

# THE INVENTIONS OF HAWKINS

By EDGAR FRANKLIN

## THE CRANO-SCALE.

I had intended it for a peaceful, solitary walk up town after business on that beautiful Saturday afternoon; and had in fact accomplished the better part of it. I was inhaling huge quantities of the balmy air and reveling in the exhilaration of the exercise.

But passing the picture store, I experienced a queer sensation—perhaps "that feeling of impending evil" we read about in the patent medicine advertisements.

It may have been because I recalled that in that very shop Hawkins had demonstrated the virtues of his infallible Lightning Canvas-Stretcher, and thereby ruined somebody's priceless and unpurchasable Corot.

At any rate my eyes were drawn to the place as I passed; and like a cuckoo-bird emerging from the clock, out popped Hawkins.

"Ah, Griggs," he exclaimed. "Out for a walk?"

"What were you doing in there?"

"Going to walk home?"

"Setting for that painting, eh?"

"Because if you are, I'll go with you," pursued Hawkins, falling into step beside me and ignoring my remarks.

I told Hawkins that I should be tickled to death to have his company, which was a lie and intended for biting sarcasm; but Hawkins took it in good faith and was pleased.

"I tell you, Griggs," he informed me, "there's nothing like this early summer air to fill a man's lungs."

"Unless it's cash to fill his pockets."

"Eh? Cash?" said the inventor.

"That reminds me. I must spend some this afternoon."

"Indeed! Going to settle another damage suit?"

"I intend to order coal," replied Hawkins, frigidly.

He seemed disinclined to address me further, and I had no particular yearning to hear his voice. We walked on in silence until within a few blocks of home.

Then Hawkins paused at one of the cross streets.

"The coal yard is down this way, Griggs," he said. "Come along. It won't take more than five or ten minutes."

"Now, the idea of walking down to the coal yard certainly seemed commonplace and harmless. To me it suggested nothing more sinister than a super-heated Irish lady perspiring over Hawkins' range in the dog days.

At least, it suggested nothing more at the time, and I turned the corner with Hawkins, and walked on unsuspecting.

Except that it belonged to a particularly large concern, the coal yard which Hawkins honored by his patronage was much like other coal yards. The high walls of the storage bins rose from the sidewalk, and there was the conventional arch for the wagons, and the little, dingy office beside it.

Into the latter Hawkins made his way, while I loitered without.

Hawkins seemed to be upon good terms with the coal people. He and the men in the office were laughing genially.

Through the open window I heard Hawkins file his order for four tons of coal. Later some one said: "Splendid, Mr Hawkins, splendid."

Then somebody else said: "No, there seems to be no flaw in any particular."

And still later the first voice announced that they would make the first payment one week from to-day, at which Hawkins' voice rose with a sort of pompous joy.

I paid very little heed to the scraps of conversation; but presently I paid considerable attention to Hawkins, for while he had entered the coal office a well-developed man, he emerged apparently deformed.

His chest seemed to have expanded something over a foot, and his nose had attained an elevation that pointed his gaze straight to the skies.

"Good gracious, Hawkins, what is it?" I asked. "Have they been inflating you with gas in there?"

"I beg pardon?"

"What has happened to swell your boom? Is it the first payment?"

"Oh, you heard that, did you?" said the inventor, with a condescending smile. "Yes, Griggs, I may confess to some slight satisfaction in that payment. It is a matter of \$1,000—from the coal people, you know."

"But what for? Have you threatened to invent something for them, and now are exacting blackmail to desist?"

"Tush, Griggs, tush!" replied Hawkins. "Do make some attempt to subdue that insane wit. I fancy you'll feel rather cheap hearing that that \$1,000 is the first payment on something I have invented!"

"What!"

"Certainly. I am selling the patent to these people. It is the Hawkins Crano-Scale!"

"Crano-Scale?" I reflected. "What is it? A hair tonic?"

"Now, that is about the deduction your mental apparatus would make!" sneered the inventor.

"But can it be possible that you have constructed something that actually works?" I cried. "And you've sold it—actually sold it?"

"I have sold it, and there's no 'actually' about it!"

And Hawkins stalked majestically away through the arch and into the yard beyond.

The idea of one of Hawkins' inventions actually in practical operation was almost too wild for conception. He must be heading for it; and if it existed I must see it.

I followed.

Hawkins strode to the rear of the yard without turning. About us on every side were high wooden walls, the storage bins of the company.

Up the side of one wall ran a ladder, and Hawkins commenced the perpendicular ascent with the same matter-of-fact air that one would wear in walking upstairs.

"What are you doing that for? Exercise?" I called, when he paused some 20 feet in the air.

"If you wish to see the Crano-Scale at work, follow me. If not, stay where you are," replied Hawkins.

Then he resumed his upward course; and having put something like 35 feet between his person and the solid earth, he vanished through a black doorway.

Climbing a straight ladder usually sets my hair on end; but this one I tackled without hesitation, and in a very few seconds stood before the door.

In the semi-darkness, I perceived that a wide ledge ran around the wall inside, and that Hawkins was standing upon it, gazing upon the hundreds of tons of coal below, and having something the effect of the Old Nick himself glaring down into the pit.

"There she is!" said the inventor, laconically, pointing across the gulf.

"There!" cried Hawkins, triumphantly.

"It works!" I gasped.

"You bet it works!"

"But it must cost something to run the thing," I suggested.

"Well—er—I'm paying for that part," Hawkins acknowledged, "until I've finished perfecting a motor particularly adapted for the Crano-Scale, you see."

I smiled audibly. I think that Hawkins was about to take exceptions to the smile, but a voice from without bawled loudly:

"Two—tons—nut!"

"Ah, there she goes again!" said the inventor, rapturously.

This time the Crano-Scale executed a sudden detour before descending. Indeed, the thing came so painfully near to our perch that the wind was perceptible, and when the giant coal-scuttle had passed and dropped, my heart was hammering out a tattoo.

"I can't believe this ledge is safe, Hawkins."

"Nonsense."

"But that thing came pretty close."

"Oh, it won't act that way again. Watch! She's dumping into the wagon now! Hear it?"

"Yes, I hear it. I see just what a beautiful success it is, Hawkins—really. Let's go."

"And now she's coming back!" cried the inventor, his eyes glued to the remarkable contrivance. "Observe the ease—the grace—the mechanical poise—the resistless quality of the Crano-

"No—ll?" came a voice from far above.

"Where are you?"

"Hanging—to—the—scoop!" sang out the inventor.

And there, up near the roof, I located him, dangling from the Crano-Scale coal-scuttle!

"What are you going to do next?" I asked, with some interest.

"I—I—I—can't—can't hang on long here!"

"I should say not."

"Well, climb out and tell them to lower the crane!" screamed Hawkins.

I looked around. Right and left, before and behind, rose a mountain of loose coal. I essayed to climb nimbly toward the door which the Crano-Scale had used, and suddenly landed on my hands and knees.

"Are you—out?" shrieked Hawkins.

"I can't stick here!"

"And I can't get out!" I replied.

"Well, you—ouch!"

There was a dull, rattling whack beside me; bits of coal flew in all directions. Hawkins had landed.

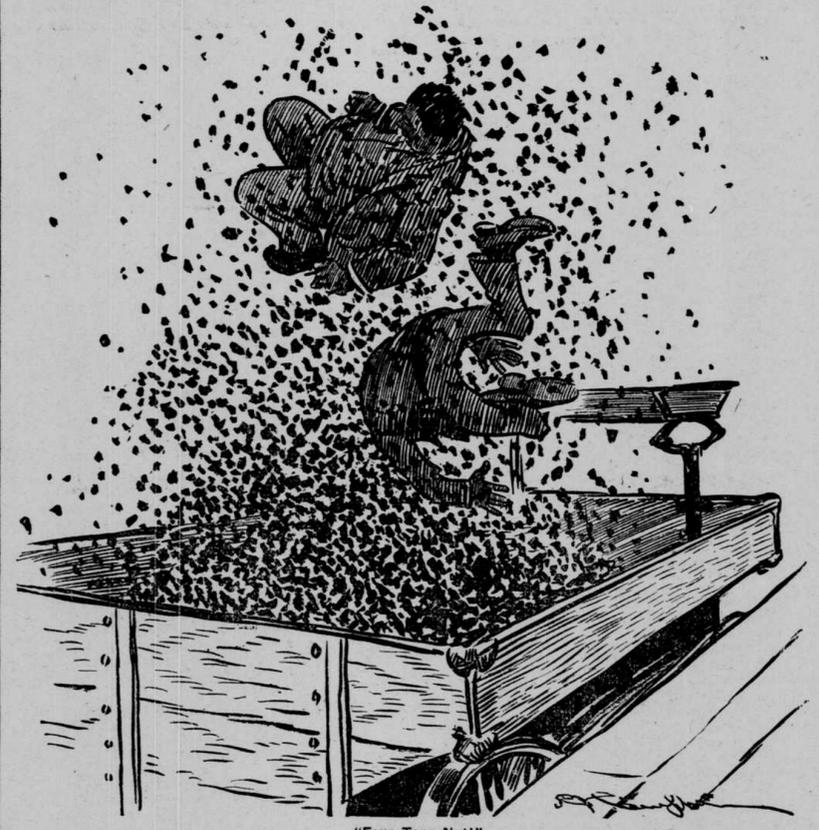
"Well!" he exclaimed, sitting up. "I honestly believe, Griggs, that no man was ever born on this earth with less resourcefulness than yourself!"

"Which means that I should have climbed out and informed the people of your plight?"

"Certainly."

"Well, you try it yourself, Hawkins."

The inventor arose and started for the door with a very convincing and



"Four Tons Nut!"

I made my way to his side and stared through the gloom.

Something seemed to loom up over there.

Presently, as my eyes grew accustomed to the change, I perceived the arm of a huge crane, from which was suspended an enormous scoop.

"You mean that mastodonic coal-scuttle?" I inquired.

"Precisely. That's the Hawkins Crano-Scale."

"And what does she do when she—er—crano-scales things, as it were?"

"You'll be able to understand in a moment. That coal-scuttle, as you call it, is large enough to hold four tons. See? Well, the people in the yard are going to want two tons of coal very shortly. What do they do?"

"Take it out, weigh it, and send it," I hazarded.

"Not at all. They simply adjust the controlling apparatus to the two-ton point and set the Crano-Scale going. The scoop dips down, picks up exactly two tons of coal, and rises automatically as soon as the two tons are in. After that the crane swings outward, dumps the coal in the wagon, and there you have it—weighed and all! It has been in operation here for one month," Hawkins concluded, complacently.

"And no one killed or maimed? No Crano-Scale widows or orphans?"

"Oh, Griggs, you are—Ha! She's starting!"

The Crano-Scale emitted an ear-piercing shriek. The big steel crane was in motion.

I watched the thing. Gracefully the coal-scuttle dipped into the pile of coal, dug for a minute, swung upward again. It turned, passed through a big doorway in the side, and we could hear the coal rattling into the wagon.

The Crano-Scale returned and swung ponderously in the twilight.

Scale's motion! See, Griggs, how she swings!"

I did see how she was swinging. It was precisely that which sent me nearer to the ladder.

The Crano-Scale was returning to position, but with a series of erratic swoops that seemed to close my throat.

The coal-scuttle whirled joyously about in the air—it was receding—no, it was coming nearer! It paused for a second. Then, making a bee-line for our little ledge, it dived through the air toward us.

"Look out, there, Hawkins!" I cried, hastily.

"It's all right," said the inventor.

"But the cursed thing will smash us flat against the wall!"

"Tush! The automatic reaction clutch will—"

The Crano-Scale was upon us! For the merest fraction of a second it paused and seemed to hesitate; then it struck the wall with a heavy bang; then started to scrape its way along our ledge.

The wretched contraption was bent on shoving us off!

"What will we do?" I managed to shout.

"Why—why—why—why—why—why—Hawkins cried, breathlessly.

"But, my course of action had been settled for me. The scoop of the Crano-Scale caught me amidships, and I plunged downward into the coal.

That there was a considerable degree of shock attached to my landing may easily be imagined.

But small coal, as I had not known before, is a reasonably soft thing to fall on; and within a few seconds I sat up, perceived that I was soon to order a new suit of clothes, and then looked about for Hawkins.

He was nowhere in the neighborhood, and I called aloud.

elaborate display of indomitable energy. He planted his left foot firmly on the side of the coal pile—and found that his left leg had disappeared in the coal in a highly astonishing and undignified fashion.

"Humph!" he remarked, disgustedly, struggling free and shaking something like a pound of coal from his person. "Perhaps—perhaps it's more solid on the other side."

"Try it."

"Well, it is better to try it and fail than to stand there like a cigar-store Indian and offer fool suggestions," snapped the inventor, making a vicious attack at the opposite side of the pile.

It really did seem more substantial. Hawkins, by the aid of both hands, both feet, his elbows, his knees, and possibly his teeth as well, managed to scramble upward for a dozen feet or so.

But just as he was about to turn and gloat over his success, the treacherous coal gave way once more. Hawkins went flat upon his face and slid back to me, feet first.

When he arose he presented a remarkable appearance.

Light overcoat, pearl trousers, fancy vest—all were black as ink. Hawkins' classic countenance had faded no better. His lips showed some slight resemblance of redness, and his eyes glared wonderfully white; but the rest of his face might have been made up for a minstrel show.

"Yes, it's devilish funny, isn't it?" he roared, sitting down again rather suddenly, as the coal slid again beneath his feet.

"Funny isn't the word. What's our next move to be?"

"Climb out, of course. There must be some place where we can get a foothold."

"Why not shout for help?"

"No use. Nobody could hear us down here. Go on, Griggs. Make your attempt. I've done my part."

"And you wish to see me repeat the performance? Thank you. No."

"But it's the only way out."

"Then," I said, "I'm afraid we're slated to spend the night here."

"Good Lord! We can't do that!"

"I have a notion, Hawkins," I went on, "that we not only can, but shall. You say we can't attract any one's attention, and I guess you're right. Hence, as there is no one to pull us out, and we can't pull ourselves out, we shall remain here. That's logic, isn't it?"

"It's awful!" exclaimed the inventor. "Why, we may not get out tomorrow—"

"Nor the next day, nor the one after that. Exactly. We shall have to wait until this wretched place is emptied, when they will find our bleaching skeletons—if skeletons can bleach in a coal bin."

Hawkins blinked his sable eyelids at me.

"Or we might go to work and pile all the coal on one side of the bin," I continued. "It wouldn't take more than a week or so, throwing it over by handfuls; and when at last they found that your crano-engine wouldn't bring up any more from this side—"

"Aha!" cried the inventor, with sudden animation. "That's it! The Crano-Scale!"

"Yes, that's it," I assented. "Away up near the roof. What about it?"

"Why, it solves the whole problem," said Hawkins. "Don't you see, the next time they need nut-coal, they'll set the engine going and scoop—"

"Four—tons—nut, Bill!" said a far-away voice. "Yep! Four tons. Start up the blamed machine!"

"What? What did he say?" cried the inventor.

"Something about starting the engine."

"That's what I thought. They're going to use the Crano-Scale. Griggs! We're saved! We're saved!"

"I fall to see it."

"Why, when the thing comes down, be ready. Ah—it's coming now! Get ready, Griggs! Get ready! Be prepared to make a dash for it!"

"And then?"

"And then climb in, of course. There won't be much room, for they're going to take on four tons, and the thing will be full; but we can manage it. We can do it, Griggs, and be home in time for dinner."

"And you're a fine-looking object to go to dinner," I added.

Hawkins' countenance fell somewhat, but there was no time for a reply. The coal-scuttle of the Crano-Scale was hovering above us, evidently selecting a spot for its operations.

"Here! We're right under it!" Hawkins shouted. "This way, Griggs! Quick! Lord! It's coming down—it'll hit you! Quick!"

And I dived toward Hawkins as he was struggling for a foothold, and then—

Then I wriggled frantically, and something near me wriggled frantically as well. Then one of my hands struck something that yielded, and there came a muffled voice from somewhere in the neighborhood.

"Griggs!" it said.

"Yes!"

W-w-w-where are we? This isn't the coal bin. Are you hurt?"

"I give it up. Are you?"

"I think not. Why, Griggs, this must be one of the big coal carts!"

"I shouldn't wonder," I assented, vaguely.

"But—how—"

"You miserable coal-scuttle must have stunned us, picked us up and dumped us in with the coal!" I exclaimed, suddenly enlightened.

"Do—you—think," came through the blackness. "Huh! It's stopped!"

For a long, long time, as it seemed, there was silence. The weight of coal pressed down until I was near to madness. Hawkins was grunting painfully.

I was speculating as to whether he was actually succumbing—whether I could stand the strain myself for another minute—when everything began to slide. The coal slid, I slid, Hawkins slid—the world seemed to be sliding!

We landed upon the sidewalk. We struggled and beat and threshed at the coal, and finally managed to rise out of it—pitch black, dazed and battered.

And the first object which confronted us was the home of Hawkins! We had been delivered at his door, with the four tons of nut coal.

"They'll have to sign for us on the driver's slip," I remembered saying.

That person let off a shriek and vanished down the street. Then the door of the Hawkins home opened, and Mrs. Hawkins emerged, followed by my wife.

That numerous things were said need not be stated. Mrs. Hawkins said most of them, and they were numerous.

Mrs. Griggs limited herself to ruing a \$50 gown by weeping on my coal-soiled shoulder as she implored me never again to tread the same street with Hawkins.

It was a solemn moment, that; for I saw the light. I realized how many bumps and bruises and pains and duckings and scorplings might have been spared me, had I taken the step earlier.

But I is never too late to mend. Probably I had still a few years in which to enjoy life.

I turned to Hawkins—a chopfallen, cowering huddle of filth, standing upon two pearl-and-black legs—and said:

"Hawkins, when in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one man to sever those friendly bands which have connected him with another, and so to assume a station apart, a decent respect for the opinions of the latter usually make it necessary to declare the cause of that separation. It is so in this case. You know mighty well what you've put me through in the past. There's no need of going into it."

"But this Crano-Scale business is my limit—my outside limit," I went on, "and you've passed it. If you ever attempt to address another word to me, or ride in the same elevated train, or even sit in the same theater, I'll have you arrested as a suspicious person—and locked up for life, if money'll do it! Hawkins, henceforth we meet as strangers!"

And Hawkins, piloted by the unhappy woman who bears his name, walked up the steps, turned and stared stupidly at me, and then stumbled into the house and out of my life—forever.

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## THE RETURN

By GRACE BRUTON

It was quiet in the studio. Outside, in the November twilight, the wind and rain beat and wailed in pathetic harmony with the occasion. Within no sound broke the silence save an occasional sob.

"Buried to-day! Buried to-day!" This was the burden to which John Gray's heart was breaking. And yet, oddly, he could not think of Anita de Lee as buried. To his eager memory she was so alert, so vital, so sweetly full of life.

They were to have been married at Christmas. The world had not known it. The sternly affectionate old father who had borne her to Europe at the first hint of a love stronger than his own had said "No!" to the bare idea, but Anita had smiled encouragement at her lover.

"I'll go with him, dearest," she had decided, "and try to help him to a happy summer. And when we come back it will be your turn, and we've so many happy years before us, dear boy."

But she had clung to him weeping when it was time for good-by.

Then had come her dear letters, bearing no hint of sickness or sorrow. And then, yesterday, her father's brusque telegram:

"Anita died suddenly this morning. Buried Florence, Friday."

And this was Friday. He threw himself on the lounge from which she so often had smiled at him, and turned his face to the wall.

A tap at the door startled him to sudden action. All day he had kept lonely vigil, refusing to answer any summons; now he could have sworn it was their oft used signal. He flung the locked door open, but, of course, the bright hall was empty. Yet when he returned to the sofa there she was, lightly poised on the arm of the big chair, smiling at him in the old, accustomed way.

"No, you're not mad or dreaming, Jackie," she laughed, as the thought flashed through him. "That's why I turned on the light, so you'd be sure you really saw me, and why I'll leave you a little sign when I vanish. No," waving back his impetuous movement, "you mustn't touch me, though you may look and listen. You'd better, really, for I may not be able to visit you again."

"There must be no more of this foolish despair, Jackie boy," shaking at him the tiny finger that had so often pointed her sweet lectures. "Why, even in heaven I heard you grieving, and—oh hurt me, Jackie. Love isn't worth much if it makes life less worth living, and I'd hate to think that loving me made you unhappy. Look me straight in the eyes, Jackie—there's a dear boy!"

She did not actually touch him, but something thrilled from her leaning, flower-like figure and face to his soul and spirit. Suddenly he found himself viewing the years they were never to spend together. He, successful, complacent, doing work but little above the average and finding it good. She delicate, adoring, not so much helping as holding his hands.

The next picture showed him the long years without her visible presence, with a grave, strong companion to tread life's road beside him. But now his work held a real message for the uplifting of his fellows, and the growing child, Anita, held wondrous promise in her heart and eyes.

The soft voice talked on gently, soothing the cruel ache that had deadened his senses, fading at last into a tenderly whispered "Good-by, Jackie, dear Jackie. God bless you! Be a good boy, for my sake! Some time—perhaps—if you're brave and patient—"

She was gone, and his heart went with her. Again he sprang to the door, and again the bright hall showed empty. But the still room was sweet with the delicate perfume inseparable from her, and the violets he had that morning placed before her portrait now lay on the arm of the big chair.—Chicago Tribune.

Those Haunting Notes.

There was a peculiar sound from the direction of the woods as the member of the Birdlovers' society sat in the window of her friend's country home one summer afternoon.

She quickly took her small "Bird Guide" from her ever present bag, and rapidly turned the leaves. At last she paused with a smile of satisfaction, and listened, with her finger between two leaves of the little book, till the sound came again.

When it was repeated an expression of doubt flitted across her features, but still she was hopeful.

"You probably know many of the bird notes, living so near the woods and in such a quiet spot," she said to her friend. "Can you tell me what bird that is?"

"That," said her friend, briefly, "is our goat. We shall have to move him further off."—Youth's Companion.

Didn't Like the Sample.

Clark Howell, of the Atlanta Constitution, enjoys telling how, in his early days in the newspaper field, he was visited by a Georgia farmer, having his 17-year-old son in tow, and who, upon entering the office, said:

"I came to get some information, Mr. Howell."

"I shall be glad to afford you any that I can," politely responded Howell.

"Well," said the farmer, "this boy o' mine wants to go into the literary business; an' I thought you would know if there was any money in it. It's a good business, ain't it?"—Harper's Weekly.

## Writing a Business Letter

Where Many Writers Fail—Fault of Poor Manners.

"I know," said a business man of wide experience, "how crowded with studies the schools are now, and I should be loath to recommend the introduction of any new ones; but I do wish sometimes that the boys and girls who are giving time to so many little fads could be induced to give more to art of writing letters."

He did not refer to the mere art of writing correct English or the art of writing an interesting personal letter, but to the preparation of really good business letters, in which the matter in hand should be treated not only clearly and concisely but also courteously.

The need he mentioned is one which is felt by thousands of business men and may well claim the attention of young people of both sexes who look forward to business life. The ability to write intelligibly is not rare, but the capacity to write in such a way as to produce a pleasant personal feeling for the house one represents is extremely rare.

Many writers fall in the matter of courtesy—either in the way of constant omission of articles and constant abbreviation, or, more commonly, in neglecting to give the other man the benefit of the doubt. In other words, the fault with most business letters is a fault of poor manners rather than of mental deficiency.

"Never, in any circumstances, allow your first letter, in a case of difference to be harsh or discourteous," said a business man to one of his clerks. "No matter how much you think the man has injured us, give him the benefit of the doubt. Assume that he has made a mistake rather than that he

has misrepresented. To take the other course is to enter a blind alley. You may have to turn around to get out of it."—Youth's Companion.

Rain, Air Purifier.

An Englishman named John Aiken has for many years made a study of the solid impurities found in the atmosphere. He invented apparatus for counting the number of dust particles in a cubic inch of air, thus making it possible to institute comparisons between the condition of air at various elevations and in a single place at different times. While he was making some meteorological observations with his dust counter on the Eiffel tower, at Paris, recently, a heavy thunder shower occurred. Before the rain the number of dust particles was large and showed that the impure air of the city came up in great quantities to the top of the tower. After the shower the number of dust particles was so far reduced that the air finally became as free from dust as any that Mr. Aiken ever tested on the mountain tops of Switzerland. This increase in purity is ascribed to the "dragging down" of the upper air to the level of the top of the Eiffel tower, for the reason that "rain cannot wash the air to anything like that purity."

A Chaser.

"Do you think all those city folks will come to visit us this summer?" said the farmer.

"No, there's no danger," said his wife. "I've just written them that we've gone into the bee business."—Detroit Free Press.

Prudence.

"I am going to have my hands insured," said the eminent pianist.

"Don't do it," answered his manager. "Your hands do not constitute your most valuable asset. Have your hair insured."—Washington Star.

## He Had No Vision For Colors

Bright Hues Without Significance for the Poet Whittier.

It is well known that the poet Whittier was color blind, and unable to distinguish red from green. He once bought himself a necktie which he supposed to be of a modest and suitable olive tint, and wore it—once. He never wore it again, for his friends soon made him aware that it offended

against the traditional quietness of costume enjoined alike by the habits of the Friends and by his own taste. The tie was of flaming scarlet.

On another occasion, when he found a little girl's distress on account of a new gown, made over from her elder sister's, which was not becoming to her coloring and complexion, he tried to console her.

"I wouldn't mind what a rude boy

approached too near for safety to a place where blasting was going on. The danger signal was shown, but neither Friend noticed it, until a workman, violently waving his arms and shouting, leaped before them and warned them back.

"I didn't see the flag at all," said Mr. Whittier's companion.

"I saw it," rejoined the poet, with a twinkle in his eye, "but I thought it was in honor of St. Patrick—thee knows my defect. I can't tell Erin from explosions, except by the harp!"

## Taste That Age Withers

According to a member of the candy-loving sex there is no sadder evidence of age in a woman than being able to pass a bonbon shop without being tempted by the wares.

"When a woman can do this," she says, "she is frankly middle-aged. During your school days chocolates are a recognized necessity of existence. During the early bud period of matinee hero worship they are indis-

pensable; to the enjoyment of a performance. When your mouth does not water at the mere idea of a caramel or a marshmallow begin to search for the first gray hair."

Tribute to Farmer's Life.

United States Senator Pettus of Alabama who is 86 years of age, when recently asked what vocation he would choose if he were again beginning active life, replied: "The high calling of a farmer."

Looks for Disastrous Earthquakes.

Prof. Gregory, of the Yale geological department, says the San Francisco earthquake will be repeated with universal disastrous results.

Safe Than Registered Letter.

Safer than registering, says the London Pall Mall Gazette, is to put insufficient postage on a letter. Says the Gazette: "The postoffice never loses a letter which is insufficiently stamped."