

MR. LOT AND MINE.

I met her one summer—and the next me—
A kind of view of the boundless sea;
And the faint light of the stars came to be,

THE BANK MYSTERY.

One day the directors of the Bank of England were much puzzled, and not a little amused, when the secretary read to them, at their usual sitting, the following ill-spelt and somewhat curious letter.

Two Gentlemen of Bank England: You think you are in a hand your bank is in, but I know better. I am inside these banks the last 24 hours hand you nose puff about it.

The letter being duly read, was, as might be expected, the topic of conversation and suggestion for some time. Some of the directors thought it was a hoax. Others thought that under the apparently ignorant written letter a deep mystery was hidden.

The detectives looked grave. There was a plot at work, they saw, and with their usual penetration, they at once penetrated the deepest depths of the inquiry. Every one knows that a file of soldiers march every night from the Tower to the bank to keep watch and ward over the vast treasure there, but they simply guard the outside from attack.

There is a very large room underground, where the huge wealth of the bank is deposited—millions and millions of English sovereigns, bars of gold and hundred weights of silver, with myriads of notes to an incalculable amount. The detectives of course, knew that this room must be the place which the writer of the letter had designated as "treasure room."

This extraordinary communication was a source of no small anxiety to the bank directors. How it could have been left on the table in the strong room, guarded as it was, none could imagine. They, however, at last agreed to do what perhaps would have been wiser if done at first, namely, to depute a few of their number to visit the vault alone.

A heavy chest had been forwarded by the Parcels Delivery Company, directed to the "Directors of the Bank of England." The chest was, of course, opened before them at once—such a thing being very unusual—and found to contain a large packet of most valuable papers and securities, which had been safely deposited in the vault. With them was the following letter:

To the Directors of the Bank of England—Gentlemen: My husband, who is an honest man, wrote to you last week, and told you that he had found a way, which he believes is known only to himself—of getting into your strong room, and offered, if you would meet him there at night, to explain the whole matter. He has never taken anything from that room except the enclosed box. You set detectives upon him, and he took the box to show that he could go there if he chose. He gives you another chance. Let a few gentlemen be in the room alone, and my husband will meet you there at midnight. Yours very respectfully,

This letter was most mysterious than the last. The only thing that was evident was that the writer, "Elen Smith," was a better scholar than her husband. The detectives were shown the letter, and acted accordingly. Of course, they saw through "the dodger." The cleverest man were posted in the room.

In the morning they told a strange story. They said that they saw a light at about 12 o'clock. It seemed to come from a dark lantern; but directly they ran to the spot from whence the light proceeded it went out, and the strictest search had discovered nothing. The bank officials became alarmed. Every night the strictest watch was set, but nothing turned up until, on the morning of the next sitting of the board, another letter was found on the table of the strong room. Now it got there,

considering the room was guarded day and night, was a mystery. Its contents were as follows: "It was for your own good that you were warned that the strong room of the bank is not really safe. At any time any one can enter it. If we wished to steal we certainly would never have told you about it, or returned that box. You have set the police to see to what you ought to have looked after yourself. If the police are there to-night we will never explain the easy way of getting into your strong room, but most likely some one else will let you know that we told the truth when they help themselves to what is there. E. S."

More and more astonished than ever on the receipt of this letter, and more puzzled still at the strange way in which it had been delivered, the directors, after a long consultation, agreed upon a plan of action. There were two things perfectly evident: one that the writer of the letter really had access in some mysterious way to the strong room and the other, that he had discovered that some of the directors, who could conveniently do so, should visit the strong room at the time indicated in the letter.

The plan was carried out. But, as might be expected, the directors were not alone. The police had advised them too well for that, and half a dozen of the best detectives were dressed up in the garb of gentlemen and mingled in such a way that any one would have a good chance of their finding one group.

They waited until twelve, and then one of the directors, a little impatient, approaching the table, said: "Well, it's a most extraordinary affair. Feiden, you are used to these matters and you have examined the room. Where the fellow can come from is to me a perfect mystery."

Perhaps if he had not used these words at that moment, the "mystery," as he called it, might have been instantly solved.

Of course every eye was directed to the table where the letters had been placed, but though every precaution was taken, there was not the least sign of any living being but themselves, or any voice save their own, in the room. They waited there the whole night long, but nothing was seen or heard. Their labor was in vain. About 4 o'clock in the morning the detectives whispered that it was needless for the gentlemen to remain any longer; they themselves would wait as long as the gentlemen chose, but the hour for breaking into that strongest of all strong rooms—if it could be broken into at all—was long past. The gentlemen, nothing loath, departed, after "tipping" their assistants liberally. The detectives also, convinced that their work for the night was done, let the strong room about 4 o'clock.

The next morning the board held an extraordinary meeting, in order to discuss the result of the efforts of the gentlemen who had had all night in the vault. They had little or nothing to say of any consequence, and a long argument about nothing, were about to separate, when a porter entered with a letter, which he stated had been found on the table in the strong room. It ran as follows:

You kindly see how like. Last night I here someone speak to Mr. Feiden, who knew an insider of the matter, and of course I did not come; as I have a duty to give you another chance. Come tonight, if two or three gentlemen are there alone I will be with you. If any detectives are there I shall give it all up at last. You may see me as you wish. E. S."

Mr. Cremon, in his "Life Among the Apaches," gives an entertaining account of a lady's man with whom he once enjoyed an interview. "A tall, strong, well-made and handsome young dandy," he calls him, "strutting about with an air of very superior consequence, displaying his colonial-skin saddle, his splendid leopard-skin sash, his leggings, and the like."

After a while Salt-jah came swaggering toward me and said, in broken Spanish: "Your chief says you great medicine; he says your pistol fires six times without reloading; he says you bring the trees which are afar off close to the eyes, as you can count the leaves; he says our guns reach a great way and never miss; he says a great many other wonderful things, which I cannot believe. You have bewitched him."

Drawing a sash-shooter from my belt, I pointed out a tree about seventy yards distant, and began firing rapidly. Each shot struck the tree, and blazed off large fragments of the bark.

Salt-jah was astonished, and made no attempt to conceal the fact; but his admiration broke into emphatic expression when he witnessed the precision and reach of our Sharp's rifles, and the rapidity with which they could be loaded and fired. His pride had evidently received a heavy fall, and his lofty bearing was tamed down many degrees.

In my possession was the miniature of a young lady, whose graces of person, cultivated mind and amiable disposition, rendered her one of the most lovable of Boston's fairest daughters.

Salt-jah happened to see this picture, and asked permission to take a good look at the pleasant features. The miniature was placed in his hand, and his eyes seemed to devour its expressive elements. Throughout the remainder of the day he bored me with frequent requests for another look, and the next morning, as soon as the camp was astir, he offered me his bow, arrows, and splendid leopard-skin for the picture.

The offer being refused, he added his horse, and whatever other property he might have, then, finding me deaf to his entreaties, he took one long, last look, vaulted on his horse, set off at full speed, and rapidly disappeared in the distance.

man, however, soon spoke for himself, and the directors, who were still at a loss to explain his presence there, listened in astonishment.

It appeared that he was a poor man, and obtained a precarious living in a strange way. When the tide was low it is the custom of a certain class of people unknown to refined society to enter the sewers to search for any articles of value which may have been accidentally washed down into them. It is a dangerous task and revolting in the extreme, but they not unfrequently find very precious things hidden in the filth.

The man was one of those strange adventurers. One night he had discovered an opening leading to some place above. There was a large square stone which he found could be easily raised. He listened for some time, and finding all was silent, lifted up the stone without much difficulty, and found, after some little investigation by the light of his lantern, that he was in the strong room of a bank.

These men, like miners, can readily determine the exact spot of ground under which they are, and he soon had a clue to the whole mystery. He told his wife, who was a woman of much superior education to his own of the whole affair, and then he wrote, as we have seen, to the directors.

Down in the sewer he was able to hear all their movements as well as if above ground, and thus was not only able to know their plans, but to frustrate them, and of course could watch his time to remove the small but valuable box which we saw was afterward returned, to leave the letters on the table, and to appear so mysteriously.

Of course no one ever thought of looking to the stone pavement, which was supposed to be solid and immovable, as it was known that there were no vaults below, although the iron walls and doors had been most carefully tested.

The mystery was now cleared up; and the directors, calling for lights, examined the place carefully and fully verified the man's statements.

He was berated at the usual entrance, after his address had been taken, and a time had been appointed when he should appear before the board.

The whole affair, which caused a great sensation at the time, was duly inquired into, and such precautions taken that a repetition of the adventure would henceforth be impossible.

The directors felt that they owed the strange man a debt of gratitude. Although gold and silver was not lying in heaps upon the cellar floor, there was incalculable wealth hidden there, in the shape not only of notes and the most valuable securities, but also in solid bullion and hard cash. It is impossible to say what a clever burglar might, if he fully knew of the secret entrance, have taken away undetected.

The very strictest search proved that nothing had been taken besides the box, which was intact. When this point was fully settled it was agreed by the directors that the mysterious visitor to their strong room should be rewarded for his honesty, and it was currently reported that they settled upon him a liberal annuity, sufficient to support him in comfort for the rest of his days.—New York News.

Susceptible Indian. Mr. Cremon, in his "Life Among the Apaches," gives an entertaining account of a lady's man with whom he once enjoyed an interview. "A tall, strong, well-made and handsome young dandy," he calls him, "strutting about with an air of very superior consequence, displaying his colonial-skin saddle, his splendid leopard-skin sash, his leggings, and the like."

After a while Salt-jah came swaggering toward me and said, in broken Spanish: "Your chief says you great medicine; he says your pistol fires six times without reloading; he says you bring the trees which are afar off close to the eyes, as you can count the leaves; he says our guns reach a great way and never miss; he says a great many other wonderful things, which I cannot believe. You have bewitched him."

Drawing a sash-shooter from my belt, I pointed out a tree about seventy yards distant, and began firing rapidly. Each shot struck the tree, and blazed off large fragments of the bark.

Salt-jah was astonished, and made no attempt to conceal the fact; but his admiration broke into emphatic expression when he witnessed the precision and reach of our Sharp's rifles, and the rapidity with which they could be loaded and fired. His pride had evidently received a heavy fall, and his lofty bearing was tamed down many degrees.

In my possession was the miniature of a young lady, whose graces of person, cultivated mind and amiable disposition, rendered her one of the most lovable of Boston's fairest daughters.

Salt-jah happened to see this picture, and asked permission to take a good look at the pleasant features. The miniature was placed in his hand, and his eyes seemed to devour its expressive elements. Throughout the remainder of the day he bored me with frequent requests for another look, and the next morning, as soon as the camp was astir, he offered me his bow, arrows, and splendid leopard-skin for the picture.

The offer being refused, he added his horse, and whatever other property he might have, then, finding me deaf to his entreaties, he took one long, last look, vaulted on his horse, set off at full speed, and rapidly disappeared in the distance.

HOME AND THE FARM.

A DEPARTMENT MADE UP FOR OUR RURAL FRIENDS.

The Creamery Has Elevated the Standard of Butter—Wise Words for Farmers' Wives—Rotation in Crops—More Subsoiling Needed—Agricultural Notes.

An Idea as to "Store Butter."

It is a fact generally overlooked that even Iowa with its semi-weekly butter train service, ships out less than 40 per cent of its total manufacture. The official returns show that for every pound sent outside the State much more than a pound is consumed within the State. Now this home market is still too much in the hands of the private dairyman. In a large share of this State—and of every other State—the quality of butter consumed at home is still in the d graded state of the year "before the war." The creamery has elevated the standard of shipping butter, has enhanced the price, has put western butter clear to the top in the general market, but this work has not taken hold of the home market as generally as it should. Here in Waterloo, our people have learned that butter of standard quality is better for table use than the hodge-podge commodity known as "store butter," and consequently the home demand has been enormous and local creameries suffering nothing from the freight blockade last summer, for the butter was all wanted at home. The fact that any creamery sells at home is proof that the home market is fully equal to, or better, than the distant market.

Now every step toward broadening the home market for creamery butter is a benefit to the creameries and to the patrons. There comes up the question of how to do it. It is more convenient to hand a customer a ball of dairy butter than to go out to fill orders from a tub of creamery butter. It may be well for creamerymen to print enough for this trade and compete against the "ball butter" with lucious creamery butter in tidy, compact print of "brick." This has been tried with satisfaction in several cases, in other cases small jars small enough for family use have been used, the creamery filling them and selling them unbroken. As a rule, some merchant in the town should do the retailing.—Creamery Journal.

Words for Farmers' Wives.

A clever physician once prescribed a new and becoming dress as the best remedy he knew for a nervous, careworn woman, writes Helen Jay in an article devoted entirely to "The Work of a Farmer's Wife" in the Ladies' Home Journal. History says that a cure was elected. At any rate, we know that there is much truth in the saying of the French "a woman is just as old as she appears to be," and the woman who would keep young and strong must look young and strong. There is another way, in which the farmer's wife injures herself physically, and that is by drinking so much cold water when doing her work. She becomes overheated in the hot kitchen, baking, ironing, or washing, and goes from that warm room into her cold dairy, where the temperature is several degrees lower, to cool off for a few minutes, as she says. While resting there she drinks a glass of cold water and then goes back again to her work. She goes from the stove to the cellar without a thought of the risk she is running. This criminal carelessness on her part causes many of the rheumatic fevers so prevalent upon our farms, and if it does nothing else it runs the finest skin. No surface can be exposed to such extremes without injury, and a face that is first almost blistered with heat and then chilled with a current of cold air is apt to grow wrinkled and coarse, if it is not disfigured by eruptions. Instead of doing so much work in the hot kitchen, the wide, cool piazzas, which as a general thing, run around one side of the farm house, should be utilized for domestic purposes. The ironing and part of the baking can be done here very early by using a small oil stove, and the vegetables will be quite as thoroughly prepared for cooking if the housewife sits comfortably in the coolest corner, instead of wearily bending over a table in a close room, made almost unendurable by the heat from a large stove.

Rotation in Crops.

The operations necessary for the cultivation of one kind of crop are often of a nature to form an excellent preparation for a succeeding one. Even without the application of fertilizers, with a perfect knowledge of the chemistry which will supply exactly the missing soil elements it may be possible to produce from the same ground in one season. As a rule, long rooted plants should be followed by those with root nearer the surface, and plants cultivated for their seeds should be followed by those cultivated for their foliage. The former exhaust the inorganic matter from the soil to a greater degree than the latter. All experiments should be conducted on this general principle. Countless tons of plant food are shipped from our fertile fields every year; one crop feeds upon what another may discard or may have supplied, and a diversified system is the only one by which to make farm operations profitable. We should readily see and appreciate the advantages of rotation.

Care of House Palms.

A New York woman who has kept her bay-window filled with the same palms for fifteen years, tells the Evening Sun that their long life is only a matter of proper care. She has the advantage of electrical light and steam heat, making a better atmosphere for palms than do gas and the furnace, but beyond this it is

necessary to keep them moist at the root and out of the cold air. Twice a week she fills the top of each pot with water, once a fortnight, with a flower sprayer, she cleans the leaves, which must drip dry. When housed for the winter, near the window for sunlight to reach them, she never allows a draft to blow on the palms, and except on the balmy days, no window is opened to dust until they are removed to a place of safety. If in spite of this care they droop, the forest is sent for, and if he finds moisture and drainage good, he will look for worms, which are a palm's greatest enemies, but can be cut out without great detriment to the plant. Clean water, an even, warm temperature and sunlight will suffice for health of any house palm.—Country Gentleman.

More Subsoiling Needed.

There will doubtless be one good result from the severe drought which most parts of the country have suffered the past season. It will direct the attention of farmers to the necessity of subsoiling. Even in the driest sections rain all enough comes each season to make the crop if the water can be husbanded until time of need. This can be done by breaking up the hard subsoil, so as to enable it to hold a greater quantity of moisture. This will do no good, however, unless there is outlet beneath for the surplus water to pass away. Stagnant water is death to the roots of most kinds of vegetable crops. When a field is underdrained one thorough subsoiling will keep the oil deep and moist for many years. The frost penetrates a drained soil, and this keeps its particles from running together in a solid mass, as soil does when water is allowed to become stagnant in it.

Making the Hogs Useful.

The old negro who said of the hog: "He do no work—he just lik a gentleman," ought to see the way that some farmers make even his swine-ship of service. At Hood Stock Farm, near Lowell, the other day we saw some of the large Berkshire hogs industriously rooting over piles of horse manure thrown into the pens in which they were kept. This is good for the manure pile. It mixes it thoroughly and makes it ferment more easily without danger of fire-fanging. But the best service is to the animals. A boar hog should not be fat. If he is he will be unfit for breeding. The exercise which he gets by rooting over manure piles for scattered grain is just what is needed to make him a sure stock getter.—American Cultivator.

Notes.

SWEET potatoes contain a large proportion of sugar, and are more fattening than corn. The smallest size are equal to the best for stock.

A VERMONT farmer who raised his own cow feed, except cotton seed meal, and kept a strict account, came to the conclusion that his butter cost him 13 c per pound.

In Europe the farmers often spread manure over the land to a depth of 6 inches. They are never afraid of "turning up" the crops with manure, especially when the manure is well rotted and fine.

From many careful experiments it has been determined that the force necessary to draw a given load, on a good broken stone road, is less than one third that required to draw the same load on a common earth road.

A unsightly fence lessens the value of a farm by giving it a run-down appearance. Such a fence is not only useless, but serves as a harboring place for insects, and collects seeds of weed to be distributed over the farm next season.

Manure should be kept in a dry place and where the temperature will be even. Cold does not kill bees as quickly as dampness. They create a large proportion of animal heat in the hive, and should not be in a location that is too warm.

The feet of horses need frequent examination. When the feet are sore or are injured in any manner the usefulness of the animal ceases. To preserve the feet some attention is necessary in keeping the stables dry and clean, and this should not be left entirely to an assistant.

The Chinese Son of Heaven.

In Peking is the residence of a monarch who is still the Son of Heaven to 300,000,000 human beings, whom a bare score of living foreigners have even seen, and who at the end of the nineteenth century leads an existence befitting the Veiled Prophet of Khe-Rassan. He is Vicegerent of Heaven, himself all but a god, and lives a prisoner's life. To the innermost palace no man is admitted, and the imperial person and harem are surrounded by a vast body of eunuchs estimated at from 8,000 to 10,000. When the Emperor goes out nobody is allowed on the streets, which are very likely paved for the occasion, while the houses are barricaded or closed with mats.

The ceremonial functions of his life are manifold and engrossing, and his education in the native classics is not neglected. Kuang Hsu, the present Emperor, takes a deep interest in everything English, and receives daily lessons in our language from two Chinese students, who, unlike the Ministers, are allowed to sit in his presence; but with the sad routine of his official life, rigidly prescribed by an adamant etiquette, and the temptations of the harem, it is unlikely that an Emperor of China can develop force of character or learn lessons of statecraft. Should a strong sovereign emancipate himself from the petrified traditions of the palace, the phantom of imperial power would, it is said, collapse.—The National Review.

Every person interested in scandal has been the subject of it.

OUR GADSDEN'S CAMPAIGN.

Offered Very Much from Those of the Present.

Political canvassing in these days and political canvassing in the times of our fathers and grandfathers are very different things. All that is necessary now is for an orator or candidate to betake himself to a private car. There, surrounded by friends and supplied with every luxury, he is as comfortable as if at home in his study or office. The train moves off, and at frequent intervals stops at a station where already a crowd of people are gathered. The orator steps to the rear platform of his car, delivers a speech of from 5 to 30 minutes, according to the exigency of the time table, and then glides onward. Thus in the course of two or three days a great State may be thoroughly canvassed, and in the course of ten days a half dozen States. At important capitals a stop is sometimes made over night, where the orator addresses the people in a vast hall amid the accessories of music and brilliant electric lights. In this manner a great political campaign is now reduced to a matter of a few weeks, where formerly it dragged through many months and often extended over a year.

In the old times a political campaign was a serious labor. It involved long and disagreeable journeys on horseback or in private vehicles. The roads were bad and sometimes impassable, while creeks and rivers were bridges. To canvass a congressional district or a State was the work of months. The announcement had to be made weeks before hand and a political meeting was as notable an event as the coming of the circus. It is said, indeed, that S. S. Prentiss, one of the greatest and most eloquent of stump-orators, once canvassed Mississippi in company with a circus, making an arrangement with the showman to divide time, to the advantage of both. Prentiss was as at a race a card as the show. To these old-fashioned meetings farmers and other good and patriotic citizens would come distances of twenty to thirty miles, bringing their families and making a gala day of it. For this was their only means of gaining political information or of finding out what their public servants were doing. The daily newspaper was a thing unknown, and the weeklies were not circulated widely, so the people looked to the great political gatherings to get news of the world, and one or two such meetings would last them a year.

Such was "stumping" in the West, thirty, forty, and fifty years ago before railroads brought the market to every farmer's door and before the telegraph gave him the news of the world every morning. And as it was in the West so it had been in the East. To-day Mr. Reed can start from Portland in Maine and in ten days speak in every important city between there and Portland, Ore. With a period of three weeks he can speak in every quarter of the United States and his utterances be read at a million breakfast tables the morning after. In the days of his fathers it would have been a herculean task to have traveled from Portland to New York in the same period of time, making speeches by the way.

The first political tours of importance in our history were made by Washington in his first administration. His object was to induce as far as possible the union sentiment and to acquaint himself with the condition and desires of the people in various parts of the country. His New England tour occupied a month and his western three months. He traveled in his own coach, though his entrance into the towns was made on horseback. He himself made no set speeches, but many were made by others and the union feeling was greatly strengthened.

James Monroe made two extensive Presidential tours with an ulterior political purpose, so successfully, indeed, that he was elected by the vote of every State for his second term.

Henry's Clay's journey to and from Washington almost invariably took the form of a political stumping campaign, not that he wished it so, but because under the circumstances he could not help it. Traveling was a slow process in those days and was rarely performed after nightfall, and wherever he stopped the people would wild to hear the silver tongue of Harry of the West. On some occasions his entire journey was a continued ovation. On his way back to Lexington, after Jackson's first inauguration, he was received everywhere by crowds of enthusiastic admirers. Suppers, dinners and balls were arranged for him all along the line, and he had free passage everywhere. Taverns stood wide open stages were free and no toll gate stopped him. His course was a triumphal march. Thus early did he commence his Presidential campaign for 1820. During the next two or three years he made long and extensive journeys South and North and addressed vast crowds, but it was the occupation of months, not of a few days.

Longfellow, in 1850, occupied nearly two months in his Presidential campaign, making many speeches North and South, and though he had the railroads, he could not have the comfort and convenience of modern travel. That campaign cost him his life. A generation has passed since Longfellow spoke and modern inventions have made the pathway of the political orator still more easy. Perhaps in another generation the flight of the orator through the land will be still more rapid and the labor of a campaign be concentrated into a few days.

When a sinner dies, the relative always want a "liberal" preacher to conduct the service.