

Mother Mississippi's Voice

It was excessively inconsiderate of Mrs. Downs to die, just as he was about to close that N. R. & M. merger, argued Henry Yates, but with due respect for his sister, he turned his back on his New York office, boarded the "20-hour train" for Chicago, and of a sudden found himself living in the past.

He awakened to a realization that years had passed since his gentle, shrinking wife had closed her eyes to sight of him standing shocked and wide-eyed with a wee baby girl in his arms.

He had been so busy, fighting for a foothold in Chicago's financial world, that he had failed to note his wife's failing health, and even in the hour of her death, he had not realized that she had died literally of heart-hunger—of longing for the companionship and the protecting love, but not the dollars, of the man she had married.

Of one thing he was sure. He had loved her, in his passive way, and had meant to make a great lady of her, when he had won his financial fight. He hated the child who had robbed him of his wife.

So the babe had been thrust into the willing arms of his widowed sister, and he had plunged back into the business maelstrom.

The allowance turned over to Mrs. Downs for the support of the child had been liberal. He had been informed that her education had been carried on after the most approved methods, but he never saw her, and when from Chicago he had plunged into New York, still bent on acquiring



ON THE VALLEY QUEEN.

more and more wealth, he had passed out of their lives without even a sight of the child.

And now, of course, with Mrs. Downs' death, something must be done. Edith's sister had had intimate friends among her own sex. The problem would be solved somehow.

And it was, but not just as he had expected.

Edith settled it for herself, when she came to greet him, big-eyed, slender, lily-like and sorrowful. The daughter was her mother of their honeymoon days.

Yates reached out his arms with a great cry. The paternal instinct awoke with a rush that robbed him of speech. But the girl understood. She was the sort who could read men aright.

From that hour Edith's happiness and social success were of more vital interest to Henry Yates than the acquirement of stocks and bonds. The latter were useful only in furthering her interests.

Mr. Yates built a palace on Millionaires' row and cursed in his heart the social lights who withheld their beams from his lovely daughter.

A lordling of depleted fortunes but irreproachable social connections came and saw but did not conquer. Yates said the price was too high, and his daughter, curled up in his never-failing arms, thanked him between sobs of joy.

But all this did not help matters when Allen Houston appeared on the horizon, and so far as Edith was concerned, filled it completely. Young Houston had a small patrimony, a tremendous fund of ambition, and the profile of a poet.

Henry Yates said "No." Edith remembered the lonely years her father had spent, talked pathetically, yet not wateringly, of "duty," and Houston flung himself into the wilds of the west.

Edith did not grieve openly, but the loving eyes of her father were not to be deceived. He became restless and anxious, and so they decided that New York was unbearable and the sight of New Orleans during the Mardi Gras would do them both good.

Mr. Yates planned the trip without consulting Edith. They would go to Memphis by rail and there board one of the old-fashioned stern-wheel river boats for New Orleans.

Somewhat, with the sting of social failure and the mad rush of his business life wearing upon him Yates was hungry for the old life—life he had known when he was only "Mr. Stark" of "The Belle of the West."

These were the days when the Yates fortune was represented by three figures had during those river trips he laid the foundations for the property which now ran into eight fig-

"I never realized how tired I was until I got within sound of my old friend's voice."

The next morning they went on board the Valley Queen. Yates thrilled as his foot touched the deck. He walked briskly to the little window on the saloon deck and exclaimed: "Mr. Clerk, I want two of your best rooms to New Orleans."

A blue-coated figure came close to the window, a strong, masculine hand held out some keys, and a voice which made Mr. Yates start answered: "The best two on board, Mr. Yates, and I hope you will find your trip with us most pleasant and comfortable."

Mr. Yates glanced wildly toward the shore. It was slipping away from them. They were in mid-stream—and the man at the window was Allen Houston.

Retreat was impossible. Graceful capitulation was inevitable. Yates put out his hand.

Thereafter he divided his time between the deck, which he paced with his daughter, telling her lively yarns of his own days as a river-boat clerk, and the office, where he shared Houston's preoccupation with his duties.

There was something familiar about it all—the pleasant familiarity which takes 10 years off a man's shoulder. And Houston understood the work. Just as Yates had understood it years before. Where he had started, Houston was starting.

Sometimes watching his daughter's face, he wavered. But no; it was impossible. His own case had been exceptional. All river-boat clerks could not be millionaires, and Houston was merely of a good, up-State family, without social standing in the world where Mammon ruled.

Yet Mr. Yates found himself watching young Houston curiously. He wasn't half bad, this college-bred youth, who could dispatch office duties with ease, placate patrons who fretted at the slow method of travel, and in an emergency could tell the deck hands more things about their ancestry than Yates had dreamed of in his own river life.

They had quit the bluffs, and cotton had given way to cane and rice. In a few hours they would touch at New Orleans. The deck hands had all been paid off, save for the dollar which insured their aid in tying the boat to the dock.

The clerk's duties were over, his papers in shape, and the last landing made. Mr. Yates met him on the saloon deck, and remarked, "Let's go below and watch those darkies lose all their money."

The old life had him in its clutches. Down below they went. Away in the stern the engines pounded. Toward the bow the furnaces glowed. Between the two, roustabouts had gathered to gamble their earnings. Some of the negroes were already penniless. Others were flushed and excited by their gains.

Yates watched the scene for an hour, laughing at the apt remarks of the gamblers. Wall street was forgotten. Social ambitions died within him. He was again in Allen's place, a clerk without a future, without great hopes. Suddenly he turned:

"Man, they are happier than I have dared be since I stood where you are to-day. I am wondering whether it is worth while—the struggle, the knock-out blows one must give and take. Mother Mississippi has been talking to me, Houston; scolding me in her own way. Edith told me once that money was not all—and I reckon she is right. At any rate, you may ask her if she still believes that. If she does, I won't stand between you."

An hour later the boat slipped around the crescent, past the coal docks and the fruit docks to the levees. The rush of the water and the ruddy melodious voices of the negroes singing at their work, mingled with a strange harmony.

In the bow of the Valley Queen, Edith Yates stood with her hand clasped in her lover's her expectant glance fixed on the quaint old city.

In the stern, looking backward upon the river, whose voice he had heeded, Henry Yates stood with folded arms. He was wondering whether he should ever go back to the mad struggle and the social walls he had striven so hard to climb—for her sake.—Boston Globe.

Horses Scarce and High.

"I have not known a period when horses were so scarce and high," said T. E. Gilbert of Cincinnati at the Hotel Barton. "I am in the business and have of late been scouring Kentucky and Ohio with a view of purchasing a good-sized bunch, but had very poor success. More people want to buy than sell, and prices are at a point where it is impossible for dealers to make any profits. The country was drained of horse flesh during our war with Spain, and further depletion was caused by the Boer war. It will take several years to make up the deficiency, and high prices will continue. The automobile craze has had no perceptible effect on the demand for high-class animals, and I do not believe that it will ever get so violent as to make people indifferent to the delight of sitting behind a pair of high steppers."—Washington Post.

About the only thing that comes to the man who sits down and waits in old age

MACARONI.

Favorite food of the Italians and How It Is Made.

The national food of the Italian is macaroni. He keeps his native tastes when he comes to America, and to supply him and his fellow Americans of other blood who have made his favorite food one of their supplementary articles of diet, there are several factories in America. One of them, in Boston, was visited by a Boston Herald Reporter, who writes thus in regard to the making of macaroni.

Real macaroni is made of hard wheat of a semi-translucent sort which grows in southern Europe and Algeria, and which is richer in gluten and other nitrogenous matter than soft wheat.

Macaroni is nothing but flour and water, but it has to be carefully made. The flour is mixed with boiling water in a cylinder which converts it into stiff paste. Then it rolled under a huge granite wheel which flattens it into a smooth mass. The man at the wheel cuts it into squares and claps it under the wheel again and again until it is thoroughly kneaded.

The dough then goes into an upright metal cylinder closed at the lower end with a thick disk of copper. This is pierced with openings, through which a plunger-piston squeezes the dough into threads. The threads are cut off at regular lengths and handed to a man who hangs them on wooden drying rods.

In making spaghetti the holes are small and the dough comes out in solid strings. In the manufacture of macaroni the holes are larger and centered by mandrels which make the tubes hollow. Macaroni is also made into pastes of various shapes, alphabets and thin strips, cut by machinery.

When the macaroni is shaped, it is sent up into a drying room, the small pieces in trays, the long strips of vermicelli, the thin, solid strips of spaghetti, and the large hollow tubes of macaroni on long poles the size of a broomstick. Here a current of air dries the paste.

Genuine macaroni always shows the bent ends where the long hairpin-shaped lengths have straddled the poles. Cheap imitations are made from common flour, which is not glutinous enough to bear its own weight, and therefore is dried flat.

Real macaroni is tender, yellowish, rough in texture and elastic. It breaks with a smooth, porcelain-like fracture. When it boils, as every cook knows, it swells to twice its size and does not become sticky, but holds its tubular form without collapse. It will keep any length of time, and is a very nourishing food.

A CHARITABLE DUCHESS

Builds Hospital on Her Estate for the Benefit of Tenants.

The wealthiest peeress in England is the Duchess of Bedford. She is a sister of Lady Henry Somerset, long the head of the temperance movement in England, and like her is a philanthropist. Recently on her husband's estate at Woburn abbey she opened a handsome modern hospital for the benefit of her tenants and the people of her parish. The building is as well appointed as is any in London and is supplied with the best trained nurses and competent surgeons and physicians, who attend the institution from London. The duchess spends much of her time in visiting hospitals and prisons and in many ways evinces her interest in the less fortunate class of people. In manner she is haughty and imperious, qualities which do not tend to make her popular in her own set.

The Bedfords are among the great-est land owners in England. They own huge blocks of London real estate, among them Covent Garden Market and Covent Garden Opera House.

A curse is said to rest on the family estate of Woburn abbey. In the days of sequestration, in the reign of Henry VIII, one of the duke's ancestors hanged the abbot of the monastery to a tree. Another abbot predicted that the dukedom should never pass in direct line three times in succession. Thus far the prophecy has held true, and as the only son of the duke is a delicate boy of 12 there are not wanting those who believe that the prophecy shall be fulfilled again. This youth would be the third in the direct line.

An Industrious Gas Meter.

"I'm the gas man; just dropped around to see if you need anything; anything out of order; any complaints against the company."

"No, I don't think I need anything just now, but I've got a complaint. The meter works too hard for the company. My gas bill is entirely too big."

"Oh, we don't call that a complaint. Good morning.—New York Press.

Labor Poorly Rewarded.

D'Auber—I only got \$25 for that painting.

Friend—Well, you didn't put much work on it.

D'Auber—What! I guess you never saw me trying to sell it.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Observed in Spite of Everything.

Tommy—Pop, what is an optimist?

Tommy's pop—An optimist, my son, is a man who is married and glad of it.—Philadelphia Record.

When a man loses confidence in himself he makes the vote unanimous.

Science AND Invention

Exhaustive tests for years have convinced Joseph L. Ferrell that sulphate of aluminum is the best fireproofing for wood. Unlike sulphate or phosphate of ammonia, which check flames by emitting ammonia gas, the aluminum compound forms an infusible and non-conducting coating.

The late discovery in strawberries of salicylic acid, a specific in acute rheumatism, has seemed to confirm the idea that these berries are a desirable article of food for rheumatics. The effect of the fruit cannot be due to the salicylic acid, however, as less than the hundredth of a grain per pound is found.

Important tests of the fatal proportion of carbonic oxide in the air have been made by Prof. Mosso at the Turin Physiological Institute. A heroic subject was confined three times in a hermetically sealed iron chamber, the air of which was mixed first with 1.333 of carbonic oxide, then with 1.285, and lastly with 1.233. On the last experiment the man ceased to breathe, being restored only by oxygen.

While urging that the proposed biological survey of the North Sea should seek means of favoring fishes and their food supply, Prof. W. C. McIntosh declares that no important species is in danger of becoming extinct. The fishes were not exterminated by the swarms of gigantic destroyers of reptilian times, when the destruction must at least have equaled that of to-day by man, and future extinction need not be feared.

Alcohol is coming into considerable use for illumination in France. The flame is made luminous by the addition of sufficient coal-oil or crude benzene, or the ordinary non-luminous flame is used to give incandescence to a Welsbach mantle. The latter is the more important method. Some lamps have from sixty to eight hundred candle-power, and these large portable lamps, carrying their own illuminant, seem to have advantages over gas or electricity for many purposes. The best of the burners yield about thirty candle-power hours per ounce of alcohol.

Tests have recently been made on the Boston and Maine and the Florida East Coast Railroads to determine the value of oil as fuel for locomotive engines. On the Florida Railroad it was found, after a month's experimenting with a locomotive hauling its regular load, that 323.3 gallons of oil did the work of one ton of coal. Another test showed 131.8 gallons of oil to be equivalent to a ton of coal. In the Boston and Maine experiments the ratio was 140.29 gallons of oil to one ton of coal. It was found that the engine could be urged to a greater capacity with oil than with coal, and this with a smokeless fire.

By a singular change of circumstances, the gold miners of Hastings County, Ontario, Canada, who for years were baffled in trying to extract the precious metal from its matrix by the presence of arsenic in the ore, have lately found the arsenic to be more profitable than the gold. This is due at once to the great purity of the Canadian arsenic, and to the rapid exhaustion of the arsenic deposits of England and Germany. At the same time, the introduction of a successful method of separating the gold increases the profit of working the Canadian deposits, because every ton of the arsenical ore carries from \$4 to \$60 worth of gold.

HOLDING HIM TO HIS WORD

It Does Not Pay to Make Too Sweeping Statements.

"My dear," said Mr. Puffer, with some dismay, as a smoking cherry pudding was placed on the table before him, "don't you think you are sort of running to cherries lately? Of course I hope that I shall always be cherished by you, but when it comes to cherries in some form every meal,—just cherries or stewed cherries or cherry pie or cherry pudding,—I believe I could cheerfully donate some of our cherries to our less fortunate neighbors."

"Well, John," said his wife, calmly, "I suppose you remember what you said when you insisted on picking the cherries yourself?"

"Ah, Martha," said Mr. Puffer, complacently, "there was a clean-cut, neat, workmanlike job for you, in spite of all your fears and opposition. Instead of the grass under the tree being piled a foot deep with a litter of leaves, twigs and branches broken from the tree, as it invariably is when you send a boy rampaging after the fruit, I cleaned that tree without any damage to it, and consequently with hardly a single leaf to be raked up off the grass. And I got all the cherries without breaking any of my arms or legs or necks, as you so cheerfully predicted, too. Still, while I admit I am proud of the job, I do not think it absolutely necessary to live indefinitely upon those cherries I gathered."

"You haven't eaten a single one out of the few quarts you gathered, John," said Mrs. Puffer, positively. "I canned all of them."

"Well, where does this satiety of cherries I've had inflicted upon me for the past two days come from, then?" demanded Mr. Puffer.

"Do you remember what you said when I asked you if the few you picked were all it was possible to get

from the tree, John?" asked Mrs. Puffer, with a twinkle in her eye.

"Why, yes," acknowledged Mr. Puffer, thoughtfully and suspiciously. "What was it?" persisted his wife, the twinkle widening.

"Well, I believe I said that if any body could get any more off that tree I'd eat them, stones, stems and everything," admitted Mr. Puffer reluctantly.

"I haven't insisted upon the stones and stems," said his wife, demurely.

"Eh?" exclaimed Mr. Puffer.

"But little Jimmy Ballou got enough to last about three weeks longer at the rate you are eating them," continued Mrs. Puffer, quietly.

Mr. Puffer solemnly helped himself to a large, thick slab of the pudding, and began slowly stowing it away.

"Martha," he said, gravely, after a few minutes of this labor, "if I own up to that I am a little—just a trifle—too old and stout to pick cherries as well as I did when I was a boy, don't you think the hospital would appreciate a donation of some nice, luscious cherries?"—Youth's Companion.

BOLD ROBIN HOOD'S DAY.

May 1 the Anniversary of the Death of the Noted Woodsman.

An immense lot of leases still date from May 1, says the New York Commercial Advertiser, but not many of the lessors or lessees know that this is simply an adjournment of a few days from St. George's day, from which the leases of their ancestors used to run. This again dates from the more remote period when the date was fixed at the time of one moon after the spring equinox. May day as a day for strikes of workmen is not a thing of recent years. It has the sanction of centuries. If of nothing else, May 1 is the day on which bold Robin Hood was bled to death by his treacherous relative, and sped his last arrow, which marked where his grave should be. The date is at least as certain as that on which Remus made his unlucky jump over the rising walls of Rome. Robin Hood was the hero and saint of the common people of England, and for centuries the May day festivities were joined to celebrations of his deeds, and to exultant prophecies of the day when conditions should be equalized after the ideal of this knight of their own.

It has happened ever since that when the sun enters the sign of Taurus and Robin Hood's day approaches, the sturdy descendant of his woodsman, working at the mechanic's bench, feels a strange fever burning in his blood. He feels that he would like to have a reckoning with certain "rich earls" whom he wots of. He grows impatient toward the "fat bysshoppes and the archbysshoppes," and works himself into such a fighting mood that if interfered with he would not hesitate to take a fall out of even the "hys sheryffe of Nottingham." So he throws down his tools and hies him off to the "green forest," where shaws be sheen and shards full fair," together with a brass band and plenty of refreshments. Perhaps he will bring to terms the proud Norman who owns the shop; perhaps not; anyway, he has his fun.

The floral festivities of the day, in these times and in this country usually adjourned to the first Saturday in May are a survival of the old Roman festivities in honor of the goddess Flora. The May queen is Flora herself impersonated. The rigging up of a boy consort is an impertinent and ridiculous innovation, which should, if possible, be abolished.

MISSED HIS ENGAGEMENT.

Wily John Chinaman Could Not Escape From Police Clutches.

Some time ago a squad of Manhattan police raided a fan tan game in Chinatown. Eleven Chinamen were captured and kept in a third story front room in charge of Detective Brennan until the patrol wagon came for them. While they were waiting for the wagon one of the prisoners said to Brennan:

"Me got to go. Me got velly important engagement."

"I suppose so," said the detective, "but you've got a more important engagement at the police station."

The Chinaman begged like a good fellow, but Brennan was obdurate.

"Me give you five dollars if you let me go," the prisoner finally whispered.

"No use, John. Even if I let you out of the room," said the detective, "the police would catch you at the lower door. They are guarding that."

As quick as a flash the Chinaman answered: "That's all right. You let me out, me go upstairs, get out on roof, and go down other building. Police no catch me."

"Can't do it, John," Brennan persisted. "They've got you prisoners all counted. If I turn over only ten I'll have troubles of my own."

"Me fix that," the Chinaman answered, without a moment's hesitation. "Me go to window, call a Chinaman friend up from street. When he come to this door you pull him in and I run out. See? You have eleven prisoners alle same, and police can't tell one Chinaman from other."

But notwithstanding his cunning, John had to go to the station, and his velly important engagement was broken.—Brooklyn Eagle.

When Talk Comes High.

"Oh, well, talk is cheap," sneered the angry lawyer.

"Not that kind," replied the judge promptly. "Ten dollars," please.—Syracuse, N. Y., Herald.

Theaters in New York.

Thirteen new theaters, to cost \$5,000,000, are being built in New York city.

THE PATHOS OF A LIFE.

Once Hostess of a King; Now Inmate of an Almshouse.

Once a belle in Boston society; daughter of James H. Gare, a wealthy importer; married to Henry Boyd, the man of her choice, also wealthy; presented to Queen Victoria while abroad on the wedding tour, which lasted a year and covered nearly every country in Europe; the mother of two noble sons, the one-time hostess of a king, and the envied of many. Now old, penniless, forgotten, bereft of all her loved ones, the inmate of a public almshouse. Into these brief facts are crowded the pathetic life history of Mrs. Catherine Muerling, now in the Home for Dependent Adults on Blackwell's Island, New York, and all through no fault of her own. Was it Fate that sent the tyrant death into the midst of a happy home circle to rudely seize 7-year-old Henry and wrest him from the frantic mother's arms? Was it Fate that a few years later struck down the one remaining child, the young man who was idolized by both parents—sole inheritor of the dead Henry's wealth of love—their greatest hope and joy? Who shall say? Disheartened by the blow, the father lost courage to wage the battle, grew careless with his business, and soon he, too, was taken. Then came the crash of his carelessly-conducted business, and the heart-broken widow was left nearly penniless.

Blazed by the blows which had in turn bereft her of children, husband and fortune, the grief-stricken woman was forced to leave her once happy home and seek a means of support. Her one accomplishment was that of miniature painting, and to perfect herself in this she went to Paris. It was while studying there that she met John Muerling, an officer of the Swedish army, and married him. For a time life was once more sweetened with joy. They lived in Stockholm and it was there that they entertained King Oscar, of Sweden. Then Trouble, gaunt and grim, once more dogged the footsteps of this most unfortunate woman. Her husband died and, though they had managed to keep up appearances on his slender pay as an army officer, she was again left to battle for life alone and penniless.

At 68 one has lost much of the vigor and enthusiasm of youth, and Mrs. Muerling could do little at best. Returning to America she found her friends were all dead. For a time she managed to obtain a living, meager and uncertain though it was. Then followed days when food was unknown, and at last, staggering from weakness, her pitiable condition became known to others and she was provided for at the Home. So ends the story of one poor unfortunate—just a few facts loosely strung, but read between the lines.—Ullrich Globe.

FILIPINO BABIES WALKING.

How It Is Taught Them Earlier Than Most Babies Learn.

Filipino mothers have little trouble with their babies. They have a contrivance which relieves them of most of the bother of this sort. Every house is equipped with a piece of mechanism to teach babies to walk. Infants are nervous. Doctors say they cannot remain quiet more than five seconds when they are awake. Filipino babies are fully as nervous as those of other countries, but they don't have the opportunity of expending their energy annoying their mothers.

In the swampy, reptile-infested portions of the islands the houses are set up on bamboo poles. In the center of these houses, which usually consist of only one room, one bamboo pole is allowed to extend about two feet above the level of the floor. In the hollow of this bamboo, which acts as a socket, is placed a round piece of wood about two feet long. On this is nailed or fastened a crosspiece which projects a foot or two on each side.

When the infant reaches the age to get into mischief through a desire to exercise its little legs, the mother ties it to one end of this crosspiece. As soon as the baby tries to lean on it the device revolves in the bamboo socket. The little one is apt to be frightened and cry out, but the mother expects this and refuses to interfere. Then begins a treadmill stroll for the Filipino baby. He has to follow the revolutions of the walking machine or he will fall. His little hands, which clutch tightly just as those of white babies do, enable him to preserve his equilibrium, and he keeps up his exercise until he is ready to go to sleep. In this way Filipino babies are taught to walk much earlier than those of any other country, and their mothers are not forced to hire nurse girls or devote their whole time to their offspring.—New York Press.

A Misunderstanding.

"Mr. Klidder thinks he's funny," snapped Mrs. Stavenn. "I don't see what there is about my table to make him joke so much."

"No," replied the sarcastic boarder; "there's hardly enough here to make a canary bird do that."

"A canary bird? How can a canary bird joke?"

"Oh, beg pardon. I thought you said 'choke.'"—Philadelphia Press.

A Definition.

"Pa, what is a fray?"

"Why, my son, that is what a person who has never been in a fight calls it."—Puck.

Once more the umpire is doing his annual stunt as a martyr.