By Neptune's Services.

There was the letter addressed very plainly, in Thorpe Creighton's rather peculiar handwriting, to Miss

Daisy Edliffson. What should she do with it? Deliver it, and so let her cousin

win and wed the man whom she herself loved? No, Maud Hildrup was neither generous nor honest enough to do that.

Destroy it? No, she did not quite dare to pursue that course, though it would have well suited her plans; for she knew that Thorpe was too modest, and perhaps a little too proud also, to woo very long without apparent encouragement.

She could not impale herself on either horn of the dilemma, she thought, but would compromise. So she slipped the letter into one of those old, never touched, books on the upper shelf of her uncle's book-

"No one knows that I received the morning mail from our letter-carrier," she said to herself, "so there will be no inquiries as to what has become of this horrid letter. If it is discovered at any future day-which is not likely-I, of course, will be ignorant of how it came there."

Dishonesty does seem to prosper for a long, long time, and there were no inconvenient questions as to where the morning letters were.

Meantime, as Maude presumed to be the case, Thorpe was on his way to San Francisco, where he hoped to receive an e neouraging reply to the fervent words of love which he had penned to Daisy the night before he started on his trip.

Cunning, fair-seeming Maude had taken care to be present at each of the interviews he had had with her cousin between the time when he announced that he had accepted the offer of a fine position in a banking house in San Francisco, and the hour of his departure; therefore he had been reduced to the necessity of committing his burning thoughts to unsympaathetic pen and paper, and Maude had guessed correctly as to the contents of the hidden letter.

"Daisy, dear," asked Maude, carelessly, shortly after Thorpe's depart-"don't you think it's very queer that Mr. Creighton went away without proposing to you? He was so devoted to you! And I, for one, did not dream that he was only flirting;

"We girls are very apt to mis-con-strue the meaningless attentions with which idle young men flatter answered Daisy, with studied

ie was so ready to go "What? I've never heard any such

story."
"You never have? Why, how odd! Where were your ears?" said Maude who had herself heard no such rumor until this very moment, when she

had originated it. Pride and maidenly reticence kept Daisy from exhibiting any grief at her quondam lover's defection. If, she thought, he had been merely friendly in his visits, she would give no one the chance to see her wear the willow for another girl's property; so she smiled, and danced, and-well, yes,

flirted the least bit. And blind observers said to one another: "Who would have imagined that Thorpe Creighton and Daisy Edliffson were only friends, after all!"

A few weeks passed by, and then Maude received an invitation to visit an old schoolmate who resided in San Francisco; no one but herself and her future hostess knew how skillfully she had angled for this invitation! But no matter; she got it, and accepted it, and then contrived to cross Thorpe Creighton's path again, when as she thought, the edge of his love for her cousin would have been dulled by her seeming indifference—or re-jection, if that letter had indeed been a bona fide offer of marriage

Her letters home were full of the good times she was having, and she contrived to bring in Creighton's name very often. To Thorpe himself she related long accounts of the many conquests Daisy was continually

making. "I would not have believed two years ago that my demure consin could have developed into such a little flirt as she is now!" Maud to him one evening, anxious to ascertain his present senti-

"No one who looked into her clear brown eyes would have given her such an appellation," he said, sighing.
"Oh, she don't mean to flirt! But

why that sigh? Surely, you were not one ofher victims?" asked Maud, art-

"Ah! but I was! Did she not tell you?" "No, maeed. She knew that I nev-

er approved of her trifling and-But she did not really refuse you?"
"I grieve to say that she did." "Oh, I'm so sorry! Foolish girl!

She gave me no hint of it, and I beg your pardon for jesting on such a subject. Are you sure you understood her?"

"I wrote it; I wrote to her the vory night before I left home and begged her for just one word of hope, but not a line has she ever sent me! It has occured to me lately that per-

haps she failed to receive my letter.' Maude did not want him to nourish any notion of that sort, so she hastily replied:

"I happen to know that she did get a note from you the morning you left home, for I, myself, received it from the carrier. I remember, too, that just about that time she had a good deal to say about vain people misconstruing other people's courtesies. Poor fellow I am not surprised. How can a girl be so heartless!"

Sympathy is very sweet, especially when rosy lips and tender, blue eyes express it to an unsuspicious young

Pretty soon Maude began to have hopes that her plot would prove successful. Thorpe called on her very often and showed her many attentions. To be sure, most of his talk was about Daisy, but then Maude always contrived to bring in some bit of news about her cousin's last flirtation, which never failed to plant a sting in her listener's heart.

Just as she was begining to feel almost sure of her game, there came a

hindrance in the chase

Thorpe received a cable message saying that the husband of his only sister had just died, unexpectedly, in Florence, leaving four little children and a delicate wife among strangers; of course Thorpe lost no time in joining her, cabling to her to remain in Florence until he got there.

Maude could not possibly conjure up any reason for running off to Italy on such short notice, though she fain would have done so, and she had to let him go without hearing the decisive question from his lips. However, he promised to write frequently; that was something.

She knew just what steamer he was to take from New York, so she eagerly scanned the passenger list to see if there were any familiar names upon it, the names of any who would be likely to know the Edliffsons, but to her relief none such appeared.

Her relief was groundless, however, for two names printed as Mrs. Howardson and Miss Howardson were incorrectly substituted for Mrs. Howard Edliffson and Miss Edliffson!

Both Daisy and Thorpe were very much disconcerted when they discovered that they were to be penned up together for a week in the narrow limits of an ocean steamer, but each was too proud to let the other suspect that a true heart was aching at apparent inconstancy.

Each held aloof from the other. Thorpe made Daisy wretched by his many courtesies to a charming young widow and her little fairy of a him," she replied unconsciously. daughter, and he, in turn, could have wrung with a hearty good-will the slender neck of a callow Yale "man" who danced constant attendance upon Daisy.

They had been six days out, with favorable wind and weather, when the doctor, a genial Irish gentleman, came up to the group of which Thorpe and Daisy were uncongenial members, and said:

"Well, my friends, you are not he said.—Detroit Echo. quite so eager for letters as most travelers arel

"I wonder if it is true that he has a lady-love out there, and that is why he was so ready to go!"

Affected must take us to be if you think we look for the postman while we are on Some people can the high seas!" exclaimed one lady,

"Oh, no!" he answered, with a quizzical smile. "Do you not know that, among other improvements, we of this line have communication with shore so that we have mail delivered now and then?"

"No! Nor do you know it, either," Daisy said, seeing that the doctor glanced expectantly at her. "Nevertheless I have some mail for

one of my passengers." "Oh! A note which her true love Edliffson.

"Wrong again! I have a bona fide, new, fresh letter, with an unbroken seal and a properly canceled United States postage stamp on it."

"Really and truly?" asked Daisy.
"Really and truly! Honor bright!" "Then I suppose one of the improvements of your line is that you have secured the services of Neptune as letter-carrier.'

morning and handed me a letter with his trident. A letter for some one before me." "Ah, doctor, we've caught you napping! Neptune only comes aboard ships when they cross the

"Now you've hit it, Miss Edliffson!

The old chap came aboard this

Thorpe's first remark. "Neptune makes exceptions in our behalf, especially when the letter is for a lady; he is gallant, as all of us

salt water dogs are! As he thus spoke the doctor held up to be sealed, stamped, addressed and

never opened. "Miss Daisy Edliffson, No. 9876 Elm street, Vernon Center," read the lady nearest to it.

"Why, it is for me! That is my name and address!" exclaimed Daisy, in great surprise. "Where did you get it? Is it not an old one which you have found and re-sealed, just for fun?'

'Yes; where did you get it?" repeat ed Mrs. Edliffson, noticing that Daisy looked confused when she saw the writing upon it, and that she blushed and hastily put it into her pocket. "I was looking over that old copy

of Don Quixote which you kindly lent

me and there I found it. "Oh!" that miserable Don Quixotel" said Mrs. Edlifson, laughing heartily. "That is a joke on my very good but absented minded husband. When I was packing my steamer trunk I asked him to hand me, from the top shelf of the bookcase, and old English prayer book which belonged to my grandmother, as I thought I would like to use it Lo, when I opened my trunk after simple, natural, and useful disciples we were well out to sea, I found this that we ought to be,

Don Quixote insteal of my prayer

Daisy was very quiet for some time; one glance had shown her that the hand-writing on the envelope was that of Thorpe Creighton, and the date the day he had left Vernon Center; she knew, too, that from where he was standing when the doctor held it up he must also have recog-

nized his own handwriting.

It was the very letter which Mande had so cunningly concealed, never knowing that in her haste to return the book to its shelf she had unwittingly placed it next to where the old prayer book had laid for over 20

How was she to know that the dim brown bindings of both books were so much alike that her uncle easily blundered?

Thorpe could not contain his curriosity, could it possibly, he thought, be the letter to which he had so hungered for just one word of answer? So he soon contrived an opportunity to say to Daisy

"Miss Edliffson, surely it cannot be considered rude to inquire about a letter written by one's self, so I venture to ask you if that is the one which I wrote to you the night before I started for California?"

"Yes, it is," she answered, blush-Did you purposely refrain from reading it then, so that you might

not be obliged to reply to it?" "No, certainly not! I never saw it until to-day, and I cannot imagine how it crept into poor old Don Quix-

"Your cousin, Miss Hildrup, told me that you had received it, and

"Then, if she knew that it come she knew more than I did!" cried Daisy, indignantly. "She never mentioned it to me, if she knew that it was there.

"Then it is not too late for me to look for an answer! When will I get

The words were simple, but oh, the tonel "Oh, Neptune is the only postman

employed by this line of steamers, so you must wait until he comes around "Neptune is gallant, you know, and if you were to ask him to take a

love letter he would surely make all "Well, when I see him I'll give it to

"So your reply is to be a love letter!" cried he, joyfully, in a very ten-der whisper. "But how much better for you to speak the love than merely to writeit!"

How the good natured doctor did laugh when he was told that he had been the means of mending two broken heart!

"When I have a love letter to send I'll be sure to send it by old Neptune,'

Affected Piety.

Some people can not, or at any rate do not, talk about religious sub jects except with the use of a special phraseology and a peculiar tone of voice, neither of which they ever adopt under other circumstances. We know some who never walk up the aisle to their pews in church except with body bent, head drooped between the shoulders and slightly bowed, and a tetering, tip-toeing sort of gait, as if a natural, upright cargave you in New York for you to riage were an unhallowed thing, hand to her today," suggested Mrs. These peculiarities usually, if not always, are due to a reverent spirit. but are the illustration of a mistake as to what is essential to the exhibition of such a spirit. In most instances they do harm to others, and sometimes they react mischievously upon those in whom they appear. Nothing is more important as an element of influential personal piety than naturalness. When one who has become a professor of religion is perceived by his acquaintances to be stiff and formal in speech, they distrust him a little. Words or phrases in regard to religious subjects which are not natural to him, and which equator—and we are terribly out of evidently do not express any real our course if we've done that!" was feeling or actual experience of his own, feeling or actual experience of his own, inevitably have a parrot-like, singsong effect, which repels because it suggests a doubt of their sincerity. Whatever causes us to seem artificial robs us of power over others. Even if it represent an actual and proper a letter which, as all could see, seemed | frame of mind, and is effected only in appearance, it does no good; indeed, it does positive harm. Naturalness, therefore, straightforward simplicity, must be preserved as much as possible. The danger of losing this lies largely in the fact that young Christians often suppose that they are expected to speak and act like those who are much older, and their elders often treat them as if this were desirable. But it is not. Boys and girls, young men and women, on entering the service of Jesus Christ, are to remain young people, and should not be encouraged to put on the manners of greater age. The chief thing for them to aim at is to be consecrated young people, to think and talk and behave with the same unaffected naturalness as ever, but with a holy purpose and spirit which may sweeten and ennoble their whole conduct and influence. They should not even think much about being natural, for studied naturalness is almost impos sible. We all ought to think littlabout ourselves, and much aboue the Lord Jesus Christ. When our atfor her sake while I was in England. tention is fixed on him we are the

The Iron Duke's Breeches. One morning when the duke of illegible handwriting. With a view J., London." "Oh!" said his grace, wonder?" Then he began at the beginning and read the note carefully through, an expression of bewilderment and perplexity gradually overspreading his face as he did so. The writer craved his grace's pardon for the intrusion and requested as a personal favor that the duke would kindly permit him to come and see famous Waterloo breeches. "Why, the bishop must have gone mad!" exclaimed the duke, as he let his glasses fall. "See my Waterloo breeches! What in the world does the man want to see my breeches for? However, I'm sure I've no objection if he has a curiosity about them. A queer whim, though, for a bishop to take into his head.

Next morning the bishop of London, on sorting his pile of correspondence, found among it a letter bearing a ducal crest. He opened it and read as follows: "My Dear Lord: You are perfectly welcome, as far as I am concerned, to come and inspect the breeches I wore at Waterloo whenever you like. It's true I haven't a notion where they are, but I daresay my valet knows, and I will communi cate with you more definitely in a day ortwo. Yours, very faithfully, Welling-"The poor duke!" ejaculated the bishop of London, in a voice of the profoundest commiseration. " always thought it was foolish of him to enter political life after his military career. He must be helplessly insane. What a dreadful thing for the country, to be sure!" So the worthy bishop, with many sighs, went into his study and wrote a kind letter to the duke of Wellington, remembering that persons who are mentally afflicted must be dealt with tenderly. He thanked his grace for his kindness, but assumed him as delicately as he could that he was not in the least anxious to inspect the historical relics in question, and begged that the duke would give himself no further trouble in the matter as far as he, the bishop of

London, was concerned. It was now the duke's turn to be astonished. "I can't have been dreaming, he said in his perplexity. And yet the bishop's first letter was plain enough." Then he did what he ought to have done in the first instance -he called for his secretary, Col. B., and laid the whole matter before him. "I am afraid it's your grace who has irrepressible smile flitting over his face as he examined the two letters. The first letter is not from the bishop of London at all; nor does the writer say anything about the breeches you wore at Waterloo." "Not from the bishop!" exclaimed the duke. "Yes it is. The signature is as clear 'Yes it is. as can be-'C. J., London.' The initials stand for Charles James." is from Mr. C. J. Loudon, a scientific gentleman who is preparing an important work on forest trees," plied the secretary; "and what he wants to see is your grace's avenue, the Waterloo beeches, as they are called, leading up to your door at Strathfieldsaye. Shall I write and give him your permission?" And thus it fell out that both duke and bishop were ultimately convinced of each other's sanity.

This Happened at Nantucket.

Harper's Magazine. Last fall a man was arrested for petty larceny and sentenced by the judge to three months in jail. A few days after the trial, the judge, accompanied by the sheriff, was on his way to the Boston boat, when they passed a man sawing wood.

The sawyer stopped his work, touched his hat, and said: "Good norning, judge.

The judge looked at him a moment passed on a short distance, and then turned to glance backward with the question: "Why, sheriff, isn't that he man I sentenced to three months in jail?"

Yes," replied the sheriff, hesitatingly; "yes, that's the man; but you -you-see, judge, we-we haven't any one in jail now, and we thought it a useless expense to hire some one to keep the jail for three months just for this one man, so I gave him the key, and told him if he'd sleep there three nights it would be all right."

The Retort Courteous.

was a man of pawky humor and one of the most inveterate "beggars"for charitable purposes who ever got up a subscription list. He called one morning on a wealthy merchant in Aberdeen, whom he had successfully canvassed on more than one occasion and, having recounted the misfortune of a widow whose husband had been killed by a fall from the cliff, asked for a check in her behalf. "Well, doctor,"said the merchant, "I'll give you the sum you ask for on one condition, namely, that you allow me to inscribe on your tombstone the words And it came to pass that the begga "Willingly," replied the doctor, with a laugh; "but you must add the rest of the verse, 'And was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom',"-N. Y. Home Journal. One Night's Adventure.

A brave man and a trio of villains! Wellington was at breakfast, says These are simple but sufficient ele-Cassell's Magazine, he received a ments for a thrilling story, and the country that immense sums were lying hidden at Oak Hill Ranch.

Suspicious characters began to hang about the house, and the bankers, alarmed removed the gold from the building, and hid it in fivegallon caus among the squash vines

in the garden. One day Mr. Bristol's partner went some distance on business, and, contrary to his intentions, did not reach nome that night. It was now the Fourth of July, and every man in the region, except the preacher, had gone to town to "celebrate." There was no one to interfere, if he were robbed, murdered, or attacked by cannon-

"Nothing special occurred," writes, "till near twelve o'clock, and I had lain down in my bunk. Then heard the footsteps of several men approaching. Stopping near the house, they held parley in whispers. Then one of them tried the door, and afterwards the window.

"When he had reported his failure in entering, the others approached with him and knocking loudly upon the door. Instantly I was on my feet, unlocked the door, lifted the great latch, removed the huge crossbar, and swung open the door. There I stood squarely before them, as good a mark as they could have wished. "Before me were three full-whiskered

men, with revolvers, and each holding in his hand a short rifle. The boldness of my opening the door so promptly disconcerted them. " 'Good-evening,' said I. 'Come in,

you are rather late. "Mechanically they obeyed, and when they were inside I shut the door, latched it, and put the great bar across. This bewildered them still more, and they peered back among the bunks, to see if I had not allies lying there.

"I had not a moment to lose. Stepping back into a dark corner where my firearms lay, and cocking my Colt's navy, I ordered them to 'Lie

down! Lie apart!' "The voice with which I spoke had about it a vim and terror which frightened them, and startled me, too! Instantly they were on the floor, and all my fear was gone. I "I am afraid it's your grace who has made the mistake," said Col. B., an and tor four mortal hours I held wedded parishioners to work out one another or move.

"About four o'clock in the morning,

a horseman rode up, and cried Hallo! "When I opened the door, he inquired the way to Canyon Creek, and as I went out to show him the trail, the three men walked past me, and in a single file went straight on, pay-

ing no regard to trails or anything else, save getting out of sight. I stood and looked after them until they disappeared, and then went back into my cabin to offer, from the heart and lips, my thanksgiving to God, for His strange and wonderful protection.'

Spiders' Webs.

I read the statement in this magazine not long ago, about the spiders' webs that cover the fields and meadows on certain mornings in the Summer which was not entirely exact. It is not quite true in the sense in which it was uttered, that these spiders' webs are more abundant on some mornings than on others, and that they presage fair weather. Now the truth is, that during the latter part of Summer these webs are about as abundant at one time as another; but they are much more noticable on some mornings than on others; a heavy dew brings them to view. They are especially conspicuous after a morning of fog, such as often fills our deeper valleys for a few hours when Fall approaches. They then look like little napkins spread all over the meadows. I saw fields last Summer, in August, when one could step from one of these dew-napkins to another for a long distance. They are little nets that catch the fog. Every thread is strung with innumerable fine drops, like tiny beads. After an hour of sunshine, the webs apparently are gone.

Most country people, I find, think they are due to nothing but the moisture; others seems to think that the spiders take them is as morning advances. But they are still there, stretched above the grass at noon and at sunset, as abundant as they are at sunrise; and are then more serviceable to the spiders because less visible. The flies and insects would avoid them in the morning, but at midday they do not detect them as readily. If these webs have any significance as signs of the coming weather, this may be the explanation: A heavy dew occurs under a clear, cool sky, and the night preceeding a day of rain is usually a dewless night. Much dew, then, means fair weather and a copious dew discloses the spiders' webs. It is the dew that is significant, and not the webs .- Joe, Burroughs, in St. Nicholas.

A Wedding Story.

From the London Telegraph.

The homily with which one marriage services closes lacks 'atrinsic letter in an unknown and rather Reverend Sherlock Bristol, in his cheerfulness and its peculiar charms, "Recollections," as miner and actual or suggestive, are seldom apto obtaining a clew to its contents preacher, does not need to fill them preciated by the more youthful class he put on his eyeglasses and scrutin- out with fanciful details. The minis- of brides. Neither, despite its slight ized the signature, which he read "C. | ter and his partner had taken charge | indelicacy, do all bridegrooms relish of the gold belonging to the miners it with a perfect zest, although, in "the bishop of London, to be sure, of the region, with the understand, summarizing the obligations of mat-What does the bishop want of me, I | ing that each depositor should keep | rimony, it puts the case for the husthe matter a profound secret. To band a good deal more advantagetheir dismay, however, they found ously than for the wife. I remember that the report had gone over the an odd incident, illustrative of the objections entertained toward this tiresome exordium by men of the "Time is money" and "Self-help" ways of thinking. It took place at the second wedding of an honorable and gallant friend of mine, whose humor was abundant, but of the variety known as "dry." He was being married, let us say, at South Shields, a good many years ago, and, having been through the ceremony before, as a principal, was sharply on the lookout for the homily, which he regarded in the light of a vexatious superfluity. Accordingly when the curate-a young and somewhat nervous ecclesiastic-had completed the 'buckling-to" part of the service, and was mildly bleating out the exhortation to "hear what Saint Paul saith," Captain P-held up his hand, to the officiant's utter dismay, and interrupted him with the words. "I beg your pardon, sir; but are we legally married?" "Why.yes; certainy you are,"was the hesitating reply, Then, sir," rejoined the captain, "I'll not trouble you to tell us what Saint Paul said. Saint Paul may have been a very good fellow; but he wasn't a South Shields man." This said, he gave his arm to his newlymade wife, and led her away calmly in the direction of the vestry.

The curate, it appears, entertained so high an opinion of the occult virtues of the homily, and of the beneficial effects they could not fail to exercise upon a young married couple, that he took my friend aside a few minutes before the wedding breakfast and timidly asked him whether he would permit him, the said curate, to impart St. Paul's views to him and Mrs. P-orally on their return from the honeymoon trip? To this question, dictated by professional zeal which would have done credit to an Early Christian, my friend returned a polite, but evasive answer. When, however, husband and wife came back to their native town, at the conclusion of what the Germans so happily term "Die Flitterwochen," they were so obviously a happy pair, and the subsequent harmony of their married life proved so delightfully continuous, as far as their many friends and acquaintances knew, that the reverend enthusiast never found occasion to "place" his favorite homwedded parishioners to work out them at bay, not allowing them to their connubial felicity in their own way.

The "Nigger" Who Woke up.

There were a lot of negroes on the boat as passengers, and one afternoon as the boat left Baton Rouge a little crowd of us on the promenade deck got to discussing the colored man. The colonel who was from Wisconsin, claimed that the reason the white man did not get along better with the negro was because he did not study his physiognomy.
"You just set 'em all down as lazy,

trifling, and dishonest," he said to the major, who was from South Carolina, "and the good suffer with the

"Do you believe there is such a thing as an honest nigger in Louisiana?" asked the major. "Of course I do.

"Could you pick one out in that rowd down there?" "Certainly I could."

"Well, go ahead for the cigars. Just pick your man, hand him a piece of money, and tell him to walk to the stern-post and back and return it. "Say, major, ther's thirty negroes

down there I'd trust with my wal-"Very well. We'll go down and

you pick out one." The colonel passed a dozen before he came to a middle-aged man asleep

on a sack of cotton-seed meal. He studied the fellow's face for a long minute and then shook him awake. "What's de row?" demanded the

"I am going to trust you," replied the colonel. "I have been looking you over and I know you to be an ionest man. "I ar' dat."

"Here's a \$20 gold piece. Take it to the stern of the boat, make a wish for one particular thing, and bring it

The negro seized it and started off, and he had no sooner left the stern than we heard a great yelling upstairs, followed by the bells to stop the boat. We ran up, and there was the colonel's honest negro between us and shore, striking out like a whale, and his mouth out of shape with the gold piece stuffed into it. While we were still looking he reached the bank, crawled upon the levee, and then turned and shouted:

"I just dun wished I was ashore, an' yere I am! Good-bye, white

"Still," said the major, as he turnto sit down, "the colonel might try a dozen more and find them all hon-

But the colonel went off to his seat-room in a huff .- Detroit Free