very careless to overlook what the merest school-boy ought to know, for not only were all these parts of the stove a total wreck, but the crank-arbor, walking-beam and throat-latch were twisted out of shape, and so mixed up with the feed-cam, tumbling-rod, thumb-screw, dial-plate and colic indicator, that I was obliged to send for a practical engineer at an expense of \$150, with board and travelling expenses, to come and fix it up.

Now, there is nothing more simple than the operation of one of these stoves, with the most ordinary common sense. At first, before starting your fire, see that the oblique diaphragm and eccentric shaft are in their true position; then step to the rear of the stove and reverse the guide plate, say three quarters of an inch, force the stretcher bar forward and loosen the gang-plank. After this start your fire, throw open the lemon-squeezer and right oblique hydraulic, see that the tape-worm pinion and Aurora Borealis are well oiled, bring the rotary pitman forward until it corresponds with the maintop mizzen, let go the smoke stack, horizontal duodenum, thorough brace and breech-pin, and as the stove begins to get under way you can slide forward the camera; see that the ramrod is in its place, unscrew the cerebellum, allow the water guage to run up to about 750 in the shade, keep your eye on the usufruct, and the stove cannot fail to give satisfaction. The Fearfully and Wonderully Maid may not be a cheap or durable stove, but for simplicity and beauty of execution, she seems to excel and lay over, and everlastingly get away with all other stoves, by a very large majority.

REMARKS TO ORIGINATORS

It is the wild delight which comes with the glad moment of discovery, and the feeling that he is treading on unexplored ground, that thrills the genius, whether he be a writer, a speaker, an inventor of electric light, or the man who first gets the idea for a new style of suspender.

Think how Carl Schurz must have broken forth into a grand piano voluntary, when he knew for a dead moral certainty that he had struck a new lead in the Indian policy. It was the sweet feeling of newness, such as we feel when for the first time we put on a new, rough flannel undershirt, and it occupies our attention all the time and brings us to the scratch.

Think how the 2571 originators of "Beautiful Snow" must have felt when they woke up in the night and composed seventeen or eighteen stanzas of it with the mercury at 43 degrees below par.

Think how Franklin must have felt when he invented electricity and knew that he had at last found something that could be used in sending cipher dispatches over the country.

Think how Hayes must have danced the highland fling around the executive mansion when the first idea of civil service reform dashed like a sheet of lightning through his brain.

These are only a few isolated illustrations of the unalloyed joy of discovery. They go to show, however, that the true genius and the true originator – whether he be simply the first man to work the vein of an idea, or the inventor of a patent safety-pin – is the man who makes the world better. He is the boss. He is the man to whom we look for delightful surprises and pleasant items of the world's progress. Then do not be discouraged, ye who linger along the worn-out ruts where others have travelled. Brace up and press onward. Perhaps you may invent a new style of spelling, or something unique in the line of profanity. Do not lose hope. Hope on, hope ever. Give your attention to the matter of improving the average Indian editorial. Or if you cannot do even this, go into your laboratory and work nights till you invent a deadly poison that will knock the immortal soul out of the average bedbug, or produce a frightful mortality among cockroaches, or book agents, or some other annoying insect. Invent a directory, or a glittering falsehood, or a napkin-ring, or a dog-collar, or a cork screw. Do something, no matter how small, for the advancement of civilization.

QUEER

An exchange says that the people of that locality were considerably excited the other day over a three-cornered dog fight that occurred there. This is not surprising. Had it been simply a combat between oblong or rectangular dogs, or even a short but common-place fight between rhombohedral or octagonal dogs it would not have attracted any attention, but an engagement between triangular dogs is something that calls forth our wonder and surprise.

SIC SEMPER GLORIA HOUSEPLANT

Evidently it is an ill wind that blows nobody good. Although this severe weather froze up the water barrel and doubles the coal bill, I am filled with a great large feeling of gratitude and pleasure this evening, for the last pale house plant, which for two or three weeks has been sighing for immortality, last night about midnight, got all the immortality it wanted, and this morning no doubt it is blooming in the new Jerusalem. I am glad it will bloom somewhere. It never got up steam enough to bloom here.

The head of the house thought he heard the rustle of wings in the still hours of night, and arising in all the voluptuous sweep of his night robe, and with the clear white beams of the winter moon lighting up the angles and gothic architecture of his picturesque proportions, he stepped to the bedside of the sickly little thing to ask if there was anything he could do, any last words that the little plant would like to have preserved, or anything of the kind, but it was too late. John Frost had been there, and touched the little thing with his icy finger, and all was still. The agricultural editor breathed a sigh of relief and went back to rest, neglecting to awaken the other members of the house, because he did not want a scene.

Any one desiring a medium sized flower-pot as good as new, can obtain one at this office very reasonably.

HOW TO TELL

For the benefit of my readers, many of whom are not what might be called practical newspaper men and women, I will say that if your time is very precious, and life is too short for you to fool away your evenings reading local advertisements, and you are at times in grave doubt as to what is advertisement and what is news, just cast your eye to the bottom of the article, and if there is a foot-note which says "*ty4-fritu, 3dp&wly, hcolnrm, br-jn7, 35tfwly, &df-codtf,*" or something of that stripe, you may safely say that no matter how much confidence you may have had in the editor up to that date, the article with a foot-note of that kind is published from a purely mercenary motive, and the editor may or may not endorse the sentiments therein enunciated.

BIOGRAPHY OF COLOROW

Brigadier-General Wm. H. Colorow was born on the frontier in July, 1824, of poor but honest parents. Early in 1843, he obtained the appointment to West Point through the influence of his Congressmen. While at West Point he was the leader of the Young Men's Christian Association, and now, if the army officers knew the grips, passwords and signals of the Association, and would use them, much good might be accomplished in bringing the General to terms, as he still respects the organization. But most of the army officers are a little rusty in the secret work of the Y. M. C. A.

Lieutenant Colorow, after graduating at the head of his class, came west to engage in the scalp trade, in which he has been very successful. "Colorow's Great Oriental Hair Raiser and Scalp Agitator" is known and respected all over the civilized world.

He has also held the position of Master of Transportation on the air line route from Colorado to Kingdom Come. His promotion has been rapid and his career has been filled with wonderful incidents.

General Colorow is not above the medium height. He wears his hair straight, and parted in the middle – a habit he contracted while at West Point. He sometimes parts the white man's hair in the middle also. He does it with his little hatchet. He is rather inclined to the brunette order of architecture, with Gothic nose, Eastlake jaws, and ears of the Queen Anne style. His hair is turning gray and his face is burned and specked with powder, caused by an explosion which came near terminating an eventful career.

Brigadier-General Colorow owns considerable stock in some of the best North Park mines. Occasionally, he goes out to the Park to see how these mines are panning out. Then the miners, out of respect for his feelings, leave the mines and come into town to see what is the latest news from the front. Some of the miners have neglected to come in at times when the General was visiting the mines. They are there yet. I have a mine out there but I am getting along first-rate without it, and I have been thinking that when the General celebrates his silver wedding, I will send up this mine to his residence, wrapped up in a clean napkin, with his monogram worked on it.

DIARY OF A SAUCY YOUNG THING

It may be wrong to publish the contents of a diary, but the following notes in a new diary found yesterday, are too good to lose:

Jan. 1, 1877. To-day is New Year's day. Last night was Sunday night. I remember it distinctly. George and I watched the old year out and the new year in. George is awful kind-hearted. He has quit using tobacco on my account. He hasn't taken a chew this year.

Jan. 3. I didn't get time to write anything yesterday.

Jan. 4. This is Thursday. Day after to-morrow will be Saturday, and the next day will be Sunday.

Jan. 8. George was here last evening. I found some tobacco in his overcoat. Can he be deceiving me? O what false hearts men have! We had popcorn last evening. George and I ate a milk-pan full. He says popcorn seems to supply a want long felt. I don't know where he heard that.

Jan. 9. Another long week before the blessed rest and quiet of the Sabbath. I met George yesterday near the postoffice, and he didn't laugh as he once laughed. I wonder what makes him so sad. Maybe it's going without tobacco, or perhaps it's a boil. O what a world of woe!

Jan. 10. George is trying to raise a moustache. It looks like a Norwegian's eyebrow. It is genuine camel's hair. George's mother treats him unkindly, because he has pearl powder on his coat sleeves Monday morning. Four more days and the peace and quiet of the Sabbath will be here. I am a great admirer of Sunday.

Jan. 11. To-day is Thursday. O pshaw, I can't keep a diary.

KILLING OFF THE JAMES' BOYS

Now that a terrible mortality has again broken out among the James' boys, it is but justice to a family who have received so many gratuitous obituary notices, to say that the James' boys are still alive and enjoying a reasonable amount of health and strength.

Although the papers are generally agreed upon the statement that they are more or less dead, yet in a few days the telegraph will announce their death again. They are dying on every hand. Hardly a summer zephyr stirs the waving grass that it does not bear upon its wings the dying groan of the James' boys. Every blast of winter howls the requiem of a James' boy. James' boys have died in Texas and in Minnesota, in New England and on the Pacific coast. They have been yielding up the ghost whenever they had a leisure moment. They would rob a bank or a printing office, or some other place where wealth is known to be stored, and then they would die. When business was very active one of the brothers would stay at home and attend to work while the other would go and lay down his life.

Whenever the yellow fever let up a little the Grim Destroyer would go for a James' boy, and send him to his long home.

The men who have personally and individually killed the James' boys from time to time, contemplate holding a grand mass meeting and forming a new national party. This will no doubt be the governing party next year.

Let us institute a reform. Let us ignore the death of every plug who claims to be a James' boy, unless he identifies himself. Let us examine the matter and see if the trade mark is on every wrapper or blown in the bottle, before we fill the air with woe and bust the broad canopy of heaven wide open with our lamentations over the untimely death of the James' boys. If we succeed in standing them off while they live we can afford to control our grief and silently battle with our emotions when they are still in death, until we know we are snorting and bellowing over the correct corpse.

A RELIC

The Hutchinson family gave a concert last evening at the Methodist church, according to advertisement, and were greeted with a fair house. The entertainment did not awaken very loud applause, nor very much of it. The songs were not new. Many of them I had almost forgotten, but they were trotted out last evening and driven around the track in pretty fair time.

The fresh little quartette entitled, "Tommy, don't Go," was brought forward during the entertainment. I could see that this song has failed very much since I last met it. Its teeth are falling out, and it is getting very bald-headed. It will probably make two or three more grand farewell concerts and then it will be found dead in its bed some morning before breakfast.

"Silver Threads Among the Gold" was omitted from the programme.

The old melodeon that I remember was rickety and out of repair when I was a prattling infant, was on the stage last evening. It is about the size of a mouth organ, but the tone is not as clear. It is getting wheezy, and a short breath shows that it is beginning to feel the infirmities of age. The pumping arrangement makes more noise than the music, and something is the matter with the exhaust pipe. But when the old man opened the throttle and gave her sand, she would make a good deal of racket for such a little thing. After the concert was over, Mr. Hutchinson rolled up the melodeon in his pocket handkerchief and took it home.

Take the entertainment up one side and down the other, I was not much tickled with it. For those who like to drift back into the musty centuries gone by, and shake hands with the skeletons of forgotten ages, it is all right; but the time has come when a troupe cannot travel upon anything but true merit, and the public require that those who ask for money shall give some kind of an equivalent.

SOME REASONS WHY I CAN'T BE AN INDIAN AGENT

I see by the Western press that my name has been suggested to the Secretary of the Interior as a suitable one for the appointment of Indian Agent at the Uncompahgre Agency to succeed Berry; and, while I must express my grateful acknowledgment for the apparent faith and childlike confidence reposed in me by the people of Colorado, I must gently but firmly decline the proffered distinction.

In the first place, my other duties will not admit of it. My time is very much occupied at present in my journalistic work, and should there be a falling off in my chaste and picturesque contributions to the press, the great surging world of literature would be surprised and grieved.

Again, I could not entirely lay aside this class of work anyway, even were I to accept the position, and as I cannot write without being wrapped in the most opaque gloom and perfect calm I would be annoyed, I know, by the war-whoops of the savage when he got to playing croquet in the front yard, and whenever he got to shooting at me through the window while I was composing a poem, I am perfectly positive that I would get restless and the divine afflatus would cease to give down.

The true poet loves seclusion and soothing rest. That is the secret of his even numbers and smooth cadences. Look at Dryden, and Walt Whitman, and Milton, and Burns, and the Sweet Singer of Michigan. What could any of them have done with the house full of children of the forest who were hankering for a fresh pail of gore for lunch?

Further than this, I have not that gentle magnetic power over the untutored savage that some have. I am agitated all the time by a nervous dread that if I go near him I may lose my self-command and kill him. I would lose my temper some day when I felt irritable, I'm afraid, and shoot into a drove of them and mangle them horribly if they refused to dig the potatoes, or got rebellious and wouldn't do the fall plowing.

Then I would have to hunt up a suitable military post 200 or 300 miles away and stay there till the popular feeling in the tribe had cooled down a little.

Then, again, the Utes would invite me to attend the regular social hops during the winter, and I wouldn't know what to do, for it would be bad policy to refuse, and yet I don't know the first figure of the war-dance. I dance like a club-footed camel, anyway, and when I got mixed up in the scalp-dance the floor-manager would get mad at me probably, and chop some large irregular notches in me with a broad-ax.

Then their costumes are so low-necked and so exceedingly dress, and everything is so all-fired decolette, whatever that is. I would probably insist on wearing a liver-pad on a chilblain, and they wouldn't dance with me all the evening, and I would be a wall-flower, and they would call me a perfect dud, and would laugh at the way my liver-pad was cut, and I would go home and cry myself to sleep over the whole miserable affair.

So that perhaps it would be just as well to plug along as I am and not get ambitious. The life of the ostensible humorist may not be so fraught with untrammelled nature and sylvan retreats, and wild, picturesque canons, and bosky dells, and things of that kind, but it is cheering and comforting to put your hand on the top of your head and feel that it is still on deck, and, although wealth may not come pouring in upon you in such an irresistible torrent as you may desire, you know that if you can get enough to eat from day to day, and dodge the Vigilance Committee and the celluloid pie, you are comparatively safe.

Besides all this, I am afraid I am not in proper spiritual shape to go among the Indians., Suppose that on some softened, mellow, autumnal day they were all clustered about me with the bacon grease and war paint on every childlike countenance, and while I stood there in the midst of all the autumn splendor with the woods clothed in all the gorgeous apparel of the deceased year, telling them of the beauties of industry, and peace, and the glad unfettered life of the buckwheat promoter, or while I read a passage of Scripture to them and was explaining it, and they were looking up into my face

with their great fawnlike eyes, all at once one of them should playfully shoot my wife – all the wife I had, too – or my hired girl! The chances are about even that I would throw down the Bible and fly into an ungovernable rage and swear, and be just as harsh, and rude, and unreasonable as I could be. Then, after I had hammered the immortal soul out of the entire tribe, and my wrath had spent itself, I would probably bitterly regret it all.

O it's of no use. I can't accept the position. I've been in the habit of swearing at the spring poet and the "constant reader" too long, and I know just as well as any one how it unfits me for every walk of life that requires meekness and gentle Christian forbearance.

THE PICNIC SNOOZER'S LAMENT

Gently lay aside the picnic,
For its usefulness is o'er,
And the winter style of misery
Stands and knocks upon your door.

Lariat the lonely oyster
Drifting on some foreign shore;
Zion needs him in her business —
She can use him o'er and o'er.

Bring along the lonely oyster,
With the winter style of gloom,
And the supper for the pastor,
With its victims for the tomb.

Cast the pudding for the pastor,
With its double iron door;
It will gather in the pastor
For the bright and shining shore.

Put away the little picnic
Till the coming of the spring;
Useless now the swaying hammock
And the idle picnic swing.

Put away the pickled spider
And the cold-pressed picnic fly,
And the decorated trousers
With their wealth of custard pie.

BILLIOUS NYE AND BOOMERANG IN THE GOLD MINES

Whenever the cares of life weigh too heavily upon me, and the *ennui* which comes to those who have more wealth than they know what to do with settles down upon me, and I get weary of civilization, I like to load up my narrow-gauge mule Boomerang and take a trip into the mountains. I call my mule Boomerang because I never know where he is going to strike. He is a perpetual surprise to me in this respect. A protracted acquaintance with him, however, has taught me to stand in front of him when I address him, for the recoil of Boomerang is very disastrous. Boomerang is very much below the medium height, with a sad, faraway look in his eye. He has an expression of woe and disappointment and gloom, because life has been to him a series of blasted hopes and shattered ambitions.

In his youth he yearned to be the trick-mule of a circus, and though he fitted himself for that profession, he finds himself in the decline of life with his bright anticipations nothing but a vast and robust ruin. About all the relaxation he has is to induce some trusting stranger to caress his favorite chilblain, and then he kicks the confiding stranger so high that he can count the lamp-posts on the streets of the New Jerusalem. When Boomerang and I visit a mining camp the supplies of giant powder and other combustibles are removed to some old shaft and placed under a strong guard. In one or two instances where this precaution was not taken the site of the camp is now a desolate, barren waste, occupied by the prairie-dog and the jack-rabbit. When Boomerang finds a nitro-glycerine can in the heart of a flourishing camp, and has room to throw himself, he can arrange a larger engagement for the coroner than any mule I ever saw.

There is a new camp in the valley of the Big Laramie River, near the dividing line between Wyoming and Colorado. A few weeks ago the murmur of the rapid river down the canon and the cheerful solo of the cayote alone were heard. Now several hundred anxious excited miners are prospecting for gold, and the tent-town grows apace. Up and down the sides of the river and over the side of the mountain every little way a notice greets the eye announcing that "the undersigned claim 1,500 feet in length by 300 feet in width upon" the lode known as the Pauper's Dream, or the Blue Tail Fly, or the Blind Tom, or the Captain Kidd, or the Pigeon-Toed Pete, with all the dips, spurs, angles, gold and silver bearing rock or earth therein contained.

I have a claim further on in the North Park of Colorado. I have always felt a little delicate about working it, because heretofore several gentlemen from the Ute reservation on White River have claimed it. They are the same parties who got into a little difficulty with Agent Meeker and killed him. Of course these parties are not *bona fide* citizens of the United States, and therefore cannot hold my claim under the mining law; but I have not as yet raised the point with them. Whenever they would go over into the park for rest and recreation, I would respect their feelings and withdraw. I didn't know but they might have some private business which they did not wish me to overhear, so I came away.

Once I came away in the night. It is cooler travelling in the night, and does not attract so much attention. Last summer Antelope and his band came over into the park and told the miners that he would give them "one sleep" to get out of there. I told him that I didn't care much for sleep anyhow, and I would struggle along somehow till I got home. I told him that my constitution would stand it first-rate without rest, and I felt as though my business in town might be suffering in my absence. So I went home. The mine is there yet, but I would sell it very reasonably – very reasonably indeed. I do not apprehend any trouble from the Indians, but I have lost my interest in mines to some extent. The Indians are not all treacherous and bloodthirsty as some would suppose. Only the live ones are that way. Wooden Indians are also to be relied upon.

In digging an irrigating ditch on the Laramie Plains, last summer, the skeleton of an Indian chief was plowed up. I went to look at him. He had, no doubt, been dead many years; but in the dry alkaline divide, at an elevation of nearly 8,000 feet above sea level, his skull had been preserved pretty well. I took it in my hand and looked it over and shook the sand out of it, and convinced myself that life was extinct. An Indian is not always dead when he has that appearance. I always feel a little timid till I see his scapula, and ribs, and shin bones mixed up so that Gabriel would rather arrange a 15 puzzle than to fix up an Indian out of the wreck. Then I have the most child-like faith and confidence in him. When some avenging fate overtakes a Ute and knocks him into pi, and thus makes a Piute out of him, and flattens him out like a postage stamp, and pulverizes him, and runs him over the amalgator, and assays him so that he lies in the retort like a seidlitz powder, then I feel that I can trust him. I do not care then how much the cold world may scoff at him. Prior to that I am very reserved and very reticent.

That is why I presented my mine to the Ute nation as a slight token of my respect and esteem. Then I went away. I did not hurry much, but I had every inducement and encouragement to reach home at the earliest possible moment, and the result was very gratifying. Very much so, indeed. I left my gun and ammunition, but it did not matter. It wasn't a very good gun anyhow. I do not need it. Any one going into the park this summer can have it. It is standing behind the door of the cabin between the piano and the whatnot.

TWO GREAT MEN

Mr. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, passed through here on his way to San Francisco on Wednesday evening, with his party.

In company with Delegate Downey, Judge Blair and United States Marshal Schnitger, I went into the Secretary's special car and talked with him while the train stopped here.

The other members of the party did most of the talking and I eloquently sat on the back of a chair and whistled a few bars from a little operatta that I am having cast at the rolling-mill. I am not very hilarious in the presence of great at men. I am not so much at home in their society as I am in my own quiet little boudoir, with one leg over the piano, and the other tangled up among the \$2,500 lace curtains and Majolica dogs.

Bye and bye I thought that I had better show the Secretary that I knew more than the casual observer would suppose, and I said, "Mr. Thompson, how's your navy looking this summer? Have you sheared your iron-clad rams yet, and if so, what will the clip average do you think?" He laughed a merry, rippling laugh, and said if he were at home he would swear that he was in the presence of the mental giant, William G. Le Duc.

I was very much pleased with the Secretary. This will insure the brilliant success of his Western trip.

He paid the Laramie plains a high compliment; said they were greener, and the grass was far superior to that of any part of the country through which he had passed. He said he was as positive of Garfield's election as he was of reaching San Francisco, and chatted pleasantly upon the general topics of the day.

I could see that he was accustomed to the very best society, for he stood there in the blinding glare of my dazzling beauty, as self-possessed and cool as though he were at home talking with Ben Butler and Conkling and Carpenter and other rising young men.

There is a striking resemblance between the Secretary and myself. We are both tall and slender, with roguish eyes and white hair. His, however, is white from age, and is a kind of bluish white. Mine is white because it never had moral courage or strength of character enough to be any other color. It also has more of a lemon-colored tinge to it than the Secretary's has.

We resemble each other in several more respects. One is that we are both United States officials. He is a member of the Cabinet, and I am a United States Commissioner. We are both great men, but I have succeeded better in keeping it a profound secret than he has.

DIRTY MURPHY

On Thursday a man known by the Castillian nom de plume of Dirty Murphy, was engaged in digging out a frozen water-pipe in front of the New York House, when the glowing inspiration came upon him that the frozen earth could be blasted much easier than it could be dug, so he drilled a hole down to the pipe and put in a shot preparatory to lifting a large portion of the universe out by the roots and laying bare the foundations of the earth.

John Humpfner, the ram-rod of the New York House, feared that the explosion might break the large French plate glass windows of his palatial hotel, and so put a wash tub over the blast. What the exact notion of Mr. Humpfner was relative to the result in this case, I am unable to say, but when the roar of the universal convulsion had died away, and the result was examined by Mr. Humpfner and the Count de Dirty Murphy, they looked surprised.

Instead of blowing out a large tract of land and laying bare the entire water and gas system of the city, the blast blew out like a sick fire-cracker with a loose fuse, and, taking the washtub with it, sailed away into the realms of space. It crashed through the milky way and passed on in its mad flight into the boundless stretch of the unknown. Those who saw the affair and had no interest in the wash-tub, enjoyed it very much, but to the incorporators and bondholders who held the controlling interest in the tub, the whole thing seemed a hollow mockery and a desolate, dreary waste. Don Miguel de Dirty Murphy swooned on the spot. The hose has been playing on him ever since, but he has not returned to consciousness. The later geological formations have been washed away, and it is thought that by working a night shift, prehistoric and volcanic encrustations will be removed so that the pores may be opened and life and animation return, but it is a long, tedious job, and the superintending geologist is beginning to despair.

A ROCKY MOUNTAIN SUNSET

Speaking of the hours of closing day reminds me that we have recently witnessed some of the most brilliant and beautiful sunsets here that I have ever seen. In justice to Wyoming, I will say that she certainly deserves a word for the gorgeous splendor of her summer sunset skies.

The air is perfectly pure, and at that hour the sighing zephyr seems to have sighed about all it wants to and dies away to rest. The pulse of tired Nature is almost still, and the luxurious sense of rest is upon the face of the silent world. The god of day drops slowly down the crimson west, as though he reluctantly bade adieu to the grassy plains and rugged hills. Anon the golden bars of resplendent light are shot across the deep blue of heaven, the fleecy clouds are tipped and bordered with pale gold, while the heavy billows of bronze are floating in a mighty ocean of the softest azure. The blue grows deeper and the gold more dazzling. The scarlet becomes intensified and the softened east takes up the magnificent reflection. The hills and mountains are bathed in the beams of this occidental splendor, and the landscape adorns itself in honor of nature's most wonderful diurnal spectacle.

It is certainly the boss. These mountain sunsets in the pure, clear air of Wyoming and Colorado, as thrilling triumphs of natural loveliness, most unquestionably take the cake.

The Italian sunset is a good fair average sunset, but the admission is too high. It also lacks expression and *embonpoint*, whatever that may be.

May be it is not *embonpoint* which it lacks, but it is something of that nature.

These beautiful sights awake the poet's soul within me, and on one occasion I wrote a little ode or apostrophe to the sunset, which was as sweet a little thing as I ever saw in the English language, but the taxidermist spoiled it. He left it out in the hot sun while he was stuffing a sage hen, and the poor little thing seemed to wilt and retire from the public gaze.

THE TEMPERATURE OF THE BUMBLE-BEE

A recent article on bees says, "If you have noticed bees very closely, you may have seen that they are not all alike in size."

I have noticed bees very closely indeed, during my life. In fact I have several times been thrown into immediate juxtaposition with them, and have had a great many opportunities to observe their ways, and I am free to say that I have not been so forcibly struck with the difference in their size as the noticeable difference in their temperature.

I remember at one time of sitting by a hive watching the habits of the bees, and thinking how industrious they were, and what a wide difference there is between the toilsome life of the little insect, and the enervating, aimless, idle and luxurious life of the newspaper man, when an impulsive little bee lit in my hair. He seemed to be feverish. Whereever he settled down he seemed to leave a hot place. I learned afterward that it was a new kind of bee called the anti-clinker base-burner bee.

O, yes, I have studied the ways of the bee very closely. He is supposed to improve each shining hour. That's the great objection I have to him. The bee has been thrown up to me a great deal during my life, and the comparison was not flattering. It has been intimated that I resembled the bee that sits on the piazza of the hive all summer and picks his teeth, while the rest are getting in honey and beeswax for the winter campaign.

DRAWBACKS OF PUBLIC LIFE

I always like to tell anything that has the general effect of turning the laugh on me, because then I know there will be no hard feelings. It is very difficult to select any one who will stand publicity when that publicity is more amusing to the average reader than to the chief actor. Every little while I run out of men who enjoy being written about in my chaste and cheerful vein. Then I hate to come forward and take this position myself. It is not egotism, as some might suppose. It is unselfishness and a manly feeling of self-sacrifice.

Last year I consented to read the Declaration of Independence, as my share of the programme, partially out of gallantry toward the Goddess of Liberty, and partly to get a ride with the chaplain and orator of the day, through the principal streets behind the band. It was a very proud moment for me. I felt as though I was holding up one corner of the national fabric myself, and I naturally experienced a pardonable pride about it. I sat in the carriage with the compiled laws of Wyoming under my arm, and looked like Daniel Webster wrapped in a large bale of holy calm. At the grounds I found that most everybody was on the speakers' stand, and the audience was represented by a helpless and unhappy minority.

At a Fourth of July celebration it is wonderful how many great men there are, and how they swarm on the speakers' platform. Then there are generally about thirteen venerable gentlemen who do not pretend to be great, but they cannot hear very well, so they get on the speakers' stand to hear the same blood-curdling statements that they have heard for a thousand years. While I was reading the little burst of humor known as the Declaration, the staging gave way under the accumulated weight of the Fourth Infantry band and several hundred great men who had invited themselves to sit on the platform. The Chaplain fell on top of me, and the orator of the day on top of him. A pitcher of ice water tipped over on me, and the water ran down my back. A piece of scantling and an alto horn took me across the cerebellum, and as often as I tried to get up and throw off the Chaplain and orator of the day and Fourth Infantry band, the greased pig which had been shut up under the stand temporarily, would run between my legs and throw me down again. I never knew the reading of the Declaration of Independence to have such a telling effect. I went home without witnessing the closing exercises. I did not ride home in the carriage. I told the committee that some poor, decrepit old woman might ride home in my place. I needed exercise and an opportunity to commune with myself.

As I walked home by an unfrequented way, I thought of the growth and grandeur of the republic, and how I could get rid of the lard that had been wiped on my clothes by the oleagineous pig. This year, when the committee asked me to read the Declaration, I said pleasantly but firmly that I would probably be busy on that day soaking my head, and therefore would have to decline.

THE GLAD, FREE LIFE OF THE MINER

In the spring the young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. He also looks forward to some means by which he can earn the bread and oleomargarine on which he can subsist. There are several ways of doing this. Some take to agriculture and spend the long days of golden summer among the clover blossoms of the meadow, raking hay and hornets into large winrows, while they sniff the refreshing odor of the mignonette and the morning glory, and the boiling soft soap and potato bugs that have been mashed into the sweet bye-and-bye. Others, by a straightforward course become truthful newspaper men and amass untold wealth as funny men. Others proclaim the glad news of salvation at so much a proclaim.

Perhaps, however, the most exciting way to become wealthy in a speedy manner and in a surprising style is that of the miner. He buys some bacon, and tobacco, and flour, and whiskey, and a pick and some chewing tobacco, and a shovel and some whiskey, and an axe and some smoking tobacco and matches, and whiskey and blankets, and giant powder, and goes to the mountains to get wealthy.

He works all day hard, walking up hill and down, across ravines and rocky gulches, weary but happy and confident till night comes down upon him and he goes home to camp, and around the fire he enters the free-for-all lying match, and tired as he is gets away with the prize for scrub-lying. I have met miners who would with a little chance hold a pretty even race against the great stalwart army of journalists. I do not say this intending to reflect upon the noble profession of mining, for I have been taught to respect the pleasing lie which is told in a harmless way, to cheer the great surging mass of humanity who get tired of the same old truths that have been handed down from generation to generation.

One man who ran against me for justice of the peace two years ago and who, therefore, got left, is now independent, having sold out a prospect in sight of town for a good figure, while I plug along and tell the truth and have nothing under the broad blue dome of heaven but \$150 per month and my virtue. Of course virtue is its own reward, but how little of glad unfettered mirthfulness it yields. Sometimes I wish I had a little looser notions about what is right and what is wrong. But it is too late now. I have become so hardened in these upright ways that when I do wrong it pretty nearly kills me.

This summer, however, I will get me a little blue jackass and put a sawbuck on his back, and pack some select oysters and gum-drops, and an upright piano, and a hammock, and some sheet music, and a camera, and some ice and frosted cake, and a Brussels carpet, and a tent on his back, and I will hie me to the mines, join the big stampede, fall down a prospect hole 200 feet deep, and my faithful jackass will pull me out, and I shall nearly freeze to death nights, and starve to death days, and I will have lots of fun.

I like the glad, free mountain life. I have tried it. Once I went out to the mountains and slept on the lap of mother earth. That is, I advertised to sleep, but I couldn't quite catch on. I lay on my back till two o'clock, A. M., looking up into the clear blue ether, while the stars above were twinkling. After they had about twinkled themselves out, I concluded I would not try to woo the drowsy god any more. I got up and made a pint of coffee, and drank it so hot that the alimentary canal was rolled together like a scroll. It felt as though I had swallowed a large slice of melted perdition, but it didn't warm me up any. Then I went up the mountain five miles to see the sun rise. In about four hours it rose. So did the coffee that I drank at two o'clock. Somehow the sunrise didn't seem to cheer me. It looked murky and muddy; all nature seemed to be shrouded in gloom. There was more gloom turned loose there than I have ever seen. I wanted to go home. I needed some one to pity me and love me a great deal. I needed rest and entire change of scene. I went away from there because the associations were not pleasant; roughing it doesn't seem to do me the required amount of good. I am too frail. I need more of the comforts of civilization, and less wealth of wild, majestic scenery. I find

that my nature needs very little awe-inspiring grandeur, and a good deal of woven wire mattress and nutritious, digestible food.

SOME THOUGHTS OF CHILDHOOD

Childhood is the glad springtime of life. It is then that the seeds of future greatness or startling mediocrity are sown.

If a boy has marked out a glowing future as an intellectual giant, it is during these early years of his growth that he gets some pine knots to burn in the evening, whereby he can read Herbert Spencer and the Greek grammar, so that when he is in good society he can say things that nobody can understand. This gives him an air of mysterious greatness which soaks into those with whom he comes in contact, and makes them respectful and unhappy while in his presence.

Boys who intend to be railroad men should early begin to look about them for some desirable method of expunging two or three fingers and one thumb. Most boys can do this without difficulty. Trying to pick a card out of a job press when it is in operation is a good way. Most job presses feel gloomy and unhappy until they have eaten the fingers off two or three boys. Then they go on with their work cheerfully and even hilariously.

Boys who intend to lead an irreproachable life and be foremost in every good word and work, should take unusual precautions to secure perfect health and longevity. Good boys never know when they are safe. Statistics show that the ratio of good boys who die, compared to bad ones, is simply appalling.

There are only thirty-nine good boys left as we go to press, and they are not feeling very well either.

The bad ones are all alive and very active.

The boy who stole my coal shovel last spring and went out into the grave-yard and dug into a grave to find Easter eggs, is the picture of health. He ought to live a long time yet, for he is in very poor shape to be ushered in before the bar of judgment.

When I was a child I was different from other boys in many respects. I was always looking about to see what good I could do. I am that way yet.

If my little brother wanted to go in swimming contrary to orders, I was not strong enough to prevent him, but I would go in with him and save him from a watery grave. I went in the water thousands of times that way, and as a result he is alive to-day.

But he is ungrateful. He hardly ever mentions it now, but he remembers the gordian knots that I tied in his shirts. He speaks of them frequently. This shows the ingratitude and natural depravity of the human heart.

Ah, what recompense have wealth and position for the unalloyed joys of childhood, and how gladly to-day as I sit in the midst of my oriental splendor and costly magnificence, and thoughtfully run my fingers through my infrequent bangs, would I give it all, wealth, position and fame, for one balmy, breezy day gathered from the mellow haze of the long ago when I stood full knee-deep in the luke-warm pool near my suburban home in the quiet dell, and allowed the yielding and soothing mud and meek-eyed pollywogs to squirt up between my dimpled toes.

THE NEW ADJUSTABLE CAMPAIGN SONG

I beg leave at this time to present to the public a melodious gem of song which I am positive cannot fail to give satisfaction.

It will withstand the rigors of our mountain clime as well as the heat and moisture of a lower altitude.

It is purely unpartisan, although it may be easily changed to any shade of political opinion. It is cheap, portable and durable, and filled with little pathetic passages that will add greatly to the enthusiasm of presidential contests.

It is true that some harsh criticism has been called down upon this little chunk of crystallized melody, as I may be pardoned for calling it, and it has been suggested that it is too much fraught with a gentle, soothing sense of vacuity, and that there is nothing in it particularly one way or the other.

This I admit to be in a measure true. There is nothing in it as a poem, but it must be borne in mind that this is not a poem. It is a campaign song.

Campaign songs never have anything in them. They don't have to.

Editorials and speeches have to express human ideas and little suggestions of original horse sense, but the campaign song is generally distinguished by a wild, tumultuous torrent of attenuated space.

They are like the sons of great men – we do not expect any show of herculean intellectual acumen from them.

Directions. – Set up the song with the feed bar down and pitman reversed. Then turn the thumbscrew that holds the asterisks in place, take them out and lay them away in the upper case, and in proper compartment.

Next set up desirable candidate, unless you can get candidate to set them up himself, slug the standing galley, oil the cross-head, upset the tripod, loosen the crown sheet a little, so that the obvious duplex will work easily in the lallygag eccentric, and turn on steam.

Should the box in which the lower case candidates are stored get hot, sponge off and lubricate with castor oil, antifat and borax in equal parts.

Keep this song in a cool place.

(Air —Rally Round the Flag, Boys.)

Oh, we'll gather from the hillsides,
We'll gather from the glen,
Shouting the battle cry of...,
And we'll round up our voters,
Our brave and trusty men,
Shouting the battle cry of...

Chorus

Oh, our candidate forever,
Te doodle daddy a,
Down with old...,
Turn a foodie diddy a,
And we'll whoop de dooden do,

Fal de adden adden a,
And don't you never forget it.
Oh, we'll meet the craven foe
On the fall election day,
Shouting the battle cry of...,
And we'll try to let him know
That we're going to have our way,
Shouting the battle cry of,

Chorus

Oh, our candidate forever, etc.

Oh, we're the people's friends,
As all can plainly see,
Shouting the battle cry of...,
And we'll whoop de dooden doo,
With our big majority,
And don't you never forget it.

Chorus

Oh, our candidate forever, etc.

SITTING ON ON A VENERABLE JOKE

Near St. Paul, on the Sioux City road, I met the ever-present man from Leadville again.

I had met him before on every division of every railroad that I had traveled over, but I nodded to him, and he began to tell me all about Leadville.

He saw that I looked sad, and he cheered me up with little prehistoric jokes that an antiquarian had given him years ago. Finally he said:

"Leadville is mighty cold; it has such an all fired altitude, The summer is very short and unreliable, and the winter long and severe.

"An old miner over in California gulch got off a pretty good joke about the climate there. A friend asked him about the seasons at Leadville, and he said that there they had nine months winter and three months late in the fall."

Then he looked around to see me fall to pieces with mirth, but I restrained myself and said:

"You will please excuse me for not laughing at that joke. I cannot do it. It is too sacred.

"Do you think I would laugh at the bones of the Pilgrim Fathers, where are they? or burst into wild hilarity over the grave of Noah and his family?

"No, sir; their age and antiquity protect them. That is the way with your Phoenician joke.

"Another reason why I cannot laugh at it is this: I am not a very easy and extemporaneous laughter, anyway. I am generally shrouded in gloom, especially when I am in hot pursuit of a wild and skittish joke for my own use. It takes a good, fair, average joke that hasn't been used much to make me laugh easy, and besides, I have used up the fund of laugh that I had laid aside for that particular joke. It has, in fact, overdrawn some now, and is behind.

"I do not wish to intrench on the fund that I have concluded to offer as a purse for young jokes that have never made it in three minutes.

"I want to encourage green jokes, too, that have never trotted in harness before, and, besides, I must insist on using my scanty fund of laugh on jokes of the nineteenth century. I have got to draw the line somewhere.

"If I were making a collection of antique jokes of the vintage of 1400 years B. C., or arranging and classifying little bon-mots of the time of Cleopatra or King Solomon, I would give you a handsome sum for this one of yours, but I am just trying to worry along and pay expenses, and trying to be polite to every one I meet, and laughing at lots of things that I don't want to laugh at, and I am going to quit it.

"That is why I have met your little witticism with cold and heartless gravity."

A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE

To-day I got shaved at a barber-shop, where I begged the operator to kill me and put me out of my misery.

I have been accustomed to gentle care and thoughtfulness at home, and my barber at Laramie handles me with the utmost tenderness. I was, therefore, poorly prepared to meet the man who this morning filled my soul with woe.

I know that I have not deserved this, for while others have berated the poor barber and swore about his bad breath and never-ending clatter and his general heartlessness, I have never said anything that was not filled with child-like trust and hearty good will toward him.

I have called the attention of the public to the fact that sometimes customers had bad breath and were restless and mean while being operated on, and then when they are all fixed up nicely, they put their hats on and light a cigar and hold up their finger to the weary barber and tell him that they will see him more subsequently.

Now, however, I feel differently.

This barber no doubt had never heard of me. He no doubt thought I was an ordinary plug who didn't know anything about luxury.

I shall mark a copy of this paper and send it to him.

Then while he is reading it I will steal up behind him with a pick handle and kill him. I want him to be reading this when I kill him, because it will assist the coroner in arriving at the immediate cause of his death.

The first whiff I took of this man's breath, I knew that he was rum's maniac.

He had the Jim James in an advanced stage. Now, I don't object to being shaved by a barber who is socially drunk, but when the mad glitter of the maniac is in his eye and I can see that he is debating the question of whether he will cut my head off and let it drop over the back of the chair or choke me to death with a lather brush, it makes me nervous and fidgetty.

This man made up his mind three times that he would kill me, and some one came in just in time to save me.

His chair was near a window, and there was a hole in the blind, so that when he was shaving the off side of my face he would turn my head over in such a position that I could look up into the middle of the sun. My attention had never before been called to the appearance of the sun as it looks to the naked eye, and I was a good deal surprised.

The more I looked into the very center of the great orb of day the more I was filled with wonder at the might and power that could create it. I began to pine for death immediately, so that I could be far away among the heavenly bodies, and in a land where no barber with the delirium triangles can ever enter.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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