

## OUR COAST DEFENSES.

GEN. CUTCHEON SAYS WE ARE IMPREGNABLE.

New York City Is Not at the Mercy of Foreign Nations—San Francisco Is Well Protected—The Great Disappearing Gun.

MICHIGAN daily paper contains an interesting interview with Gen. Byron M. Cutcheon on the present condition of the coast defenses at New York and other important harbors. Gen. Cutcheon served three years in the field during the late war, and eight years in congress on the military committee, being chairman while his party was in congressional control. From congress he went on the board of ordnance and fortification, where he served four years, until his resignation a few months ago. When asked if New York city could be successfully defended against an English ironclad fleet, the general said:

"New York is, in my opinion and in the opinion of our best military authorities, fully prepared to receive any ironclad fleet. The defense work done there since the fortifications board was organized, eight years ago, is of the most modern and complete character, calculated to defend the city from any number of the best battleships afloat. During the past eight years the fortifications board has built five new batteries to command the entrances of New York harbor, which an incoming steamship passenger would hardly notice. The most of the walls and all the guns are down out of sight. The outer walls, or first lines, are at Sandy Hook, the entrance to the main or south channel, where powerful batteries of twelve-inch rifled steel guns and rifled twelve-inch mortars are planted. The batteries, when on high ground, have walls even only with the surface, and on low ground they are slightly raised. The outer wall is of concrete, forty feet thick. In the concrete are blocks of stone, thrown in promiscuously, to deflect projectiles which penetrate the surface. Inside this wall is thirty feet of sand, covered with concrete; then another concrete wall, under which the men and guns are protected. Underneath all are steam boilers and powerful engines for handling the immense guns, which weigh over fifty tons each, and the carriages weigh as much more. The largest guns on any war vessel are thirteen-inch, but the gun on land, with a firm foundation, has more power and accuracy than one on ship."

**AGAIN MINIATURES.**

Women Carry the Staff of Life from Door to Door.

The largest loaves of bread baked in the world are those of France and Italy. The "pipe" bread of Italy is baked in loaves two and three feet long, while in France the loaves are made in the shape of very long rolls four or five feet in length, and in many cases even six feet. The bread of Paris is distributed almost exclusively by women, who go to the various bakehouses at 5:30 a. m. and spend about an hour polishing up the loaves. After the loaves are thoroughly cleaned of dust and grit the "bread porter" proceeds on the round of her customers. Those who live in apartments or flats find their loaves leaning against the door. Restaurateurs and those having street entrances to their premises find their supply to the staff of life propped up against the front door. The wages earned by these bread carriers vary from a couple of shillings to half a crown a day, and their day's work is completed by 10 o'clock in the morning.

### The Lady and the Burglar.

From the Chicago Times-Herald: The lady, hearing some one in the dining room, thought it was her husband, and slipped down to pour a glass for him. She confronted a burglar who was making a vigorous search of the sideboard. She stepped to a closet and brought out a heavy basket, saying: "Here is the silver; now go away, my good man, because I hear my husband at the front door, and he carries a pistol." The burglar fled with the basket and the lady fainted. When her husband revived her she told the tale and explained that the basket contained an immense Maltese cat that slept in it. She fainted again for the possible fate of pussy. The next morning the cat scratched at the basement door. It looked no worse for the adventure, and it bore a note tied around its neck, which conveyed the compliments and admiration of her victim—the burglar.

### Apples Are Brain Food.

"The apple," declares a hygienic journal, "is one of nature's best gifts to women. Esthetically it clears and beautifies the complexion by exciting the action of the liver. Hygienically it aids digestion, prevents calculous growths by helping the kidney secretions and, as it thoroughly disinfects the mouth, is one of the best-known preventives of throat disease. Apples are excellent brain food, for more than any other food do they contain phosphoric acid in an easily digested state. The best time to eat apples is just before going to bed, for they are sure to promote sound and healthful sleep." One questions, perhaps, the latter part of the paragraph, for all persons cannot eat fruit, even the wholesome apple, at bed time; but the rest is undoubtedly true. *Cincinnati Tribune.*

### Batteries for the Hair.

Jeweled ornaments in the hair are going to be much worn this winter. In the stalls of a smart theater, a few nights ago, I noticed that nearly every third lady was a diamond butterfly or star lightly poised with excellent effect. A true lover's knot of diamonds caught in a fluffy, fair fringe looked well, but a ruby and diamond butterfly perched on a coil of dusky hair was still more pleasing. Velvet bows, brooches and tiny plumes were also to be seen.—*The Princess.*

### Potatoes in Michigan.

Northern Michigan is awash under a phenomenal crop of potatoes, and instead of the good crop bringing good times it has brought severe loss to very many farmers. Nothing like the present abundance was ever known before, and there is absolutely no market for potatoes there today. Many farmers put all their money into potatoes this year, and are in hard straits now because while having realized a handsome crop they can't realize anything on it.

### Diseases.

"It isn't the poor master of getting a mind that will be found in the pastures of the world," says the author of the *Widower's Doctor*, of Troy, N. Y., who is the doctor to the world. Doctors are good.

Complex Mechanism Renders It Possible but the Attitude Is Not Normal.

From the Scottish American: We are so accustomed to standing upright as a natural attitude that few of us think what a special complex mechanism is required for this purpose. A moment's consideration will show that the ordinary explanation of the erect position (the center of gravity to be directly above the feet) is insufficient. When a man is suddenly shot, whether from the front or behind, he drops on his face, for the truth is that there is much more weight in the front of the spinal column than behind it. The fact is that when we are standing a large number of powerful muscles (both front and back) are simultaneously at work, the effects of their action being to neutralize each other. Thus, the legs would fall forward were it not that they are kept vertical on the feet by the strong tendon (the "Achilles") at the back of the heel. At the same time the muscles of the thigh are tightened so as to prevent us taking a sitting position, and the muscles of the back are pulled tense so that the trunk does not stoop forward. The head is prevented from dropping on the chest by the ligaments in the nape of the neck. That the upright is not its normal position is easily shown by the fact that a man nods as he falls asleep; for as soon as the controlling nervous force is deadened the head drops forward by its own weight, only to be pulled back in position again with a jerk when the brain becomes suddenly aware of an unusual attitude.

## A CHRISTMAS STORY.

**O**N THE house, a big hive of working people, situated in the Rue Delambre, where for six months Tony Robec had occupied a room, every one thought that he was a widower. He could not have been a widower very long, for his little boy, Adrien, who lived with him, and who was always well-cared for, was not more than six years old. Yet neither of them were mourning.

Early every day, Tony Robec, who was employed as a compositor in a printing-house in the Quartier Latin, left his room, with the child still half-asleep on his shoulder. He left the Little one at school, and called for him again at night, when returning from work. Then they went shopping together, after which they shut themselves up in their garret, and nothing more was seen of them until the following morning.

The kind-hearted gossips were full of pity for the poor fellow. He couldn't be more than forty, and was still good-looking, although sad and pale, and with silver streaks in his black beard. Behind his back they said: "That man ought to marry again."

They wished to make his acquaintance. Generally this is not difficult in such a house, where the tenants live with open doors. But Tony had a very reserved manner, and bowed so distantly and so coldly—although politely—to his neighbors, when he met them on the stairs, that they were afraid to approach him.

"No, ladies," said the door-keeper, who was inclined to be sentimental, "that widower will never marry again, mark my words. The other Sunday I passed him in the cemetery at Montparnasse. His wife is doubtless buried there. It cut me to the heart to see the poor man with the motherless little chap at his side. He must have approached him in supplication."

Suddenly he found the boy pressing against him, and murmuring, "Mamma." There, only a few paces away, under a clump of cypress trees, knelt the mother. She was clad in a wretched dress and a thin shawl. Her eyes were sunken and her cheeks hollow and pale. She was looking at her husband, and her clasped hands were stretched toward him in supplication. Tony pushed the boy gently toward her, saying, "Adrien, go kiss your mother."

The poor creature strained the child convulsively to her breast, and covered him with kisses. Then rising and turning toward her husband, but always with the air of a suppliant, she said, "How good of you!"

Certainly Tony had been very devoted to his wife, and would not be consoled now that he had lost her—but he was not a widower.

His life had been simple, but not by any means happy. Although a conscientious workman, he was not particularly good at his trade, and therefore until he was thirty he had not succeeded in making a tolerably good living, and could not think of marrying. When he did resolve to marry, he ought to have chosen a sensible, economical wife, who had known want as he had. But love does not occupy itself with such trifles. Tony lost his head over a pretty, light-minded, light-hearted flower-girl of nineteen, honest doubtless, but frivolous, and thinking more of her toilet than of anything else under the sun. It must be admitted, however, that she could make a dress out of a few scraps of stuff.

He had saved a little money with which to start housekeeping. Among other things he bought a big cupboard with a glass door, in which his wife could admire herself the whole day.

They were married, and at first lived very happily. They had two modest rooms on the fifth floor of a house in the Boulevard de Port Royal, with a little balcony from which they had a bird's-eye view of Paris. Every night, leaving work, Tony Robec disguised

himself in a coat and hat, and went to the Rue Delambre, where he had a room.

The Pompadour Coiffure.

The pompadour fashion of wearing the hair has been adopted by two of our most talked of brides this year, Miss Anna Gould and Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt. This style of hair dressing seems essentially natural, but a false pompadour may be bought in varying lengths and prices to suit the purchaser. One for the forehead alone costs \$10, one to extend to the ears, \$15, and a complete wig in this style over \$40. It is not cheapest.—*Ex.*

Done by Missionaries.

King Leopold of Belgium, chief of the Congo Free State, recently expressed, in a letter, his high appreciation of the services rendered to the state by a grammar of the language which Mr. Bentley, a Baptist missionary, had prepared. Another Baptist missionary Mr. Grenfell was knighted by the king

for his services to the natives.

Going to Be a Hard Winter.

If there is any truth in the old saying that a season of abundant wild fruits and nuts presages a cold and snowy winter, severe weather may be expected to March next. All the wild fruits have been unusually abundant and there is promise of an equally abundant nut crop.—*Albany Times-Union.*

PERSONAL.

The ex-Empress Eugenie has purchased a small estate at Braemar, and will have a large-built there.

Colonel Cockrell has been called home from Japan to become managing editor of the New York Herald.

Samuel Shaw, a wealthy farmer of Amherst, O., has married for the fifth time and is not over 50 years of age.

Phil May, the artist of London Punch, finds his greatest delight outside of art, in witnessing a good horse race.

Captain Von Schellwitz, formerly editor of the Almanach de Gotha, has been appointed private secretary of Prince Bismarck.

Frederick Harrison, who is writing a life of William the Silent, has gone to The Hague to gather further materials for his work on the spot.

William Winter, the critic and author, is to delineate the cornerstone of the new Staten Island academy building at St. George, N. Y., on November 14.

Hector MacNeil of Woodbury, Conn., thinks he is the oldest church member in the country. He is 101 years old and was received in the church at Middlebury, Conn., in 1815.

François Désiré, a son of the great marshal, died in Cuba recently of illness contracted in the campaign against his patricides. He was a young officer in the Spanish expeditionary army.

Tony sold the greater part of his furniture in order to pay his debts, and moved into the Rue Delambre.

Toward the end of September he received a letter from his wife—four incoherent and desperate pages, plentifully washed with tears—in which she announced that she had repented and implored pardon. This was all very painful for Tony, but he was proud, and the letter remained unanswered.

He heard no more from Clementine. On Christmas eve he went, as was his custom, to the cemetery at Montparnasse, there to place on the grave of his dead child a few frozen violets and roses. For the first time Tony went alone with the child, and, strange as it may seem, on entering the cemetery he suffered more poignant than ever before from the absence of that wife who had so cruelly deceived him. "Where is she now, and what is she doing?" thought he.

On arriving at the grave, he started, for at the foot of it were strewn several little playthings such as the poor give to their children—a trumpet, a jack-in-the-box, and a whistle. They had evidently just been placed there, for they were quite new.

"Oh, what pretty playthings!" cried Little Adrien excitedly. But his father, having detected a scrap of paper pinned to one of the toys, opened it and read: "For Adrien, from his brother Felix, who is now with the child Christ."

Suddenly he found the boy pressing against him, and murmuring, "Mamma." There, only a few paces away, under a clump of cypress trees, knelt the mother. She was clad in a wretched dress and a thin shawl. Her eyes were sunken and her cheeks hollow and pale. She was looking at her husband, and her clasped hands were stretched toward him in supplication. Tony pushed the boy gently toward her, saying, "Adrien, go kiss your mother."

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