

China Asks for Seeds. Another proof of the awakening going on in China is furnished by the statement that the government of the Flowery Kingdom has, through representatives at Washington, applied to our authorities for seeds and samples of every variety of plant of recognized importance raised in our country.

Witches Still Believed In. Neglected by the powers, witches ceased to be so notorious, but the belief continued to exist, and does exist now, in rural parts of Scotland and England; and in England and France, even in the towns, fortune tellers, whether they charge a guinea or a shilling for their advice, are witches under the terms of the old statutes, and flourish abundantly, but as they are not burned they are supposed by superficial observers to have been exterminated by school boards and electric lighting.

One way Americans of the present day have of honoring the immigrants of the past was illustrated last month, when a statue of Commodore John Barry, the father of the American navy, was unveiled in Philadelphia. Barry was an Irishman, born in 1745. It was not till 1760 that he reached America as a sailor, coming here from the West Indies.

A little sentiment which Mr. Cleveland put forth on his seventieth birthday, and by which the occasion might well be remembered: "I believe that we must set ourselves against the fallacy that a city life is the easier and more productive of happiness."

An Evanston, Ill., minister is fixing up a marriage ceremony in which the girl will not have to promise to obey. That is a good idea. It will be lots easier for some wives to obey if they have to when they have not promised to do so.

A minister in South Dakota was held up by two cowboys, who tried to force him to drink with them. He thrashed both, and muscular Christianity is now at the top notch of popular veneration in that section.

Consternation was caused all over the English-speaking world not long ago by the report that the Valparaiso earthquake had destroyed Juan Fernandez, Robinson Crusoe's island. The terrible rumor has been denied authoritatively by the secretary of the Royal Geographical Society.

John D. Rockefeller Jr. is to be superintendent of his father's country estate on the Hudson. It is learned from a reliable source that he will not be compelled to live on his salary.

The assertion of the Topeka Journal that "honesty is speeding," reminds us that it does seem to be getting somewhat thin in places.

If the automobiles wish to retain their popularity they should be careful about starting to run over people so early in the season.

A woman stabbed a man in the head with a knitting needle. A little painful, but in future he will be able to knit his brows.

The Castle of Lies BY ARTHUR HENRY VESEY

CHAPTER I.

The Tragedy. My feet touched the narrow ledge. I was safe. But Willoughby? Brave Willoughby? I tried to call to him. No sound came from my lips. I was too exhausted. The last atom of strength was spent. For the moment I was paralyzed—body and mind.

The rope fluttered over the overhang. It struck the icy ledge of the jutting rock to which I clung. Then slowly it fell over until it swayed loosely in the wind, still suspended from my body.

I did not attempt to draw it in. I was too exhausted for an exertion so slight as that. It swayed gently to and fro, and it seemed to me that presently an unseen force would grasp it and pull me headlong to destruction to the glacier below.

Now I dared not cry out. I could only look up and wait, still struggling fiercely for my breath. But if I had been too exhausted to warn him, to unfasten that rope from my waist, how was I to give him the assistance he would surely need presently?

A stone fell, and then another, as he fought for a foothold. I could hear him breathing deeply, though as yet I could not see him. I stood rigid, looking upward, a prey to such fears, to such terrors as no man can imagine.

Now he came slowly into sight, his feet feeling with infinite caution. The difficulties of the descent were appalling. Even for me, supported by the rope held by Willoughby from above, they had been all but impossible. Willoughby was no amateur; but without assistance—no, I could not hope to save him. It must be death for us both.

CHAPTER II. The Beacon Light. To return to America, to work; to forget it possible—that was the feverish impulse that dominated me now.

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vaguely hopeful after all. I was going home. I was going to America, and America is a long distance from Grindelwald. It was unlikely, I tried to persuade myself, that the story and the kodaks would follow me there. But if so, at least my fellow-townsmen would give me the benefit of the doubt.

"That would be too much to expect," I answered, cynically amused at his embarrassment. He hesitated a moment, one foot on the steps of the omnibus.

"Mr. Haddon, may I say that I have sympathy for you? Do not let the little accidents spoil your life. None of us are always brave. And certainly there is a courage of the spirit as well as of the body. The world condemns hastily, but it will doubt its verdict if you refuse to accept it. And you go now?"

"To America," I replied grimly, "where at present there is no verdict." "But not at once?" "Why not?" I asked in surprise. "It is your affair of course, mon-

sieur, but at least—he was seeking a pretentious expression of sympathy, but he ended lamely—"but at least do not let this simple affair spoil your digestion."

"Perhaps I shall linger a day or two at Lucerne," I said good-naturedly. "Ah, yes," he nodded in approval, "monsieur will retreat slowly."

CHAPTER III. The One Woman. I scanned each face intently as I approached them. There was a high, delicate color on the cheeks of the elder woman. She was frowning slightly. I could not be sure whether curiosity or annoyance was the dominant note of her bearing.

The younger of the two women had risen. She stood at the table, leaning forward slightly, her expression at once startled and eager. To my astonishment she was smiling at me radiantly, a smile of charming surprise and welcome. But as I stared at her stupidly, the smile was succeeded by an expression of dismay. She addressed the elder woman in an agitated whisper.

"Pardon, but this seat is reserved." It was a waiter who spoke, and he was insolent. But I answered quietly: "I was given this place by another waiter. There was no placard on the table nor were the chairs turned up. Why do you say it is reserved?"

Of the other, one might say everything, and yet feel that one had said nothing. It was not the air of proud distinction that arrested my gaze, for she shared that quality with the other. It was not that she was merely young and beautiful. Other women are young and beautiful. It was rather



that there breathed from the quiet presence of this woman a noble serenity and calm that is as adorable as it is rare. The assured, direct look of her eyes was truth itself. She had not seen me. She looked beyond the lake—at the solitary little beacon light that had comforted me only a moment ago.

I gave up my seat at once, of course. I walked slowly to the end of the terrace, and took a less desirable place. I refused to allow myself to be interested in these people. And yet I was strangely interested in them. It was as if I were waiting. When my eye was again touched, I felt no surprise. It was the waiter who had spoken to me a moment before.

Wonder held me spellbound as well as they. I turned vaguely to the waiter. He had already left my side, summoned imperiously, no doubt, by the ladies who had certainly mistaken me for another.

"The ladies wish to speak to monsieur, if monsieur is at liberty." The summons had come, as I knew that it would. I drew in a deep breath. My heart was beating fast, though outwardly I was calm enough. I turned; I advanced toward them.

It was the mother who spoke, not without evident reluctance: "Is it true that you are Mr. Haddon—Mr. Ernest Haddon?" "It is true," I replied quietly.

"Then you were with Mr. Lawrence Willoughby when the tragedy occurred?" she continued in a deep, even voice. "Yes, madam." "I am Mrs. Brett. This is my daughter, Miss Brett."

"I heard the name at first with an idle curiosity. Then vaguely I repeated it to myself. I had heard it before. It awoke startled memories. I vainly tried to place these people who were compelling themselves to speak to me with so evident a reluctance and hesitation.

"Perhaps," assented Mrs. Brett bitterly, "it was Mr. Willoughby himself." "Mother!" the daughter touched the mother's arm appealingly. "Yes," I said in a low voice, "I remember now."

"Then, sir," and the question rose to a crescendo of restrained feeling, "when we were informed only a moment ago that you were Mr. Haddon, you will understand why we have sent for you?" "Yes, madam, I understand. You wish to hear from my lips—the lips of the survivor—of the tragedy?"

Willoughby had loved the daughter. When death had faced us together, he had spoken of her. At such a time one opens one's heart, even to a stranger. And he had told me of his heart's desire; he had told me of his despair that she had not returned his love. At least not openly. But now, when it was too late, perhaps she realized that she had loved him after all.

"Humane Law of the Desert. One of the oddest humane laws in this country is in force in Nevada. In that section of the American desert which lies in Nevada, travelers in distress may flag the limited passenger trains and compel the train crew to give them water to drink. The law makes it a felony to refuse to comply with the traveler's request.

TWO BIG QUESTIONS

THE "MORAL OBLIGATION" AND "DOES IT PAY?"

SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

An Honest Answer to These Will Keep the Trade with the Home Merchant Every Time.

(Copyrighted, 1906, by Alfred C. Clark.) When the thrifty person or his wife sits down for the first time—or any time—with the mail order catalogue and its temptations, there are two, and only two, points to be taken into consideration. One of these is moral obligation, and the chances are that that will be dismissed as sentimental nonsense.

Neither of these questions should be lightly dismissed. Moral obligation is not sentimental nonsense, and black-faced figures sometimes lie. The duty a man owes to his own community and his obligation to trade at home are so often reiterated in the country press that, possibly like some of the preaching, it has a tendency to harden the hearts of the sinners. Nevertheless, the principle is true as gospel.

What has your neighboring town given you, Mr. Farmer? A market for your produce. What has made 25 to 50 per cent. of the present value of your farm? The accessibility of a market. You know that your grandfather did on that same farm? Drove his hogs and hauled his grain 30, 50, maybe 75 miles to the nearest market town, and received prices for them that would make you howl about the trusts.

Yes, the home town, with its handy market, has advanced the value of your property and made you worth several thousand dollars more than your grandfather was worth. The home town affords schooling for your children, and perhaps social and church privileges which your family would not otherwise enjoy. The rural mail routes and telephone systems, radiating from the home town, as spokes from a hub, bring to your home the greatest conveniences of modern times.

What would your farm be worth and how many of these advantages would you be enjoying now, if the city from which that mail order catalogue came were your nearest market, your most accessible trading point, your only post office and social center, the only place to which you could look to connect you with the outside world?

Have you ever noticed that the first thing the settlers of a newly-opened reservation do is to send for a wagon load of mail order catalogues? Well, I haven't. They lay out a town site every six or eight miles, start two or three general stores, build a school house, a church, a blacksmith shop, a grain elevator, petition the department for a post office, and start a newspaper. They know, from former experience that, with these things close by, life will be endurable, whatever hardships may come. They know, also, that without them they must live lives of isolation and endure an existence that is contrary to all natural human instincts.

On the other hand, it goes without saying that the average country town cannot exist without the support of its tributary territory. Then, if that town affords the advantages for the rural citizen that have been enumerated, there exists what we may call an interdependence and a moral obligation between the two. Are you, Mr. Thrifty Farmer, living up to that obligation when you do your trading with the mail order house?

To this line of argument the farmer may answer that his greatest obligation, his first duty, is to his immediate household, and that among the duties to his family and to the heirs of his estate is that of practicing judicious economy—buying where he can buy the cheapest and to the best advantage.

tage. And this brings us to the second point in the argument—the paramount question in this commercial age—"Will it pay?" By most people an affirmative answer to that question is accepted as the call of duty. As a matter of fact, "Will it pay?" is a good test to apply to any project or proposition. There are commercial, as well as political, demagogues, and the man who is appealed to on the score of patriotism or profit, duty or dollars, can scarcely do better than to sit down by himself and submit that question—"Will it pay?"—to his own best judgment. Provided always, that he goes to the very bottom of it.

I believe that every man ought to know why he does so and so. Too many of us travel in ruts. We get the habit of buying certain goods or trading at certain places when we might do better by changing. This will apply sometimes to people who trade at home as well as to those who buy abroad. It is always well to investigate. I have known people to make expensive trips to the city to buy goods that the village merchant would have sold them for less money. They hadn't taken the trouble to investigate.

What are the relative advantages of buying at the local store and ordering from a catalogue house? Advantages, understand, that figure in the question, "Will it pay?" Don't get away from that question. It certainly is very comfortable to sit down by your own fireside and select a dress pattern or a sulky plow from a printed description and a picture of the article; much more comfortable, in fact, than hitching up and driving to town on a raw day.

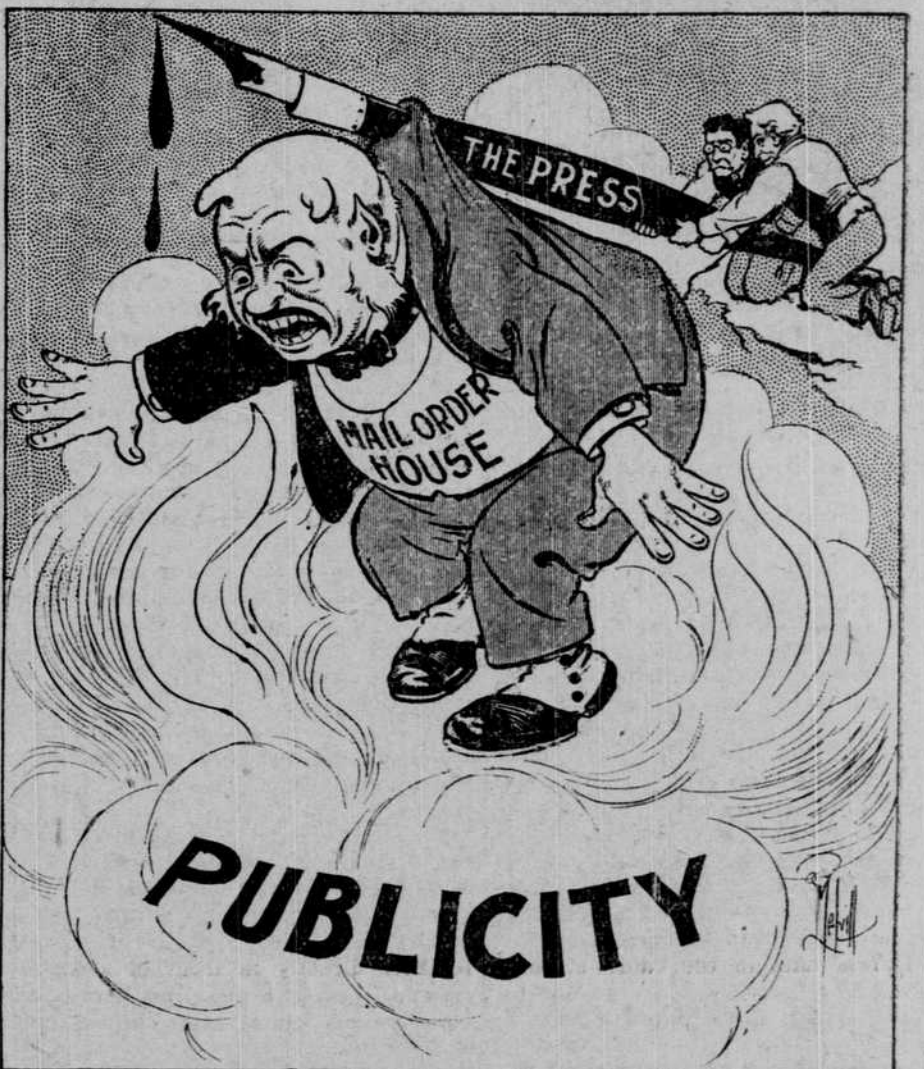
A consideration more important, perhaps, is that the printed price in the catalogue seems, in some cases at least, to be lower than the price quoted at the local store. Isn't that conclusive? Let's see. The catalogue describes the goods and quotes a price; maybe it gives a picture of the article also, but you don't see the goods. The local merchant shows you the goods; you may examine them critically; he may allow you to test them or to call in an expert to advise you. Is it fair to conclude that the catalogue article is the cheaper just because the price is lower?

An element that must enter into the comparison of goods and prices is, that in any attempt to fool the customer, the local merchant is decidedly at a disadvantage. He must show the goods, not merely describe them. His business depends wholly upon the limited trading area of his town and his ability to inspire confidence within that circle. He cannot afford to make a practice of misrepresenting his goods.

The mail order house is not so tied down to the maxim that "Honesty is the best policy." It has no neighbors, no fellow citizens, no mutual interests with its patrons. Its trade area is wide and always shifting. Naturally these conditions do not demand extraordinary vigilance in supplying honest-made goods. And where Vigilance is not a needed employe in the business he is generally taking off the pay roll, which makes a saving in expense, as well as in the cost of the goods. If lower prices are quoted by the catalogue house, may not this account for it?

"Will it pay?" Is it a matter of economy to buy inferior and damaged goods when the same money, or even a little more, will pay for goods of the best quality? Which course does a man's first duty to his own household dictate? That to get at the bottom of that question, we must consider the far-reaching general effect of mail order trading. If single catalogue houses are to be capitalized at \$40,000,000, they must be reckoned with along with Standard Oil, the beef trust, and railroad mergers. If they are allowed to suck the blood from our country towns, your grandchildren will find conditions much the same as those of your grandfather's time. Their markets will be 30, 50 or 75 miles away. The towns and villages will be deserted, and the "hubs" will be too distant to send the radiating spokes of rural mail, telephone lines and other modern conveniences far into the country.

CHARLES BRADSHAW. Cunning and Ignorance. Cunning always has been the offensive and defensive weapon of ignorance. "Match cunning with cunning" only as a first resort.—John A. Howland.



The fire of publicity is the medium the mail-order houses are using to destroy this community. It is up to you, Mr. Merchant, to fight the devil with fire. By the aid of the local press you can hold him over the scorching flames, and put a stop to his devastating competition so far as this community is concerned. Will you not assist in the good fight?

Limit to Sense of Animals

John Burroughs' Theory That They Commit Suicide.

"I do not believe that animals ever commit suicide. I do not believe that they have any notions of death, or take any note of time, or ever put up any bluff game, or ever deliberate together, or form plans or forecast the seasons."

Humane Law of the Desert.

One of the oddest humane laws in this country is in force in Nevada. In that section of the American desert which lies in Nevada, travelers in distress may flag the limited passenger trains and compel the train crew to give them water to drink. The law makes it a felony to refuse to comply with the traveler's request.