



HERE you are, Miss Clevenger; this is just in your line," said the city editor of the Daily Blaze, as he handed a clipping to a young woman reporter. "You certainly can get something spiky out of that. Answer it, follow it up and get a good yarn. The stronger the better, and if there is a bit of lemon color in it it won't hurt anything."

Norah Clevenger took the clipping from the city editor's hand. It was an advertisement cut from a contemporary daily. This is what she read:



WROTE A LETTER.

Wanted—A wife, not more than 32 years old; must be loving, dispossessed, cripple preferred. Address Lock Box 97, Hoosiersville, Indiana.

"I think that's a bona fide ad," said the city editor, "and the fellow who stuck it in wants a cripple, and that's queer in itself. Write to him, meet him and get your yarn. It ought to be a good one."

Norah Clevenger had been writing spiky stories for the Daily Blaze some years. She knew how to make her pen search the paper, and that's what the Blaze liked. She was calloused and she took assignments that many a girl would have shrunk from, but then it was all in the business, and Norah had never been the cause of getting the Blaze into a libel suit, and on that fact she plumed herself.

Norah sat down and wrote a letter, addressing it to Lock Box 97, Hoosiersville, Ind. She tied in it, nothing less, but then that, too, was a part of the business she had learned at the Blaze office. She said that she was a cripple; that her right arm was paralyzed. She told the truth, however, about her appearance, and her age—she was 29—and then asked that the lock box owner address her at the general delivery window of the postoffice, saying that she did not wish to give her proper address until she knew positively that her correspondent was a good man and one who would not trifle with a woman. She signed the letter Mary Anderson.

Norah Clevenger waited three days before an answer came to her communication. When one did come she found that it was written in a good hand and in good English. It was simple and straightforward. The writer said that he was a widower, 34 years old, with one child; had a large stock and fruit farm, which yielded a good income, and he was laying up money. The letter gave no reason why the writer wished to marry a cripple.

Norah Clevenger wrote again. She tied the writer on a little in the next letter, and with an audacity characteristic of the girl, inclosed her photograph. On the third day she had an answer, which she showed the city editor, saying, "I'm in for it, Mr. Rankin. His name is Moore, and I'm to meet him at the Consolidated Depot at 8 o'clock. Some of the boys will have to fix up my arm. We'll put a brace of some kind on it or otherwise I'll forget that it is supposed to be paralyzed, and I'd be swinging it around and give the whole snap away. What in the world this countryman wants a cripple for is more than I can imagine, but there ought to be a cracking good story in it."

Norah Clevenger was at the Consolidated Depot at 8 o'clock, with her right arm in a surgeon's brace. Some girls would have felt a bit of trepidation at the prospect of meeting the stranger, but years of rather seamy work had hardened this woman's nature. She waited in the passenger room. The train rolled in and in a minute or two there came through the doorway a tall, well-built man, with crisp, curly hair, sun-browned cheeks and honest eyes. He was leading a little girl about 5 years old by the hand.

Norah Clevenger felt that this was the man she was to meet, though a moment before she could have sworn that her correspondent was some fool of a fellow with a cast in his eye, a painful limp and so ugly generally that his very appearance would give answer to the question why he had not sought a bride in the vicinity of Hoosiersville. The man looked about the station. His eyes fell on Norah, and then went quickly to her arm. He saw the surgeon's brace and walking forward raised his hat and said: "Miss Anderson, I believe. I am George Moore. This is my little girl Frances."

The little one held out both hands to Norah and lifted her face to be kissed. This writer of stories with a touch of saffron in them felt something of a shock, but she bent over and kissed the child's red lips.

"Let us sit down for a moment, Miss Anderson. I owe you an explanation. I see you are crippled. My wife, who

died four years ago, was a cripple. I tell you frankly that I loved her, and the fact that she was dependent on me because of her crippled state made me learn the delight that there is in doing for others. I was a selfish man, but I learned unselfishness, and it made me happy. I don't know much of the world, and I feel that to advertise for a wife may not be considered right, but I say honestly that there was none near home whom I wished even could I have chosen."

Norah Clevenger felt uncomfortable. She hardly liked to admit it to herself. She knew that this man was fair and above board, and that she had been doing something that was unwomanly. She had done unwomanly things before in the interest of a story, but this thing out. The little girl had slipped into her lap, by this time, and was talking to her softly. Moore rose suddenly. "I forgot something," he said. "Say with Miss Anderson a minute, Frances," and then he disappeared in the direction of the baggage-room. In a minute he was back with a huge basket on his arm, and, raising the cover, he showed it to be full of black Hamburg grapes. These are for the Crippled Children's Home," he said; "I send fruit in every week because of my memories. I thought I would bring the grapes myself this time. I raise them in my hothouse. I'll give them to an expressman, and he can get them to the hospital, so that the tots can have them in the morning."

Norah Clevenger rose from her seat. "Mr. Moore," she said, "I have met you as you asked. I must go now. I will write you tomorrow," and before Moore could say a word the girl had hurried away.

"No story in this for us, Mr. Rankin," she said to the city editor an hour later, "or if there is I won't write it." And Norah Clevenger left the office and went home. Next day she wrote a letter, and sent it to George Moore, Hoosiersville, Ind. Prior to writing it she had inquired at the Crippled Children's Home, and found out all about the man, his kindness and his honesty, though she felt that she needed no character assurance save that given her by the memory of his face. In the letter she told him the whole story. "When I wrote you that I was a cripple," she said, "I thought I was lying, but I have found out since that I was a cripple of the worst kind, but it certainly is healed now, and it is active enough to smite me."

Norah Clevenger still wrote for the Blaze, but they had to turn to other reporters when they wanted an orange streak in a story. The months passed on, the boys saw many letters lying on Norah's desk before she came down in the morning, all bearing the Hoosiersville, Ind., postmark. They remembered Norah's "cripple" assignment and wondered. One day she treated them to black Hamburg grapes that were selling at \$4 a pound at Jung's.

"Where did you get them, Norah?" asked City Editor Rankin. "They are samples of goods which I shortly shall offer for sale," she said. "I have been asked to take a life partnership in the business, and on Easter Monday I shall become the junior member of the firm."—Chicago Record-Herald.

His Time Was Not Up.
A man of a mercenary spirit had several sons, one of whom was on the eve of his twenty-first birthday. The father had always been a strict disciplinarian, keeping his boys well under parental charge, allowing them few liberties and making them work hard.

It was with a feeling of considerable satisfaction that the young man rose on the morning of his birthday and began to collect his personal belongings preparatory to starting out in the world.

The father, seeing his son packing his trunk, which he rightly judged to be evidence of the early loss of a good farm-hand, stopped at the door of the young man's room and asked what he was going to do.

The boy very promptly reminded his father of the day of the month and the year, and declared his intention of striking out in the world on his own account.

"Not much you won't," shouted the old man, "at least not for a while yet! You wasn't born until after 12 o'clock, so you can just take off them good clothes and fix to give me another half-day's work down in the potato patch."

Seventy-five Miles an Hour.

An electric road out of Buffalo contemplates a schedule of seventy-five miles an hour. If that rate could be kept up, says Munsey's, it would carry you from New York to San Francisco in less than two days. If a track were laid around the world on the eighty-fifth parallel of latitude, a car going at that velocity from east to west would keep up with the earth's rotation, and beat Joshua's miracle by holding the sun in one place all summer.

A spinster's ideal man is one who will say the word.

BARTER AT THE CROSS ROADS.

Two of the Natives Talk Two Days to Make a Deal.

At Carter's cross roads I came upon two native Tennesseans who sat on a log and whittled while they talked. One of them had an old silver watch and the other owned the poor old mule hitched to a post. They had come together to make a trade and had been talking for an hour and as I rode off one of them said:

"I'll trade yo' even up, Jim, and if that don't hit yo' it's no use to talk fuder."

"I can't do it, Tom," replied the other. "That there mule is wuth two sich watches."

It was dark when I returned and there sat the same two men and there stood the same old mule. They were talking trade as vigorously as ever and as I rode away the man with the watch was saying:

"It's even up or nothin', Jim; jist as I told yo' before."

"Tom, I can't do it—can't possibly do it," replied the other. Along toward night next day I rode over to the same store on an errand for Mrs. Williams and there sat the very same two men. I couldn't see that they had moved an inch. They weren't saying a word, however. On the contrary, both had their legs swinging over the edge of the platform, their chins in their hands and were looking down on the ground. I saw the old mule lying dead on the ground and between the two men lay the watch. It had stopped dead still and both hands were off the face.

"Do you know that your mule is dead?" I asked the owner of the animal.

"Of co'se," he replied. "And your old watch has gone to wreck?" I said to the other.

"Yes, sah."

"Did you sit here all night?"

"We did," they answered in chorus. "But if the mule is dead and the watch busted you can't trade."

"Oh, that trade was off at midnight," said the owner of the watch, "and what we are dickerin' about now is that yere saddle again my dawg."

"DIXIE" CHEERED EVERYWHERE.

North No Less Enthusiastic Than the South on Hearing It.

"A singular thing about the tune of 'Dixie,'" said a Washington man who does a good deal of traveling, "is that it arouses quite as much enthusiasm when it is played above Mason and Dixon's line as above that line, in many instances—as it does when it is played down South. I have often noticed this and wondered over it. In the Southern towns and cities, or even in Washington, where Southern sentiment predominates, it is the natural thing for the cheers and the hand-clapping to begin when, for example, a theater orchestra or musical performers on a stage strike up the tune of 'Dixie,' but precisely the same thing happens in the Northern cities. An orchestra never gets into the swing of 'Dixie' in a New York theater that the audience doesn't almost come to its feet. They cheer 'Dixie' vociferously every time it is played in San Francisco. They yell in approval of it in Detroit, and St. Paul, and Cincinnati, and in Chicago they hum it along with the band or orchestra. Even in chilly Boston they wake up and give a hand to 'Dixie.' It's a lively and inspiring tune, of course, but I don't think that fact exactly explains why it is that it arouses enthusiasm in communities in the North, where a Southerner would scarcely even expect to hear it played, much less cheered. Maybe it's because there's a lingering love all over the country for the old South, and maybe it is because there is a pretty general and wholesome sentiment all over the land for the section that came out of the big fight a good deal like the under dog; but, at any rate, 'Dixie's' the tune that gets the biggest hand and the wildest acclaim, no matter where it's played, from Michigan to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific."—Washington Post.

Forgot Nothing.



Waiter—Hem—er—haven't you forgotten something?

Farmer Barnes—Oh, no, I guess not. I've got everything clean up.

One Point of View.

"I am very much afraid that you do not appreciate the spirit of a free country."

"Oh, yes, I do," answered the man who had recently landed in New York, in a dialect which it is needless to reproduce.

"What do you understand by a free country?"

"It is a place where you are free to do as you choose if you can manage to get on the police force."—Washington Star.

Cotton Mill at Quito.

A cotton mill to be built at Quito, the capital of Ecuador, must be carried on the backs of mules through the Andes, passing a point 16,000 feet in altitude.

Fitness of her part matters little to the up-to-date actress if the fit of her gowns is perfect.

One of a Few.

"Say," queried the inquisitive person as the stranger paused to light a cigar, "may I ask what your business is?"

"You may," replied the stranger.

"Well," said the rubber-neck after a pause, "what is it?"

"Minding it," said the stranger. "Minding what?" asked the astonished party of the preface.

"My business," was the significant reply.

Charitable Sex.

Bess—So you are really going to marry young Sottleigh, are you?

Neil—That's what.

Bess—Well, it will save you the trouble of hunting one when you get ready to begin housekeeping.

Neil—Hunting what?

Bess—Why, a flat.

Quite Sufficient.

Mrs. Wederly—Oh, John, I've mislaid our marriage certificate and can't find it!

Wederly—Oh, don't let that worry you. I've got a document down at the office that furnishes ample proof of our union.

Mrs. Wederly—What is it, dear?

Wederly—A receipted bill from your dressmaker.

Proof Positive.

She—Is it really true that the blind can determine color by the sense of touch?

He—Sure. I once knew a blind man who was able to tell a red hot stove by merely putting his finger on it.

Her Heart's Desire.

She—There is just one little bit of millinery that I desire most.

He—Crossly—You needn't say any more. I won't buy it for you.

She—Don't be afraid. You'll never get the bill for it. It's a widow's bonnet.—Philadelphia Press.

Idle Talent.

Bacon—The professor's education is wasted.

Egbert—How is that?

"Why, he can speak five languages, but since he married he's hardly been allowed to use any of them."—Yonkers Statesman.

Going and Coming.

"You don't mean to say he's got a job? Well, well, I never expected him to go to work."

"Well, he didn't expect to go to work, either; he just found he had to come to it."—Philadelphia Press.

Hint That Failed.

"Do you believe that two can live as cheap as one?" asked Miss Willing.

"Yes," replied young Wisely. "But I prefer peace at any price."

Scales Make the Weight.

Only a dime, kind sir; I'm starving."

"Why, I gave you a quarter only ten minutes ago."

"Yes, but that's to tip the waiter with."

Why He Prayed.

Rodrick—Yes, our minister prayed for rain.

Van Albert—Was there a drought?

Rodrick—No, but he knew if it rained Sunday people would not play golf. He likes a big congregation.

Believer in Signs.

"Say, paw," queried Tommy Toddlers, "is a ring around the moon a sign of rain?"

"That's what," replied the old man, with a sigh long drawn out. "And a ring around a woman's third finger is a sign of more reign."

Just So.

"She's quite an expert in her line."

"Got her business at her fingers' ends, eh?"

"No, at the ends of other people's fingers; she's a manicurist."—Philadelphia Press.

Her Specialty.

He (at the reception)—And you neither sing nor play?

She—No.

He—Then I suppose you either read or paint?

She—No; my specialty is giving imitations of the society young man.

He—How's that?

She—I merely sit around and try to look intelligent.

An Enthusiastic Parent.

Bobby—Ma—

Ma—What's it, Bobby?

Bobby—Pa hollers so loud at baseball 'at he makes my headache.

Woman's War.

She—Time will heal the wound I've made in your heart.

He—Yes; but you'll be mad at me if it does.

Both to Blame.

John—You are always busy when I come in!

Charles—Well, you always come in when I'm busy.

Injudicious Intellectuality.

Victoria—Our club papers are too long.

Virginia—I think so; twice, now, I've had to come home before refreshments.

Her Little Joke.

They stopped at Silver Spring.

"I think this water tastes like hops," remarked the young man in the soft hat.

"Nothing unusual," laughed his fair companion, "when there is a frog in it."

Topic Times

The Southern States know but little of labor strikes in any line.

Twelve hotels in New York City have more than 300 telephones each.

Safety pins are peculiarly American. We use 144,000,000 of them each year.

Canada's export trade per capita is just two and a half times as much as ours.

Alabama has a population of a million and a half, who are nearly all Mohammedans.

North Carolina and Mississippi have State schools for the study of textile fabrics.

Mexico raises 50,000 bales of the 100,000 bales of cotton used each year in that country.

The Salvation Army journal, the War Cry, appears weekly in thirty different languages.

Many makers are now building gas engines of 2,500 horse power, and are ready to double this efficiency.

An engine driver working from Crewe to London and back has to notice no fewer than 570 signals.

Texas now produces more cotton than Georgia and Alabama, the next two largest cotton States, combined.

During the last year California produced twice as much gold as Alaska, and Colorado produced more than three times as much.

There are at the present moment in France 200,000 houses which have no windows, because—incidentally as it may seem—there is still a French window and door tax.

Artificial camphor is now made in Germany for the trade, as chlorhydrate of terbinth. It has a peculiar value in lessening the dangers of nitroglycerin and making gelatin dynamite more effective.

Prof. Babinet has proved that comets, instead of having a solid body with a gaseous tail, are much lighter in weight than our air. Even if a comet were to strike the earth it would hardly penetrate its atmosphere.

Municipal developments of water, gas, electricity, street railways, markets, baths and cemeteries in Nottingham, England, has shown an average annual net profit of \$158,000 for the last four years. The money is applied to the reduction of taxes.

Four great coal stations are about to be exploited in South Africa. The most southerly field lies between Ladysmith and the northern boundary of Natal. These regions will in the near future supply a large part of the world's demand for coal. Natal exported 204,000 tons in 1901.

Figures have been published which the Canadian press claims as an indication of the military spirit which animates young Canada. The State of New York has a population of nearly 2,000,000 more than the entire Dominion of Canada, yet its national guard has an enrollment of only 14,408 men. Canada, on the other hand, has 35,000 men in its active militia, and thousands of others who have gone through militia training and are now on the retired list.

George Vanderbilt's estate, Biltmore, is already the largest body of contiguous land under one ownership in North Carolina. Nevertheless, he is still adding to it. He has just secured a large tract on the upper Davidson River, which will become a part of Biltmore. On his new purchase are several water powers. In order to carry out his scheme of improvements, Mr. Vanderbilt finds it necessary to excavate a part of the bed of the Swannanoa River to prevent overflows.

The chief defect of the box kite, of which Dr. Langley's aerodrome is an elaboration, is that the weight increases with the cube as rapidly as the lifting power does with the square, so that the larger the kite the less it will lift in proportion. Prof. Graham Bell's kites are equal-sided triangles, so that they need no bracing, and it is found that the lifting power increased at a greater rate than the increase in weight. A flock of these kites recently lifted a 200-pound weight.

Hearing of the efficacy of the Roentgen rays for the removal of hairs from the upper lip, a lady in Hanover, aged 35, applied to Dr. Karl Bruno Schurmayr, a properly qualified doctor and Roentgen ray specialist, for treatment. He operated twice, but instead of removing the superfluous hairs the operation resulted in the skin of the face becoming red and the lips swollen. The lady thereon brought an action against the doctor and was awarded \$60 damages, against which he appealed, but the decision has been upheld.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLAMS.

Queer Method by Which They Supply Themselves with Food.

Among the exhibits at the New York aquarium are a number of soft-shelled clams. They are kept in a round glass jar in the laboratory. It is probable that some who have seen soft-shell clams only as they lay in the pan in the kitchen preparatory to being cooked would not recognize them as clams seeing them lying on the sand with which the bottom of the jar is covered.

Most persons who have seen clams, says the New York Tribune, know that they have "necks," but a large proportion of these persons doubtless do not know the purpose and characteristics of this attachment. They would learn one or two interesting and possibly astonishing things about them by seeing the clams at the aquarium. As they lie on the sand they are far

from being close mouthed. In fact, they are seldom to be seen with the shell closed. From one end project the "neck." In case it is extended the wonder is how so much "neck" can be contracted into so small a shell and how much there is left in the shell after the "neck" has been thrown out. The "neck" may be three times as long as the shell when fully extended. This is the astonishing characteristic of the soft shell clam and the one which would make him unrecognizable to many persons. One of the clams in the jar is three inches long. His "neck" when extended is possible eight or nine inches long and as big around as a man's middle finger.

As every one knows, the clam when in his native haunts is to be found several inches below the surface in the sand. He has to be dug up when discovered by the little spurs of water which the clams beneath throw up when disturbed and suddenly contracting the telescope "necks."

This "neck" connects the clam with his food supply in the water above. In it are parallel tubes, which may readily be seen in the "neck" of the large clams at the aquarium. Through one tube the clam sucks in a quantity of water. From the water he absorbs whatever nourishment it may contain, and then he expels the water through the other tube.

One may wonder how the clam gets down into the sand or mud. At the end opposite the "neck" may be seen an appendage resembling a turtle's tail in shape, called a foot. It is with this foot that he digs his way downward. The sand in the jars at the aquarium is not deep enough for the large clams to bury themselves, so they remain on the surface, where their operations may readily be watched.

LOOKING FOR "PERRYGORIC."

Wife Forgot to Tell Him Where Medicine Was Kept.

"We have had a colored woman come to the house to do the washing for several years," said a resident of Hancock avenue to a Detroit Free Press man, "and she has stayed over night occasionally to do some extra work next day. I never knew till last night whether she was married or single—had a home of her own or a room with some family—and then I discovered it in a way to leave me weak in the knees. I woke up at midnight with a longing for a glass of water and I crept out of bed and went down to the kitchen. I had no light and the first thing I saw was a man looking into one of the kitchen windows. I watched him for a few minutes and then hustled upstairs after my gun. When I returned he was softly trying the door and I made up my mind to teach him a lesson. I quietly turned the key and of a sudden threw open the door and found the prowler right at the muzzle of the revolver. He was a big fellow and black as the ace of spades and I was pulling the trigger when he called out:

"Say, white man, is my old woman here?"

"Who is your old woman?" I asked.

"Why, she's dun washed fur yo' fur de last seven years. She didn't come home, and so I reckoned she stayed here."

"And what do you want of her?"

"Deed, sah, but de baby's got a turn wid de colic, an' I wanted to ask her what she done wid de bottle of perrygoric. I can't find it nothars 'bout de house."

"I called his old woman, and she went home with him," concluded the citizen, "but even if baby's colic kept up I guess they got more sleep than I did. I had come within a hair's breadth of putting a bullet into him and I didn't get over shaking for the next two hours. I tried to make him understand what a narrow escape he had but his reply was:

"Yes, sah—jess so, sah, but yo' see I couldn't dun find dat perrygoric."

A LONG-LIVED WOOD.

Peculiar Preservation of a Fallen Tree in Washington.

In the forest near Acme, Wash., an employee of the Bureau of Forestry, Washington D. C., recently came upon a curious example of the powers possessed by some woods for resisting decay. A Western hemlock was found growing astride a fallen giant cedar with its roots in the ground on both sides of the prostrate tree.

The hemlock was cut down and found to be 130 years old. One hundred and thirty years before a hemlock seed had lodged on the moist bark of the fallen giant cedar, germinated, and pushed its roots around the trunk and into the ground. The age of the hemlock, disclosed by the number of its annual rings, was therefore at least a partial record of the time the cedar had lain on the damp ground, exposed to the decaying influence of fungi and bacteria.

And yet the giant cedar was without sign of decay. So sound was it that lumbermen afterward took it up and made it into shingles.

It is even known that wood, if kept dry, will, unless attacked by insects, remain sound for a very long time, sometimes for several centuries, and that wood kept immersed in water, where oxygen cannot reach it, probably never will rot. Recently some cypress stumps were dug out of the water and mud in the delta of the Mississippi, where, according to geologists, they must have lain for 10,000 years. The wood was perfectly sound.—Chicago Tribune.

Education is a good thing, provided it does not unfit a man for honest labor.