

# State Retailers Will Meet Here February 13-15

### Many Entertainment Features Planned During Annual Convention and Style Revue.

Nebraska Retail Clothiers, who will hold their annual exposition, convention and style revue at Hotel Fontenelle, February 13 to 15, plan to make this their banner convention. Three entire floors of the Hotel Fontenelle will be devoted to exposition purposes only. Other displays will be at various hotels, according to L. A. Leppke and C. C. Westcott, who are arranging the program.

Tuesday morning, February 13, will be devoted to registration. Luncheon at 12 will be in the main ballroom of Hotel Fontenelle, immediately following which will be an elaborate style revue under the direction of the Bradley Knitting company of Levan, Wis. Twenty living models, according to reports, will display the largest, most attractive showing of cut, knitted garments, including sweaters and bathing suits, ever exhibited in this section of the country.

L. N. Jackson, president and secretary of Lampher-Skinner company of St. Paul, will have an exhibition of furs and a style revue.

Mayor to Speak. Address of welcome will be made by Mayor James C. Dahlgren, and invocation by Rev. J. W. G. Fast of the First Methodist church. Percy Coxswell, president of the Nebraska Retailers of Alliance, will open the meeting. Response will be by Joe Sarbach, president of the Men's Apparel club.

Tuesday evening dinner, smoker and round table discussion will be held at 5 in private dining room of Hotel Fontenelle. Billy Wolfe will preside.

Wednesday and Thursday mornings will be given to exposition of clothing and buying. Sample rooms will close each day promptly at noon. Luncheon Wednesday and Thursday will be served in Logan inn of Hotel Fontenelle. Through courtesy of the Nebraska Power company, a radio outfit will be installed in the Logan inn. Harry H. Abbott, manager of Brown-Klein company, will lead the song-fests at the luncheons.

Keynote Address. The keynote speech will be given Wednesday afternoon by Charles Cooledge Parlin, manager of the commercial research department of the Curtis Publishing company, of Philadelphia.

Wednesday night the wholesale jobbers and manufacturers will give a "cozy" dinner and entertainment in the Burgess Nash tea room for members and their wives. This feature of the program will be in charge of Roy T. Byrne of the Byrne-Hammer Dry Goods company, and L. E. Clough of M. E. Smith and company.

Thursday will be "Nebraska day." Fred Volland, president of the National Association of Retail Clothiers, of Topeka, Kan., will address the convention that afternoon.

Special Committee. Special representative committee appointed to receive Mr. Volland consists of Prof. J. H. Beveridge, superintendent of schools; Gould Dietz, governor of Ak-Sar-Ben; Roy T. Byrne, Byrne-Hammer Dry Goods company; John Swanson, president of the Nebraska Clothing company; W. B. Farg, director of the Omaha Athletic club, and W. B. Cheek, president of the Omaha Auto club.

Others on the program will be Gilbert M. Hirschbeck, Thomas C. Byrne, president of the Byrne-Hammer Dry Goods company; John A. Swanson, president of the Nebraska Clothing company, and Dan Morris, president of the City National bank of Kearney, Neb.

Present officers of the Nebraska Retail Clothiers are Percy C. Coxswell, Alliance president; R. H. Wilson, Omaha, vice president, and Harry Hough, Ogalala, secretary and treasurer.

Men's Apparel club dinner will close the convention. Committee in charge that evening will be Dan A. Sonnefeld, H. A. DeArcy and Joe Sarbach. Eight vaudeville acts will furnish entertainment.

Members of the Men's Apparel club will be in charge of the program for the annual banquet, which will close the convention.

Clothing from all over Nebraska will be in attendance.

Hunting Record Broken. Medina, O., Feb. 3.—Attended by his two dogs, P. J. Woods of Lodi broke the hunting record when he bagged seven coons in a single night. The dogs also held up five skunks and five 'coons the same night.

# Narrow Escape for Kidnaped Plumber

By STEPHEN LEACOCK

"Personally," said Thornton, speaking for the first time, "I was not to take a case that involves cellar work."  
"We were sitting, a little group of us, around about the fire in a comfortable corner of the Steam and Air club. Our talk had turned, as always happens with a group of professional men, into more or less technical chatter. I will not say that we were talking shop; the word has an offensive sound, and might be misunderstood. But we were talking about only a group of practicing plumbers—including some of the biggest men in the profession—would talk."

With the exception of Everett, who had a national reputation as a consulting barber, and Thomas, who was a vacuum cleaner expert, I think we all belonged to the same profession. We had been holding a convention, and Fortescue, who had one of the biggest furnace practices in the city, had read us a paper that afternoon—a most revolutionary thing—on External Diagnosis of Defective Feed Pipes, and naturally the thing had bred discussion. It was in the course of this that Thornton interrupted with his remark about never being willing to accept a cellar case.

**False Diagnosis.**  
Naturally all the men turned to look at the speaker. Henry Thornton, at the time of which I related was at the height of his reputation. Beginning, quite literally, at the bottom of the ladder, he had in 20 years of practice as an operating plumber raised himself to the top of his profession. There was much in his appearance to suggest the underlying reasons of his success. His face, so usual with men of our calling, had something of the dreamer in it, but the bold set of the jaw indicated determination of an uncommon kind. Three times president of the Plumbers' association, Henry Thornton had enjoyed the highest honors of his chosen profession. His book on Nut Case was recognized as the last word on the subject, and had been crowned by the French Academy of Nuts.

"You never go into a cellar," asked Fortescue. "But hang it, man, I don't see how one can avoid it!" "Well, I do avoid it," answered Thornton, "at least as far as I possibly can. I send down my solderist, of course, but personally, unless it is absolutely necessary, I never go down."

"That's all very well, my dear fellow," Fortescue said, "but you get down as well as I do. That you get down after case where the cellar diagnosis is simply vital. I had a case last week, a most interesting thing."

"He turned to the group of us as he spoke—"a double lesion of a gas pipe under a cement floor—half a dozen of my colleagues had been absolutely baffled. They had made an entirely false diagnosis, operated on the dining room floor, which they removed and carried home, and when I was called in they had just obtained permission from the Stone Masons Protective association to knock down one side of the house. After we had finished the whole operation I forgot to say that we had thrown the coal out on the lawn to avoid any complication—the proprietor quite broke down. He offered us to take his whole house and keep it. But, gentlemen, I feel that when Mr. Thornton says that he never goes down into a cellar there must be a story behind it. I think we should invite him to relate it to us."

**Case of Great Urgency.**  
A murmur of assent greeted the speaker's suggestion. For myself I was particularly pleased, inasmuch as I have long felt that Thornton as a raconteur was almost as interesting as in the role of an operating plumber.

"Not much of a story, perhaps," said Thornton, "but such as it is you are welcome to it. So if you will just fill up your glasses with raspberry vinegar, you may have the tale for what it is worth."

"We gladly complied with the suggestion," said Thornton, "and continued. "It happened a good many years ago at a time when I was only a young fellow fresh from college, very proud of my Plumb. B., and inclined to think that I knew it all. I should mention that at this time I was not married, but had set up a modest apartment of my own with consulting room and a single man servant. Naturally I could not afford the services of a solderist or a gasist and did everything for myself, though Simmons, my man, could at a pinch be utilized to tear down plaster and break furniture."

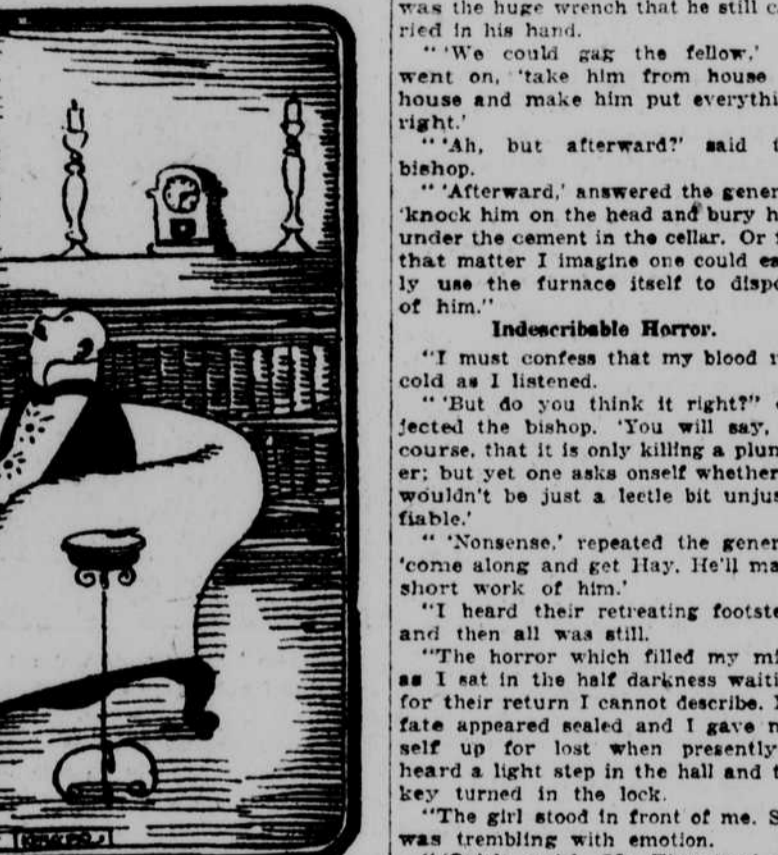
"Thornton paused to take a sip of raspberry vinegar and went on. "Well, then, I had come home particularly tired after a long day and I felt, therefore, none too well pleased when a little while after dinner the bell rang and Simmons brought word to the library that there was a client in the consulting room. I reminded the fellow that I could not possibly consider a case at such an advanced hour unless I were paid emergency overtime wages with time and a half during the day of recovery."

"Simmons," to my surprise, told me that he had already informed the client of this fact, and that the answer had only been a plea that the case was too urgent to admit of delay. He supplied the further information that the client was a young lady. I am afraid," added Thornton, looking round his audience with a sympathetic smile, "that Simmons (I had got him from Harvard and he had not yet quite learned his place) even said something about her being strikingly handsome."

A general laugh greeted Thornton's announcement. "After all," said Fortescue, "I never could see why an ice man should be supposed to have a monopoly on gallantry."  
"Oh, I don't know," said Thornton. "For my part—I say it without affectation—the moment I am called in professionally, women, as women, cease to exist for me."

**Beauty in Distress.**  
"On entering the consulting room I saw at once that Simmons had exaggerated nothing in describing my client as beautiful. I have seldom, even among my own class, seen a more strikingly handsome girl. She was dressed in a very plain and simple fashion which showed me at once she belonged merely to the capitalist class. I am, as I think you know, something of an observer, and my eye at once noted the absence of heavy gold earrings and wrist bangles. The blue feathers at the side of her hat

op," he said, "just step upstairs a minute. I have an idea."  
"Ah, there you get me rather beyond my depth," said the bishop. "They went up together, leaving me below. To my surprise and consternation, as they reached the top of the cellar stairs, I saw the general swing the door shut and heard a key open the door, and tried in vain to open the door. I was trapped. In a moment I realized the folly in trusting myself in the hands of these people."  
"I could hear their voices in the hall, apparently in eager discussion. "But the fellow is priceless," the general was saying. "We could take him round to all the different houses and make him fix them all. Hang it, Bishop, I haven't had a decent tap running for two years and Admiral Hay's pantry has been flooded since last March."  
"But one couldn't compel him. He's certainly, why not? I'd compel him to quit with this."  
"I couldn't see what the general referred to, but had no doubt that it was the huge wrench that he still carried in his hand."  
"We could gag the fellow," he went on, "take him from house to house and make him put everything right."  
"Ah, but afterward?" said the bishop.  
"Afterward," answered the general, "knock him on the head and bury him under the cement in the cellar. Or for that matter I imagine one could easily use the furnace itself to dispose of him."



Simmons brought word to the library that there was a client in the 'Consulting room.'

"It is now 7:30. We will reckon the time from now, with overtime at time and a half. But if I am to do anything for you, I must have some idea of what has happened."  
"The cellar boiler," she moaned, clasping her hands together, "the cellar boiler won't work."  
"Searching Questions. "Ah," I said soothingly. "The cellar boiler won't work."  
"How's your pressure gauge?" I asked. "Do you draw from the mains or are you on the high level reservoir?"

"It had occurred to me at once that it might be merely a case of stoppage of her main feed, complicated, perhaps, with a valvular trouble in her exhaust. On the other hand, it was clear enough that if her feed was full and her gauges working, her trouble was more likely a leak somewhere in her piping."  
"But all attempts to draw from the girl any clear idea of the symptoms were unavailing. All she could tell me was that the cellar boiler wouldn't work. Beyond that her answers were mere confusion. I gathered enough, however, to feel sure that the main feed was still working and that her top story check valve was probably in order. With that I had to be content."

"As a young practitioner, I had as yet no motor car. Simmons, however, summoned me a taxi, into which I hurriedly placed the girl and my basket of instruments, and was soon speeding in the direction she indicated. It was a dark, lowering night with flecks of rain against the windows of the car, and there was some after rain of the hour it was now after half past eight and the nature of my mission which gave me a stimulating sense of adventure. The girl directed me, as I felt sure she would, towards the capitalist quarter of the town."

"He had soon sped away from the brightly lit streets and tall apartment buildings among which my usual practice lay, and entered the gloomy and dilapidated section of the city where the unhappy capitalist class reside. I need not remind those of you who know it that it is scarcely a cheerful place to find oneself in after a nightfall. The inhabitants living, so it is said, on their scanty dividends and on such part of their income as our taxation is still unable to reach, are not people that one would care to fall in with after nightfall."

**Bishop With Monkey Wrench.**  
"We alighted at one of the most sombre of the houses and our taxi driver, with evident relief, made off in the darkness."  
"The girl admitted us into a dark hall where she turned on an electric light. 'We have light,' she said, with that peculiar touch of pride that one sees so often in her class; 'we have four bulbs.'"  
"Then she called down a flight of stairs that apparently led to the cellar."

"Father, the plumber has come. Do come up now, dear, and rest." "A step sounded on the stairs and there appeared beside us one of the most forbidding looking men that I have ever beheld. I don't know whether any of you have ever seen an Anglican Bishop. Probably not. Outside of the bush, they are seldom seen."  
"But at the time of which I speak there were a few still here and there in the pulpits of the city. The man before us was tall and ferocious and his native ferocity was further enhanced by the heavy black beard which he wore in open defiance of the compulsory shaving law. His black-shaped hat and his black clothes lent him a singularly sinister appearance, while his legs were bound in tight gaiters, as if ready for an instant spring. He carried in his hand an enormous monkey wrench, on which his fingers were clasped in a restless grip."

"Can you fix the accursed thing?" he asked.  
"I was not accustomed to being spoken to in this way, but I was willing for the girl's sake to strain professional courtesy to the limit. "I don't know," I answered, "but

all that is necessary. Ask your drugist for genuine 'California Fig Syrup.' It never cramps or overacts. Full directions for babies and children of all ages are printed on each bottle. Say 'California' or you may get an imitation fig syrup."

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# The Lady, the Taxi Man and the Wet, Wet Water

**Scene—Douglas street bridge. Characters—An excited lady, a hard-boiled taxi driver, an irritated tollkeeper, police officers, reporters, etc. Time—Eventide in winter.**  
(Taxicab rolls onto Douglas street bridge, its meter clicking merrily. Its only passenger, a lady, stops to powder nose and twists in seat in effort to survey reflection of self in glass. The driver mutters to himself: "Dreading of crap game in garage and grieving deeply over \$1.75 contributed to the cause of a scrupulous lurch. There is a sudden rapping on the glass of the cab, the driver turns and the lady speaks.)  
The lady: Is this the bridge?  
The driver (muttering to himself): Does it look like the public library? (Aloud.) It is.  
The lady: Stop the car a moment. (The driver disgustively obeys instructions, grumbling to himself the

your lip, I can't stand arguments, they give me a headache. Get down offa that rail and get in that cab. I can't be wasting the entire night around here.  
The lady, still very dramatic: I tell you I'm going to end it all. What is this world but disappointments and misery? Stand back, stand back, I want to destroy myself.  
To emphasize her words, the lady attempts a gesture and loses balance. The driver seizes her arm just in time to save her.)  
The driver: Whaddya think I am, a mind reader? Maybe she bobbed her hair at the wrong time, or's bow-legged, or didn't have a new coat as good as the twist and twirl in the next flit, or maybe she's been eating too many nut sundaes. But don't be asking me. I've got my own troubles to worry about, including one hog and six bits I sunk in the crap game at the garage and I gotta be getting back to it. So long, I'm on my way, and tell the reporters to be sure and straighten the lady's picture in the papers; otherwise her evening will positively be ruined.



while) Steve Brodie's wife again. These fractious females give me a pain. Ho, hum, I suppose it's all in the day's work, but I never did care much for work.  
(As the car stops, the lady steps out and tosses dollar to driver, who examines it critically. The lady starts toward the railing, lifting skirts daintily and stepping carefully to one side to avoid small puddle. Driver, slouching behind wheel, watches curiously and when convinced of the lady's purpose frowns with deep annoyance. Lights cigaret while he debates in own mind what shall be his procedure. I'd probably be doing the world a favor if I let her take the long leap. Still, it would be a dirty trick to let that hat get ruined, it must have cost all of 20 slugs, and some poor good probably got plenty of bad news when that fur coat came home. And then again I never did see any body flop off that rail; maybe I'll glimpe a thrill. Aw, rats, I suppose her mother'll stand for her if nobody else will and I better go over and give her a wallop in the jaw. Driver twists himself from behind wheel and saunters over toward railing.) Hey, you, whaddaya trying to do, break your leg? Come down offa that railing before you lose your balance. First thing you know you'll fall in the water and ruin that pretty feather.  
The lady, dramatically: I'm going to end it all.  
The driver: Nix on that Pearl White stuff with me, kid. I've been to the movies myself. Get down offa that rail before I push you in—the river.  
The lady: Don't you dare touch me, I'm going to kill myself and I won't be pushed.  
The driver: Don't give me any of

**Indescribable Horror.**  
"I must confess that my blood ran cold as I listened."  
"But do you think it right?" objected the bishop. "You will say, of course, that it is only killing a plumber; but yet one asks oneself whether it wouldn't be just a little bit unjustifiable."  
"Nonsense," repeated the general, "come along and get Hay. It'll make short work of him."  
"I heard their retreating footsteps and then all was still."  
"The horror which filled my mind as I sat in the half darkness waiting for their return I cannot describe. My fate appeared sealed and I gave myself up for lost when presently I heard a light step in the hall and the key turned in the lock."  
"The girl stood in front of me. She was trembling with emotion."  
"Quick, quick, Mr. Thornton," she said. "I heard all that they said. Oh, I think it's dreadful of them, simply dreadful. Mr. Thornton, I'm really ashamed that father should act that way."

"I came out in the hall still half dazed."  
"They've gone over to Admiral Hay's house; there among the trees. That's their lantern. Please, please, don't lose a minute. Do you mind not having a cab? I think really you'd prefer not to wait. And hang, won't you please take this—she handed me a little packet as she spoke—"this is a piece of pie; you always get that, don't you, and there's a bit of cheese won't it, but please run."  
"In another moment I had bounded from the door into the darkness. A wild rush through the darkened streets and in 20 minutes I was safe back again in my own consulting room."

**Sequel to the Story.**  
Thornton paused in his narrative, and at that moment one of the stewards of the club came and whispered something in his ear.  
He rose.  
"I'm sorry," he said, "with a grave face. I'm called away; a very old client of mine. Valvular trouble of the worst kind, I doubt if I can do anything, but I must at least go. Please don't let me break up your evening, however."  
"With a courtesy bow he left us."  
"And do you know the sequel to Thornton's story?" asked Fortescue with a smile.  
"We looked expectantly at him."  
"Why, he married the girl," explained Fortescue. "You see he had to go back to her house for his wrench. One always does."  
"Of course," we exclaimed.  
"In fact, he went three times; and the last time he asked the girl to marry him and she said 'yes.' He took her out of her surroundings, had her educated at a cooking school, and had her give lessons on the parlor organ. She's Mrs. Thornton now."  
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# Widow Is Denied Final Decree by Judge

Denver, Feb. 3.—District Judge Hersey declined to grant a final decree of divorce to a dead woman here. The deceased, Mrs. Cornelia F. Kellogg, was granted a preliminary decree shortly before her death last October from Cecil N. Kellogg, a salesman, believed to be living in Texas. James W. Kelly, attorney for Mrs. Kellogg in the preliminary hearing, asked the court to sign a final decree in her favor "to clear up formalities in connection with the case."

It is believed the effort to secure the final decree was made in order to exclude Kellogg as an heir to his wife's property.  
**390 Murders in Four Years.**  
London, Feb. 3.—Statistics just published show that there have been 390 murders in England during the past four years. Of this total only 14 cases was the murderer not brought to justice. Ninety-three persons were convicted of murder and executed, while 18 murderers committed suicide. Seventy people were convicted of murder, but were proved insane.

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