

VANDERBILT'S FORTUNE.

On the high bluffs which skirt the Harlem river just below the canal outlet is the famous old Bellonia hotel, where Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt made his start in life and laid the foundation of his great fortune. The building is dilapidated, but as solid as in the early years of the nineteenth century.

The hotel was built in 1803 by the New York and New Brunswick Steamboat company. With boatmen and shippers it became a favorite resort, and country residents who drove into town hardly felt satisfied till they had dined at the Bellonia. Twice a day the coaches of the Trenton line pulled up before the inn.

In 1823 the Bellonia passed into the hands of Cornelius Vanderbilt, who was unknown, except that every day or so he would sail up from Perth Amboy with a boatload of oysters and fish and hawk them about the town.

How did Vanderbilt get the money from fish-peddling to buy the Bellonia? He didn't.

Early in 1822 William Gibbons, a capitalist, made a night drive from this city (New York) to Perth Amboy. It was imperative that he should cross Arthur Kill to Tottenville, S. I. The night was stormy. Gibbons besought the ferryman to take him across, but he refused. He then wandered into an old ferry tavern, where hardy boatmen were gathered.

"Where's the man with the nerve to row me across?" he called out.

One old salt said: "Why, Cap'n, you must be daft."

Gibbons cried: "Name your price; I've got to go."

Just then the door swung open and "Corny" Vanderbilt stalked in.

Vanderbilt ordered a drink and swallowed it in silence, then he responded: "Well, Cap'n, I'm your man. Let's start!"

Buttoning up his coat Corney got out his boat, with a pair of oars, an oil-skin and a lantern. The capitalist then climbed upon the rear seat and held the lantern. Perhaps an hour later the two men, after a perilous voyage, trod Staten Island, soaked to the skin.

Vanderbilt had just been married and Gibbons could not persuade him to remain over night on the island. The rich man handed him a card, with some money, and told him to call at the steamboat company's office in Battery place when he visited New York.

Some weeks later Vanderbilt did go, and was cordially received. When he was about to leave Gibbons gave him a package, and told him to go to a wharf, where he would find an oyster smack for his own use.

With this boat Vanderbilt began to make money. Not many months later he had saved \$200 and leased the Bellonia hotel. Fortune seemed to have smiled upon him, for about the same time he was made captain of the first steamer between New York and New Brunswick. The Bellonia, through the aid of Gibbons.

While he was on the water Mrs. Vanderbilt cared for the guests who came to the Bellonia. She frequently took a hand in caring for their horses and divided the rest of her time in looking after the house and the bar. She, one of whose descendants was to be a duchess, washed and scrubbed to accumulate a fortune. She had a good eye for business.

After a while Mrs. Vanderbilt felt a desire to live more like the aristocrats about her and moved her household into a house yet standing in Burnet street. Here it was that William H. Vanderbilt was born. Captain Vanderbilt was promoted and wanted to give up the tavern, but his wife was not willing to kill the goose that laid the golden egg, and continued to welcome travelers. The good cheer of the hestery was famous.

Charles Spaulding kept an excellent private school at 370 George street, in those days, and to this was young W. H. Vanderbilt sent, having for schoolmates boys known later in life as Governor Ludlow, Bishop Richard Goodrich, Colonel Jacob J. Janeway, Judge Charles D. Desher and other prominent Jerseymen.

In 1834 the steamer Bellonia was burned. Vanderbilt was immediately transferred to another boat, which he ran for several years. His shrewdness won the confidence of his employers, and when a vacancy occurred in the New York office "Commodore" Vanderbilt was made superintendent of the line. Upon the death of Mr. Gibbons Mr. Vanderbilt became president of the company.

He moved to New York with his family and the Bellonia hotel passed into the hands of Colonel Peter Cheney, who, later, served with the Jersey troops under General McClellan in the civil war. It is now a tenement.

The famous Paris actress, Mme. Jane Hading, who is appearing on the stage of the Vienna Carltheater, has caused no end of a sensation among the fashionable women of that capital by the unrivalled magnificence of her stage, boudoir, dressing room and promenade toilets. The ladies of Vienna, themselves most fastidious in matters of dress, can talk of nothing else just now but the furor the Parisienne has made in eclipsing them in this respect. In Paris Mme. Hading is considered a reigning beauty. Opinions are divided at Vienna on this score. She is certainly a splendid figure and majestic in her carriage.

Father (whose daughter was rescued from drowning)—I tell you, dearie, Clara was very lucky to have a man near the beach at the time.

Mother—What, lucky! Unlucky, I should say. Why, the man was married.

INDIAN DOLL BABIES.

Washington, D. C.—(Special.)—The bureau of ethnology is "shy" on Moki dolls. It possesses Zuni dolls, which are similar, but do not supply the deficiency. Accordingly Dr. J. W. Fewkes has been dispatched to Arizona to look up a remedy for this lack. He is expected to return with a collection of Moki maankins.

What makes these dolls so interesting is that they represent the demons and divinities feared and worshipped by the Moki. Furthermore, the children of the tribe are taught the rudiments of the ritual which makes up the religion of these semi-savages.

No other people have such elaborate dolls; for, whereas the mankind of the Anglo-Saxon nursery or of the Continental Europe is much the same everywhere, the Moki dolls exhibit the wildest play of an aboriginal fancy revelling in the supernatural.

At intervals the Moki Indians hold festivals, largely of a religious character, and on these occasions men appear dressed in fantastic costumes and wearing strange masks. Each represents a god or demon, and the whole affair is a religious play. Those engaged give the little girls the dolls referred to, which themselves wear masks and costumes similar to those of the actors. The play in question is supposed to depict scenes in the mythological history of the Moki people. Usually it lasts for days.

The actors in the religious drama are members of societies, each of which has its secret underground chamber.

In these chambers the members write out with knives the wonderful dolls and dress them, decorate them with feathers and paint them red, yellow, green, black and white. The material employed is wood, from the roots of the cottonwood tree, which has a sacred character because it grows near water—the scarcest and most desirable of all things in that sun-baked part of the world.

Elaborate and curious are these Moki dolls—there are only a few of them—and from their variety it may be judged how rich in divinities the mythology is. The Corn Maid is one; she brought to the Indians the precious gift of maize.

The Corn Maid is varied almost indefinitely, as her attributes possess such variety. But the Little God of War is comparatively simple. His business is fighting, and he looks defiant. The Wolf God is an energetic demon, and the Moki deem him worthy of propitiation. The Earth Goddess is an unpretentious old lady. The Father of the Gods has an aggressive appearance, and his head is decorated with feathers.

The Mother of the Gods wears a blanket. She is otherwise known as the Very Old Woman or the Spider Woman. She has the power to change her shape at will. When the War God performs any feat she perches on his shoulder and gives advice. The manner in which her hair is arranged shows that she is married.

The Planting God carries a hoe and a water gourd. The boy is chiefly of use for frightening children. Mothers tell their infants that if they are not good the Bogy God will eat them. The Bogy God doll has a long snout and a lower jaw worked with a string, so that anybody may perceive his propensity to gobble.

At a certain time every year six of these bogies, represented by costumed men, come into town and ask if the children are ready to be eaten, but somebody says no and so they escape.

The Little God of War saved the corn and drove out the monsters. As for the Wolf God, he is one of the deities of the Moki. He is colored red, is ornamented with red feathers, and holds a bow and arrow. The Father of the Gods is one of the sun gods, and naturally of great importance. He has a long, red tongue which hangs out.

These are only a few of the divinities represented by the dolls of the Moki children. More will be known about them, perhaps, when Dr. Fewkes gets back with his collection.

Why He Was Not Hobsonized.

During the blockade of Havana it became necessary for a United States cruiser to run near the harbor, and, hoisting a flag of truce, communicate with the shore. The officer in charge of the cruiser told a sailor to run up the flag, and he refused.

It was announced that he said: "Never shall such a flag be shown by an American ship while I'm aboard her!" or something like that, and, folding his arms, stood dramatically in the lee scuppers and waited for a file of machines to shoot him for mutiny.

A newspaper correspondent went to get a picture of this Spartan to play him up against Bill Anthony, the hero of the Maine, of whom the public at that time had heard all there was to hear. He wanted some facts showing how the white flag man had pronounced his mother while still a tot playing marbles that he would never do anything to bring a blush to the cheek of the stars and stripes.

The officer in command of the cruiser said: "Yes, he refused to hoist the flag, but then he never does anything he's told. There wasn't any heroism about it. If we'd ask him to hoist the binnacle he would have refused to do that, too.

"Please don't make a hero of him, or the whole navy will refuse to work. However, if you insist on seeing him, you'll find him down in the forecabin with a couple of sailors sitting on him, for he's fighting drunk at this moment. The light down there isn't very good for photographing and you wouldn't be able to see much of his face anyway, because the man who's sitting on it is rather stout."

And so it came to pass that that peculiar hero was never Hobsonized.

END OF MONEY

"But does it never occur to you," asked the curate, as he poured two teaspoonfuls of port into his glass and passed the decanter, "does it never occur to you to ask yourself what is the good of it all?"

"Never," said the millionaire, with decision.

"You never regret—you see, after all, money is not everything, is it?"

"That observation is frequently made," said the millionaire, thoughtfully, "and it is misleading. Money is not everything, but it is much nearer to being everything than anything else is. There is quite a good deal of cant talked about money. It is comforting cant, of course. One gets the same kind of thing about birth. Personally, I always mistrust anything that comforts."

"But is it all cant? Take the question of health, for instance. Money cannot give health, and it is better to be well than to be wealthy."

"I often wonder why people go on saying that money cannot give health, when they must see every day that money does give health, and that poverty yeaus illness. If work is injurious to me I can afford to give it up. If I have to winter abroad I can do it easily, without considering the question of expense. If an operation is required, I can pay the man to do it, and under the very best conditions. The poor man can do none of these things. My ordinary way of life is much more healthy than his. The food that I eat is of the best quality and in perfect condition, while he eats adulterated rubbish and stale garbage. His house is ill warmed and insanitary, and mine is perfect in these respects. The poor man dies, and in nine cases out of ten it serves him right."

"Isn't that rather a terrible thing to say?" said the curate, nervously, playing with his wine glass.

"In nine cases out of ten poverty is the result of stupidity. You blame a man for his moral defects, and I blame him for his mental defects; one is just as fair as the other. And both the mental and moral defects are about equally capable of remedy."

"Surely not," said the curate earnestly. "A sinner may be reclaimed, but you cannot give a man an intellect."

"You should use the same word in both cases. You may reclaim a man's intellect just as you reclaim his morals. I have done it. I did it in my own case. I admit that mental reclamation, like moral reclamation, is rare."

"So it is," the millionaire agreed cordially. "As I told you, I don't like comforting cant. The best fable that ever was written was the fable of the fox and the sour grapes. Everybody's a gentleman who feels like it, and wealth is not everything. Oh, yes! I know these consolatory stories for those who are out of it. But they are only stories, and, as a matter of fact, wealth is everything as near as you can get it. What wealth cannot do nothing else can."

The curate seemed to reflect for a moment.

"Tell me," he said darkly, "do you value the affection of your relatives and friends and those whom you have about you?"

"Of course," the millionaire owned. "Perhaps one values that most of all."

"And do you mean to tell me," asked the curate, flushed with triumph, "that that kind of thing can be bought with money?"

The millionaire concentrated his attention on his cigar with the air of a man who can provide a platitude without troubling to think.

"But, of course," he said, "you can buy affection as easily as you can buy a pound of tea, and on almost the same commercial principles."

The curate stuck to it.

"Are you sure that it is genuine affection?" he said.

"There," said the millionaire, "I don't trouble myself. I get respect and subservience while I am there, and really I don't care what they say when I am not there. You see, I don't think about these people very much. It would annoy me if they showed hostility to me while I was with them. It would give me all the trouble of having to think of one new thing to say. But they are perfectly welcome to say what they like behind my back, because they haven't got any money worth mentioning, or any position, and they don't matter. But as a matter of fact money—C P Hnyr vbgkv vbgkv vbgkv JJ can generally buy genuine affection, an affection that is just as real as that where there has been no value received."

"Really, this is too cynical," said the curate.

"Not at all," replied the millionaire. "In fact, I am on the whole less cynical than you. I still believe in gratitude, and it would appear that you don't. Generosity is an admirable and popular quality. You must admit that. And it is very easy for a rich man to be generous; he just plugs in a few presents, as a gardener puts in seeds, and afterwards he gets the fruits—quite genuine fruits, too. I sometimes wonder how anybody who is not a millionaire believes in genuine affection; it is certainly a luxury for the rich."

"Well," said the curate, with a sigh, "I must not let you off. We owe two hundred and fifty dollars on the church restoration at St. Barnabas. I'll see if it makes me think more highly of you."

"I never subscribe: I either do a thing or I leave it alone. I'll tell you

what I'll do. I'll wipe out this debt for you altogether if you preach the opinions you have heard from me in the pulpit."

The little curate got quite excited. "I'd sooner steal the money and then cut my throat," he said. "If I could have all your money at the price of having your views of life as well, I wouldn't do it."

The millionaire smoked for a moment or two in silence.

"You're not a bad sort of fool," he said at last.—Black and White.

She Lost Nothing.

A distinguished naval officer was telling this story on himself the other evening to a gathering of his friends. At the time of his marriage he had been through the civil war and had had many harrowing experiences aboard ship, through all of which he kept his courage and remained as calm as a brave man should. As the time for the ceremony came on, however, his calmness gradually gave way. At the altar, amid the blaze of brass buttons and gold lace marking the full naval wedding, the officer was all but stampeded, and what went on there seemed very much mixed to him. Fearing the excitement of the moment would temporarily take him off his feet, the officer had learned the marriage ceremony letter perfect, as he thought, and he remembered repeating the words after the minister in a mechanical sort of way.

After the ceremony was all over and all serene again, including the officer's state of mind, the kindly clergyman came up to him and touched him on the shoulder.

"Look here, old man," he said, "you did not endow your wife with any worldly goods."

"What's that?" asked the bridegroom with something of astonishment in his voice.

"Why, I repeated the sentence 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow' several times, and despite my efforts, you would not say it after me."

The bridegroom seemed perturbed for a moment and then a beaming light came into his face.

"Never mind, sir," he said, "she didn't lose a blessed thing by my failure."

Interviewing a Bishop.

A somewhat abrupt but doubtless deserved rebuke of what may be called impertinences of journalism was administered by a well known bishop to whom a reporter had been dispatched for the purposes of interview. This is how the meeting began and ended:

The bishop met him cordially, invited him into the library, received him with great deference, and just as he was congratulating himself on the success of his mission the reporter was dismayed by a rapid fire of questions put to him by the reverend gentleman. The bishop asked him his name, his age, his father's business, the name of his paper, the editor-in-chief, and a dozen other questions of no great importance.

At last, just as the astonished reporter was catching his breath to begin his turn of questioning, the bishop said:

"I've asked a good many questions, have I not?"

"You certainly have."

"And you have been polite enough to answer them?"

"I hope so."

"It is doubtless your opinion that some of these questions concerned matters that are not my business?"

"Well, as to that—"

"I am inclined to think, my dear sir," interrupted the bishop, "that you have come on an errand with questions quite as important as my own. I am much afraid that I shall not be so polite to you as you have been to me. So perhaps I had better wish you good-morning."

Breaking the News.

In the province of Holstein, noted for its superior breed of cattle, the country people are not only very thrifty but exceedingly fond of their cows, as may be gathered from the following characteristic story:

Farmer Jan was walking sadly down the road one day when the village pastor met him.

"Why so sad, Farmer Jan?" said the pastor.

"Ah, I have a sad errand pastor," said Jan.

"What is it?"

"Farmer Henrik's cow is dead in my pasture, and I am on my way to tell him."

"A hard task, Jan."

"Indeed it is, but I shall break it to him gently."

"How will you do it?"

"I shall first tell him that it is his mother who is dead, and then, having opened the way for sadder news still, I shall tell him that it is not his mother, but the cow."

Kangaroo farming is an important industry in Australia. The hides are valuable, and the tendons extremely fine; indeed, they are the best thing known to surgeons for sewing up wounds, and especially for holding broken bones together, being much finer and tougher than catgut.

The French postoffice estimates that no fewer than 93,000 letters were stolen last year from pillar boxes. Experiments are being made by fitting some of the boxes with steel teeth, which prevent the extraction of letters, in the hope of guarding against those thefts in the future.

THE QUEEN'S CONDOLENCE.

She Wrote Letters of Sympathy to Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Garfield.

When President Lincoln was assassinated Queen Victoria wrote the following letter to Mrs. Lincoln:

"I am overwhelmed, dear Mrs. Lincoln. What can any certain being say to lessen the terrible blow that has come upon you in the loss, and the loss in such a way, of your great and noble husband? A scent with this my hearty sympathy in your affliction, through which the good God alone can guide you to peace and resignation. My people are shocked by this terrible calamity, which is to me a personal grief. My tears and prayers are yours. May He comfort and protect you always."

When, in 1881, President Garfield succumbed to the bullet of an assassin, after a long period of suffering, the Queen wrote a personal letter to Mrs. Garfield, saying:

"I have watched during the last few and sad months with admiration the patience and Christian fortitude of your gallant husband, and learn with great grief that he has passed away. I, too, know the sorrow of such unhappy desolation, and I ask you to accept my deepest sympathy in your bereavement. President Garfield was a good and noble man. May God sustain you in your hour of trouble."

The Tale of the Tortoise.

Occasionally Dr. Creighton would tell an old story giving it fresh humor by its special application. At one of the first public dinners that he attended in London, he was called upon to return thanks for the House of Lords, the proposer of the toast dwelling at length upon the powers for good that the second chamber possessed. The daring bishop, in his reply, said he was reminded of the old Oxford tale of the college that kept a pet tortoise on the grass plot of the quadrangle.

One day the dean saw two well-meaning freshmen vainly trying to tempt the creature by offering it various choice scraps from their breakfast table. At last the dean, waxing impatient, flung up his window and called out: "Try the other end, gentlemen, try the other end!"

The freshmen, not being naturalists, had been offering the food at the tail end! The bishop's terse application was conveyed in a single sentence, namely, that those who wished to accomplish any wholesome changes should apply to the other branch of the legislature and not to the hereditary house. From some men such a jest on the House of Lords would have been unpardonable; but the bishop it was received with much applause.

Senator Towne's Rapid Career.

Events in the life of Senator Towne of Minnesota have within the last year or so crowded thick and fast upon each other's heels, says the Washington Times. His nomination by the Populist party for vice president during the recent campaign was an exceedingly high honor for so young a man, and there was "a little twinkle in his eye" a day or so ago when he mounted the steps and took up the vice presidential gavel, which was handed over to him temporarily by Senator Frye.

Senator Mason took in the situation with keen delight. Senator Allen was speaking manifestly to fill up time. At the earliest opportunity Senator Manson sent to Towne a little note, saying: "Your sins are many. The punishment fits the crime."

Senator Towne replied with the following note: "I don't know about the punishment nor the crime, but I think I am breaking a record. One term in the house, one month in the senate, and one hour in the vice presidential chair."

A Close Shave.

A Sand Hog in a red shirt and grimy trousers sat down by me one afternoon on a heap of boards midway between the Sand Hog house and the "hospital." This pressure worker, whose knees showed traces of the "bends," evidently had a story to tell.

"It was only the other day," he said, "I seen it, and how the man ever happened to live, I dunno. It was one of these little caissons here we're putting this building on. He was one of the superintendents, a young college feller that knows his job. Well, he went down with us. There wuz Tim in the gang, and one of them, Tim—that chap yer might see drinkin' coffee now. They wuz a rock there, and the foreman told Tim to swing a go at it. He got his pick and swung it for a good crack. There was a tearin' an' a rippin' an' Tim dropped his pick. As he swung it the young felled had stepped out, and the pick had ripped off every button from the blue jumper he had on, without even scratchin' him.—Cromwell Childie, in Leslie's Popular Monthly.

Rules for Preserving Life.

Dr. D. K. Pearsons of Chicago, when celebrating his eightieth birthday, not long ago, gave these rules for long life:

No men or cakes; no pains or aches. No piers dig their graves with their teeth.

If you overwork your liver, it will soon tell on your brain.

Live like a farmer and you will live like a prince.

Men can live ten days without eating; they can't do without pure air for five minutes.

Don't get angry and don't get excited; every time you fret you lose a minute of life.

Let a man abuse his stomach, and he'll get fidgety, cross to his family and go to the devil.

Doctors say don't sleep on a full stomach; I take my after-dinner nap just the same, and I'm eighty years old. You can't believe all the doctors say.

If you catch cold lose your quinine and eat an onion.

Give away your money; its exhilarating and tends to longevity.

The idea of giving while one is alive will become epidemic as soon as men discover what fun it is.

The morning after he arrived Lord Roberts slipped out unseen, dressed in a very easy style, with the intention of having a look over the grounds. He had not proceeded far through the gardens when he was pounced on by a big fellow, who gruffly shouted:

WOMAN HAS A GAS PLANT.

A Pennsylvania Maiden Who Runs the Works of the Town.

Because a bright young woman managed to outwit and to defeat a bevy of disappointed financiers and capitalists, this pretty little Pennsylvania burg can now boast of having within its borders the only woman in the United States who owns, controls and operates a gas works supplying illumination for a whole town, says the Hollidaysburg correspondent of the Philadelphia Telegraph.

Miss J. Gustie Ditting is one of the most enterprising women in this part of the state, and when she made up her mind to go into the gas business she started in a way that meant business. "I took the works," she said, "to save them. The gas was so poor that folks began to go back to the use of coal oil and candles. Some said they wished the buildings would burn down. I was afraid that some tramp might fulfill that wish. The men seemed afraid to take hold, so I just sailed in and now they are mine."

So much for the motive power behind Miss Ditting's plans. Seventeen years she left school and entered J. H. Law's dry goods store in Hollidaysburg. Then she opened a millinery store on her own account. Two years ago she bought out a wall paper store. Then she began to look around, and to look it to act. She made up her mind to own the gas works. These had been built by Maj. W. W. Williams and had afterward been owned by D. K. Joslin of Philadelphia, who ran them for several years.

Suddenly the works were put up for public sale, which was largely attended. Miss Ditting was not at that sale, but her representative was, and when the sale closed it was not known the purchaser was a woman. Later this fact became known, and the men who had failed to see much in that plant began to change their views on the subject. They arranged to contest the sale. They decided that Miss Ditting could not maintain her advantage without a struggle. The plucky woman welcomed the contest and the matter was carried into court. There, after a hard fought battle, the court decided in favor of Miss Ditting. The complainants were informed that the sale had been public and bid was a matter of their own concern.

Miss Ditting pays personal attention to all her business affairs, and is now running two stores in addition to the works. She is thinking some of giving up the stores and devoting her entire time to the gas works. Numerous plans have been on foot to obtain control of the enterprise, but Miss Ditting says she is here to stay.

Why Roosevelt Surrendered.

"The senator from Kansas!" When Vice President Roosevelt, from the presiding officer's seat, makes this recognition of Mr. Burton, his memory will go back to a scene which was the turning point at Philadelphia last summer, says a correspondent of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Roosevelt was protesting against his nomination on the national ticket. He had almost persuaded the majority of the delegates to respect his wishes. One day there fled into his parlors forty stalwart men, alert and determined looking. A velvet sunflower was conspicuously pinned on the coat lapel of each of them. The leader, tall, black-haired, dramatic of manner, proceeded to say that, with all due respect to the personal feelings of the governor of New York, the Kansas delegation had decided the interests of the Republican party in their state and in the nation at large would be best served by his nomination to the second place. "And," concluded the spokesman, impressively, "we have just resolved unanimously that the vote of our delegation will be cast for you. The looks of the delegation bore out the words of the head of it, and conveyed the idea that nothing remained to be said. Governor Roosevelt realized what kind of stuff he was dealing with. He had been voluble and earnest with other callers. He looked along the line of sun-kissed—Kansas sun-kissed—countenances and threw up his hands. To others subsequently he repeated his objections, but there was no force in his opposition after the Kansans had spoken. And the spokesman will be "Senator" Burton when Vice President Roosevelt runs order in the special session on March 5.

Marked For Chinch Bugs.

The Youth's Companion tells how a man who kept a little store in a western town was one morning approached by a farmer who owed him a small account, with a plea for an extension of time, as the chinch bugs were eating up all the crops.

"Chinch bugs? Nonsense!" said the storekeeper, roughly. "I don't believe there's a chinch bug within a mile of you."

"The chinch bugs are there by millions!"

"Millions! I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a dollar and a half a gallon for every gallon of the bugs you'll bring me."

"Done!" said the farmer.

A day or two after he drove back to the village with a ten-gallon can tightly covered. This he unloaded from his wagon and rolled carefully into the general store.

"What have you got there?" asked the merchant suspiciously.

"Something for you."

"What is it?"

"Chinch bugs," said the farmer. He lifted the lid and disclosed a mass of the hideous insects, wriggling and squirming.

"There's ten gallons of them," he continued. "I take it you owe me \$15. That will just about square my little bill, and I'll thank you to give me a receipt."

"Cover it up for goodness' sake, before any of 'em get away!" roared the unhappy dealer.

But he wrote the receipt so justly forfeited.

The story came out in the papers and for months thereafter the storekeeper received letters asking for the latest quotations on the price of chinch bugs, and inquiring how many he was prepared to take.