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DICK FERRIS, of the Gotham Planet, was in the worst of humors. He was a newspaper man, and used to assignments of all sorts; but the present one was beneath any except the greenest of reporters.

A certain advertisement-seeking prima donna had become involved in a dispute with her manager over the question of wearing tights in the new opera bouffe "Semiramis," and told the reporters that the first night of the opera would show the public which side had triumphed.

Accordingly, the house was packed, and Ferris was sent by the Planet to witness the outcome of the struggle. He watched the Amazon guard listlessly in the opening chorus. He was anxious for the appearance of the prima donna, and scarcely noticed the rough maidens in tinfoil armor, until his eyes chanced to rest on the girl next to the front rank leader.

She had a different look from her associates, lacking something of their professional air, and singing as if she enjoyed it. The freshness and native grace of the girl attracted Ferris. Since boyhood, he had knocked about the world, and it was seldom that a new face interested him; but to-night he found himself following this coryphee with his eyes throughout the act, becoming so much absorbed that he nearly forgot why he had been sent to the theater.

Next day the face of the chorus girl, and its utter incongruity with the surroundings, came to his mind; and the evening found him once more at the theater where "Semiramis" was playing.

From a fellow reporter he learned that the girl's name was Marguerite Gray, and that she carried about with her a mother who might have played the role of the dragon in "Siegfried." Ferris had little trouble in getting behind the scenes, and, thanks to the good offices of the manager (who was objectionably grateful to him for the puff his opera had received in the Planet), he was enabled to meet his unknown. She was about to leave the theater, dressed in the quietest of costumes, and accompanied by the aforesaid mother, who would have put Medusa to the blush for stoniness of manner.

Like a true diplomat Ferris devoted himself to the worthy Gorgon, recalling that her late husband had once helped him out of a bad scrape—had, in fact, stood by him like an elder brother. Ferris conveyed the information that he had long meant to look the mother up to ask after his old friend, and ended by obtaining permission to call at her flat next day.

Next day he went to Mrs. Gray's little Harlem flat, and, having made inquiries that morning, was able to talk with a fair degree of intelligence on the subject of the dear departed Gray. In fact, so kindly did he speak of his putative dead friend that the widow's heart was won over, and he was warmly invited to call often—which he did.

Life became very pleasant to both newspaper man and chorus girl. In the early winter twilight Ferris used to call for an hour on his way from the office. Mrs. Gray was usually busy, and the two young people would sit in the dusky little parlor before a coal fire. Ferris did most of the talking, Marguerite listening with a sort of awe to the man who knew so much and who had read all those great books that one heard about.

To please him, she tried to read Dickens, beginning with the "Tale of Two Cities," and though hopelessly confused by the interminable line of characters and English humor, had understood enough to cry heartily over Sydney Carton's brave death and Dr. Manette's sufferings.

She told him the story of her life one afternoon, upon confession that the late Mr. Gray had not taken him into confidence concerning home matters. She told him of her father's business difficulties and death, her mother's efforts to support herself, and then her own happy discovery that she could make a living on the stage. Of the trials, hardships and repulsiveness of a chorus girl's existence, she spoke little.

Whenever he had a night off he went to the opera with her, and knew she sang better for his being there. After the show he sometimes invited her mother and herself to supper; but to these suppers the widow could never be induced to consent. Even Ferris' friendship for Gray pere, did not make it proper.

So life went on for three months. Winter passed, and the coal fire was no longer needed. Marguerite and Ferris began to plan Sunday excursions for the summer months.

About this time capital and labor revived their long standing feud, and the famous "Homestead riots" began. Ferris was sent by the Planet to the seat of the disturbance, in company with a special artist. He was to leave New York on Monday morning, and Sunday evening he called on the Grays to say good-by.

Mrs Gray was out, but he found Marguerite sitting before the open fire. He spoke to Marguerite of his gratitude for her friendship to him during the past months, and said more than he had meant to. But the look in her eyes did not tend to make him regret what he had said.

The Planet for the next few days contained graphic, cleverly-written accounts of the strike; then another and less facile style became apparent, as though some one else had been detailed in place of the first writer. This was the case, for Ferris was in a Pittsburgh hospital, his wrist shattered by a spent ball. Inflammation set in, and he did not leave the hospital for six weeks.

On his return to New York he learned that "Semiramis" had gone on the road and Marguerite with it. A president's wife lay dying at an Adirondack summer resort, and the Planet sent Ferris to write it up. Shortly after his return from the Adirondacks he was sent to report congress, and consequently saw little of New York that winter.

Before going he called at the Grays' flat, only to learn that they had given it up the month before. The young lady, the janitor said, had left her new address in case anyone asked for them, but that had been lost. Marguerite was in town at the time of this call, but was singing in another company. After Ferris went to Homestead she had written to the address he gave her; but as he was in hospital at the time the letter did not reach him. Then the company went on the road, and the flat was given up. After the careful directions left with the janitor she thought it odd that Ferris never wrote, but supposed he was busy; and invariably ended such reflections by falling into day dreams based on his words of that last evening. Even if they did not see each other for a few months, he should find how true she could be, and how she would try to make herself worthy to be the wife of so brilliant a man.

Accordingly all her spare salary went toward the purchase of books she had heard him praise. Dickens, Swinburne, Thackeray, Balzac, Emerson and a host more authors were religiously studied regardless of any connection. Late into the night she would read, after a hot day's dusty travel and a long evening's singing at some one-night stand.

There was a French girl in the chorus whom she paid to give her French lessons. This now teacher lost her temper at the many blunders, and laughed at the ridiculous accent of her American pupil, but for this Marguerite

"WON'T YOU SIT HERE?"

cared little more than for the headaches and burning eyes that followed her long nights of reading. Each step brought her nearer Ferris' level, and some day when they met once more he would be surprised, and proud of her improvement. If he had loved her in the old days, even while she was ignorant, what would he think of her now?

Spring came again, and summer. A travel-stained theatrical troupe boarded a B. & O. train, taking almost complete possession of one of the cars. A pale girl came down the aisle, and, as she passed a man rose and, with a half-doubtful look, stopped her.

"Excuse me," he said, "but—you are Marguerite Gray, aren't you? You have changed so much that I was not sure at first."

The man was Ferris, and Marguerite Gray felt the blood surge to her face at the sudden joy of seeing him. So they had met at last, and now they need never part again!

"Won't you sit here?" he went on. "We have time for a good, long talk. I'm going as far as Baltimore."

"Why, so are we," said the girl. "We play there to-night. You'll be sure to come, won't you?"

"Thanks," answered Ferris, a little embarrassed, as a thought struck him. "But I never go to the theater nowadays—except with my wife."

A Lawyer Knocked Out.

The circuit court was sitting in a New Hampshire town. It was a cold evening, and a crowd of lawyers had seated themselves around the hearth in the village inn, when a belated traveler, benumbed with cold, entered the room. As none of the lawyers offered to make room near the fire, he sat in the back part of the room.

A smart young lawyer addressed him, and the following dialogue took place:

"You look like a traveler."

"Well, I suppose I am. I came all the way from Wisconsin afoot, at any rate."

"From Wisconsin! What a long distance you had to travel."

"Well, I did it, anyhow."

"Did you ever pass through hell in any of your journeys?"

"Yes, sir; I passed through the outskirts."

"I thought likely. Could you tell us what are the manners and customs of that place? Several of us would like to know."

"Oh! You will find them the same as in this place; the lawyers always sit nearest the fire."—Boston Herald.

Stub Ends of Thought.

Very few people are liars from choice.

Men are deceivers, ever; which is not saying that women are not.

Modern civilization has done more for machinery than it has done for morals.

Love is the air the heart breathes.

There are as many differentiations of religion and love as there are human beings.

Beauty has the peculiar influence upon its possessors of making them think that nothing else is necessary.

A mirror never shows a woman what is below the surface.

If there had been a dozen Adams instead of one, Eve would not have flirted with the serpent.

Loss of respect for one man lessens, in a certain degree, our respect for all men.—Detroit Free Press.

THE IDEAL INCOME.

Some Varying Opinions as to What Constitutes an Independence.

Independence, from an entirely American standpoint, is always more or less hard to gain, though not exceeding hard, not almost impossible, as it is across the sea. It requires continuous resolution, unflinching perseverance, steady self-abstinence, clear judgment, with a dash of what is reckoned as luck, especially in youth, when such qualities are least developed. Above all, it requires resolution and perseverance. An earnest attempt at independence can never really be made too late, desirable as it is to make the attempt early. Independence should be aimed at, kept firmly in mind, whether one be twenty-five or sixty, whether they have many responsibilities or none. For it is very rarely reached without ceaseless solicitude and striving, and not, as must be granted, reached generally even with these. After good repute and good health, it is the most valuable of possessions. It is apprehensible salvation. Nevertheless, the first stages are most arduous, the most discouraging. Beyond them the road is smoother, and success dawns in the distance. Cling to the prospect while life lasts, though expectation swoon by the way. The recompense is worth the stoutest labor, the severest sacrifice; it richly atones, in the end, for whatever may have been endured for the precious cause.

What constitutes an independence? Does it not vary with the place and the individual? Is not the independence of one man totally inadequate to that of another? Obviously yes. Your idea of an independence may be so superior to mine as to seem like wealth, which, in any reasonable sense, may not be hoped for, and is not, in truth, by any number of men, though to the manner born. Still sensible, sober opinions on the subject are not so different as may appear at first. Each man should determine for himself, according to his surroundings and relations, what amount he and his, if all sources fail, can live on in a very simple way—in a way bearable and decent, if not quite pleasant or desirable.

It seems to be generally agreed that in New York a native citizen, a man of small family—a wife and two children, for example—can not get on respectably with less than about $5,000 a year. If a bachelor, $1,200 to $1,500 will answer. In other cities $3,000 to $4,000 may sustain him domestically; in the village or the country, materially less. If he must descend to marked plainness, rigid economy, prosaic facts, he can find places where, without other income, $2,000 to $2,500 will keep him and his household together, not without material comfort. That amount, therefore, may be taken as an approximation to an independence, as enough certainly to keep the wolf and the creditor from the door. Confession may be frankly made, however, that no such sum is regarded by the city folk as sufficient for the purpose. They might put it at fully $10,000, and speak of minor figures as penury, or prolonged starvation. Strict independence may, notwithstanding, be computed in general at $2,000 to $2,500; and he who has secured it indubitably has no cause to fear compassion, or to seek for sympathy. He may esteem it a genuine misfortune to be so reduced, especially after having had five or ten times as much. Still, it is independence—not handsome, welcome, or in any manner satisfactory; and it is within reach of nearly anyone who diligently and earnestly works for it.—Junius Henri Browne, in Harper's Magazine.

HOUSEWORK MADE EASY.

Many Women Make It Harder Than Is Necessary.

Supposing that my lady is trying to do her own housework, and to thus save the expense of a servant. Did it ever occur to her to save herself all possible steps and physical exertion by introducing a few innovations? For instance, when she sits out to do the family ironing, if she sits instead of stands she will be able to get through a big basket of clothes very easily, having her board in a cool room, say the dining-room. The exertion of rising to change the irons will not be great.

Even the washing can be done very comfortably by a woman not overstrong physically, if she will not fret about it but will go to work, the right way. The white clothes should, of course, be placed in warm water and soap at night and by morning they will easily rub clean. Into the boiling water should be poured a teaspoonful or a trifle more of kerosene, which will whiten the clothes.

And then carpets! There are still a great many carpets used in modest homes, where the care of them is wearing out the house-wife. Even soft pine floors can be prettily stained and varnished, after the cracks have been filled in with putty, and the pretty, cleanly method of laying rugs about will give the room the wholesomeness of our grandmother's days, and do away with the principal bother of house-cleaning time, to say nothing of the labor of frequent sweeping; the soft, long-handled brush will remove most of the daily accumulation of dust. —N. Y. Journal.

A Noble Aim.

Parker—Poor old Brownley! He's become insane, I hear, working at that telephone invention.

Barker—What was he trying to invent?

Parker—A device for preventing people from calling you up when you don't want to talk with them.—Puck.

Reasonable Solution.

Johnny—What made you run away from Bill Sluthers! You was afraid of him, that's what's the matter.

Tommy—No, I wasn't neither. If we'd fought, I'd a licked him, and then my ma'd a licked me. That's what I run away for, so!—Boston Transcript.

—A primary school has been opened at Nazareth.

COULDN'T BILK THAT DENTIST.

A Customer Induced to Settle by the Strategy of a Tooth Doctor.

A Superior street dentist smiled when he told of his experience in dealing with a large and crafty customer. In the absence of the dentist, a date was arranged by the customer with the custodian of the business docket for a goodsized job of denistry. When the appointed day came he duly appeared and took the chair. For two hours the buzz saw, mallet and file did hard service. Then the electric battery was called into play and one big molar succumbed. Finally the job was finished and the chair vacated. Its recent occupant turned toward the door, catching his hat from the hook as he went.

"And the money?" inquired the dentist.

"Haven't any," was the gruff response. "You can charge it."

The dentist moved about in suspense for a moment, and then said, in a measured tone: "See here, my friend, we are strangers. Cash is my rule, and it is the only thing that goes."

"Exactly," responded the customer, remembering the pain he had just endured, "but what are you going to do about it?"

The dentist was disconcerted. His customer had now reached the door. A happy thought struck him. "Just a moment," he called out. "I'm sorry, but I left one of those nerves exposed. Will you just sit down again, please?"

The remark was uttered in such a sincere manner that the man did not hesitate in taking the chair. No sooner had he done so than he began to suspect that all was not right. A sense of vacancy stole over him in the region of one of his teeth, and in a moment the nerve began to dance. The dentist had removed the filling.

"What are you doing anyway?" he managed to mutter as the workman proceeded.

"Oh, nothing," was the reply. "Might as well save the fillings, I suppose. There, does that hurt you? Too bad."

The man clinched his fist and made a spasmodic effort to release himself. He found that he had been made fast to the chair with a strap. He grew hot and drops of sweat appeared on his forehead and nose.

"How much is this bill?" he finally inquired.

"Regular job ten dollars, extras five dollars. Oh, about fifteen dollars, I guess," was the cheerful response.

"Want to get rich quick, don't you? Put up a block on Euclid avenue, eh? Well, I'll pay it, but I'll not bother you again. The next time I'll go to a gentleman."

Not until the money was carefully stowed away in the dentist's vest pocket was the filling replaced and the strap loosened. The two then parted never again to meet.—Cleveland Leader.

OLD BARANOFF CASTLE.

An Alaskan Stronghold That Was the Scene of Many Festivities.

Baranoff castle was in Sitka, and was built upon an eminence commanding an excellent view of the town and harbor. In appearance it bore no resemblance to a castle, but looked very much like a country hotel.

Baranoff castle, and the island upon which it was built, derived its name from the Russian governor Baranoff, who, in the early part of the century, lived there and ruled the people with a tyranny similar to that enforced in Siberia.

Under Baranoff's rule and that of his predecessors the island and the old castle were the scenes of many contests for supremacy, as well as festivities, in which persons of royal blood participated.

The governorship of that portion of all Russia was considered a great reward, and in turn many nobles ruled and were provided with plenty to make their life one of luxury. The old banquet hall of the castle was the scene of many entertainments given in extravagant style in honor of visiting celebrities.

Twenty years ago Lady Franklin, then eighty years old, visited the island, searching for some trace of her missing husband, Sir John. William H. Seward, upon his retirement as secretary of state, also spent several days upon the island, viewing with his own eyes the great territory which through his and Senator Charles Sumner's efforts secured for this country by peaceable means.

It the fall of 1867 many noted personages stood upon the balcony of the old castle, and witnessed the replacing of the eagles of the czar with the Stars and Stripes. By that act five hundred and eighty thousand square miles of territory became the property of the United States, the consideration being two cents per acre.—San Francisco Chronicle.

—One hears a new story every now and then to illustrate how an author's fame may be held in a state of suspended animation by the magazines. One of the most notable recent magazine stories, perhaps on the whole its author's best literary work, was published at least three years after it was accepted and paid for. It was an essay in a style of writing hitherto unattempted by the author, and whatever reputation shall accrue to him from success in a difficult undertaking has been postponed while the story lay pigeonholed. The daring originality of the conception doubtless accounts for the delay in publication.

—One of the oldest seats of learning in Europe, the University of Valladolid, celebrated recently its sixth centennial as an established university. In 1293 King Sancho IV. of Castile and Leon gave charter to this school. But it had been in existence long before the Christian era.

—The wise prove and the foolish confess by their conduct that a life of employment is the only life worth living. —Paley.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE CLEVER PARSON.

My children, come tell me now if you have ever
Been told of the parson who was so clever;
So clever, so clever, so clever was he
That never a cleverer parson could be

The parson loved children; he also loved walking,
And off to the woods he was constantly stalking,
To smell the sweet air, and to see the green trees,
And to do just exactly whate'er he might please.

Some children they went with him once to the wood
(They loved the good parson because he was good.)
They followed him gayly for many a mile,
To list to his voice and to look on his smile.

At length the children cried: "Oh—dear—ME!!
We're tired—as tired as tired can be!
'Tis supper time, too, while afar thus we roam—
Oh, pray you, dear parson, do carry us home!"

The children were six, and the parson was one;
Now, goodness gracious! what was to be done?
He sat himself down in the shade of a tree,
And pondered the matter most thoughtfully.

At length he exclaimed: "My dear little chicks,
I might carry one, but I can't carry six.
Yet, courage! your parson's good care will provide
That each of you home on a fine horse shall ride."

He drew out his jackknife, so broad and so bright,
And fell to work slashing with main and with might,
'Till ready there—one, two, three, four, five and six—
Lay, stout and smooth-polished, some excellent sticks.

"Now mount your good horses, my children!" he cried;
"Now, mount your good horses and merrily ride!
A canter, a trot and a gallop away,
And we shall get home ere the close of the day."

The children forgot they were dreadfully tired;
They seized on the hobbies, with ardor inspired.
"Gee, Dobbin! whoa, Dobbin! come up, Dobbin, do!
Oh! parson, dear parson, won't you gallop, too?"

Away went the children in frolicsome glee,
Away went the parson, as pleased as could be;
And when they arrived at the village they cried:
"Oh, dear! and oh, dear! what a very short ride!"

—Laura E. Richards, in St. Nicholas.

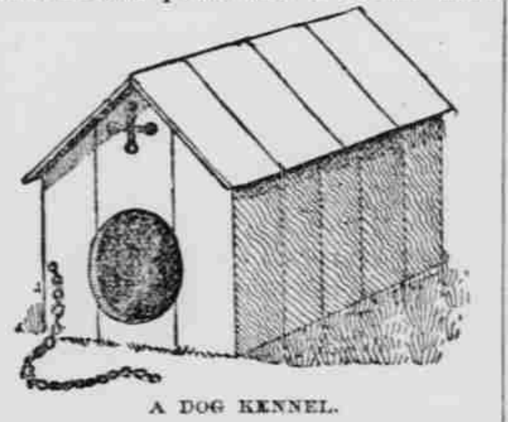
CARPENTRY FOR BOYS.

How to Make a Neat and Convenient Kennel for Their Dogs.

There are undoubtedly a good many boys who have a dog, but perhaps have no kennel. Almost any kind of a kennel will do for a dog. A box with four sides, a bottom and a top, and provided with a hole large enough for him to go through, is better than nothing, but the drawing shows a kennel of neat appearance that any boy can make from an old dry goods box or from some boards.

Its size depends, of course, on the size of your dog, but for the average dog of medium size a kennel thirty inches long, eighteen or twenty inches wide and twenty-six inches high to the top of the peak will be good proportions.

First, make the front and back with a peak top, then the sides and bottom, and in the front piece cut a round hole



A DOG KENNEL.

large enough for the dog to crawl in and out, and above it bore four holes, and with a keyhole saw cut the wood away between the holes, so as to make a ventilator, for dogs as well as other animals need pure air.

Now nail the sides to the bottom, and the front and back to the bottom and sides. Between the two peaks nail a slip of wood to form a ridge pole against which the upper ends of the top boards are to be nailed, then put on the top, nailing it securely to the ridge pole, the top edges of the front and back, also the sides, and the carpenter work of the kennel will then be completed.

Now putty up all the cracks and nail holes, and give the outside a few coats of paint of some desirable color to finish the kennel nicely.

A staple with a chain, attached to the end of which may be a snap, can be driven in at one side of the front, and to this chain the dog can be fastened.

A door might also be arranged to close the hole in the front at night, so as to keep the dog warmer in winter, but you must not forget to open it in the morning, as it would be unpleasant for a dog to be shut up in such a small house when there is daylight and he is awake.

Always place plenty of straw on the bottom of a kennel, so as to make a soft bed for your dog, and he will be more grateful to you in his canine way for the kindness shown him than you have any idea of.—N. Y. Recorder.

A WRESTLING FROG.

It Possesses a Well-Developed Weapon of Offense.

Every animal has its own means of defense or escape. Frogs save themselves by jumping—an art in which they probably excel all other forms of vertebrates. But Mr. W. H. Hudson once encountered a frog which, as he says, was not like other frogs in that it possessed weapons of offense. He was snipe shooting, and peering into a burrow saw a burly-looking frog sitting in the entrance. With the instinct of a naturalist he set about capturing it. The frog watched him, but remained motionless. What followed is thus described by Mr. Hudson.

Before I was near enough to make a grab, it sprang straight at my hand, and catching two of my fingers with its fore legs, administered a hug so sudden and violent as to cause an acute sensation of pain. Then, at the very instant I experienced this feeling, which made me start back quickly, it released its hold and bounded out and away.

I flew after it, and barely managed to overtake it before it could gain the water. Held firmly pressed behind the shoulders, it was powerless to attack me, and I then noticed the enormous development of the muscles of the fore legs, usually small in frogs, bulging out in this individual like a second pair of thighs, and giving it a strangely bold and formidable appearance.

I held my gun within its reach, and it clasped the barrel with such force as to bruise the skin of its breast and legs. After allowing it to exhaust itself partially in these fruitless hugs, I experimented by letting it seize my hand again, and I noticed that after each squeeze it made a quick, violent effort to free itself.

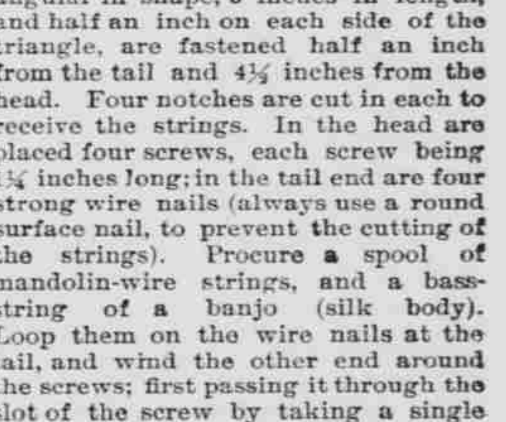
Believing that I had discovered a frog differing in structure from all known frogs, and possessing a strange and unique instinct of self-preservation, I carried my captive home, intending to show it to the director of the National museum at Buenos Ayres. Unfortunately, it effected its escape by pushing up the glass cover of its box, and I have never met another like it.

That this singular frog can seriously injure an enemy is, of course, out of the question, but its unexpected attack must be of great advantage to it. The effect of the sudden opening of an umbrella in the face of an angry bull gives, I think, only a faint idea of the astonishment and confusion it must cause by its leap, quick as lightning, and the violent hug it administers; and in the confusion it finds time to escape.

AN ÆOLIAN HARP.

Directions for Making One with Telephone Attachment.

There are many of our young readers who have heard the sweet tones of an æolian-harp, but when they attempt to make one they find the principal difficulty seems to be that the noise of the wind deadens the music of the harp. There is a solution of this problem. Below we give a draught of an æolian-harp. The sounding-box is constructed of the best-seasoned pine one-eighth of an inch thick, and free from knots and checks. The top and bottom measure 21x6 inches, the sides 2x23¾ inches, the ends 2x6 inches. In the center of the upper board saw out a circle 2 inches in diameter. (This opening allows the vibrations, or sound-waves, to escape from the box.) Now take two pieces of pine, each measuring 5¾x2x1x¼ inch, shape it so that one side will be perpendicular and two sides horizontal, and one side an angle (see draught interior of head and tail). These form the braces at each end of the sound-box to resist the strain of the strings, and are placed at the extreme ends of the box on the inside. When putting the box together fasten the top on last. Every contact surface should receive a liberal coat of glue, and small brads driven home when the glue is in a liquid state insure the box being air-tight, except the two-inch hole. Two bridges, triangular in shape, 5 inches in length, and half an inch on each side of the triangle, are fastened half an inch from the tail and 4½ inches from the head. Four notches are cut in each to receive the strings. In the head are placed four screws, each screw being 1¼ inches long; in the tail end are four strong wire nails (always use a round surface nail, to prevent the cutting of the strings). Procure a spool of mandolin-wire strings, and a bass-string of a banjo (silk body). Loop them on the wire nails at the tail, and wind the other end around the screws; first passing it through the slot of the screw by taking a single hitch around the standing part of the wire insures its not slipping. Three legs on the harp are preferable, as it may stand on an uneven surface. Give



PLAN, ELEVATION AND DETAILS OF THE HARP.

the outside a good sand-papering (finest grade) and two coats of varnish. The telephone attachment can be added in the following manner: Find a good-sized (one-half pound) baking-powder box, remove the cover, and punch a very small hole in the center of bottom. In this hole fasten a long string free from knots. Put a very small hole in the center of the side of the harp. Hang the harp by strings attached to its legs, and hold in place by guy strings. See that the strings of the harp are at right angles with the wind. Stretch the cord tight (allowing it to come in contact with nothing but the harp and baking-powder can), and you will hear the sound vibrations thrown out from the harp and transmitted through the cords and magnified by the baking-powder can held close to your ear. An æolian harp will not play unless placed in direct contact with a good breeze. If placed on a window sill without telephone attachment the harp can stand on its legs; but if suspended in a tree in the back yard, it could be bottom side up, and thus in case of rain or snow the strings and interior will be protected. The bass string will not rust, being covered with fine copper wire. The other strings and screws can be coated with machine oil, which will protect them from the weather. The higher the harp is tuned the stronger must the breeze be required to make the sound vibrations.—H. Percy Ashley, in Harper's Young People.