

LOVE'S OFFERING.

If life were a rosebud,
Bedighted with dew,
I would pluck it, my darling,
And give it to you.

If love were a jewel
That money could buy,
I would give thee a casket
No queen could defy.

But love is not purchased,
In whole or in part,
So, I've nothing to give thee
But love, and my heart.

But rosebuds may wither
And jewels are vain,
But on to eternity
Love shall remain.

Philadelphia Bulletin.

A SPECIAL ENVOY.

When Pepworth Tring, the well-known South African millionaire, sent for me, and, after inquiring if I was at liberty for a few weeks, said that he was about to commission me to take a small map to his Johannesburg representatives, I was rather surprised that he should go to the expense of a special messenger when the postal service was available.

"It seems a very simple undertaking," I said.

"But be speedily enlightened me."

"Ah, that's where you are wrong," he replied, giving me a shrewd glance. "In this case the post is not to be trusted, and an unscrupulous enemy will strain every nerve to defeat my intention."

"You anticipate there will be an attempt to rob me during the journey?"

"I am quite sure of it. The matter on the face of it is simple enough. This map" (he held up a small piece of parchment a few square inches in size; it appeared to represent the course of a river, for some red crosses were marked on one portion and some lines of writing ran along the bottom) "has to be given to Mr. Howard of Fox street, Johannesburg. There your mission ends. But whether you will be able to accomplish it is another matter. Gibson, my old partner, is determined to obtain possession of this map by some means. He is rich, unscrupulous and can command the services of men even more unscrupulous than himself. This is the reason I do not trust the post. The corruption prevalent among all Boer officials extends to the postoffice; my letters have been opened. He has creatures there in his employ. You must trust no one and conceal the paper in such a manner that it cannot be found."

"But while on shipboard it would surely be better to intrust it to the captain or purser?"

"That would be risky, and only postpone their attack on you. If you received the map back safely you would without doubt be robbed of it between Cape Town and Johannesburg. No; when the boat reaches Cape Town they must be under the impression that you are not the bearer."

"When am I to leave London?"

"The Roman leaves the docks to-morrow and Plymouth on Saturday. Your berth is booked. Gibson is also a passenger, and several of his following. But, perhaps, I had better explain why this map is so important."

"Gibson, like myself, is an old Kimberley man. We both did very well there, and lately, like me, he has been dealing in Transvaal mining property. We have often gone partners in various undertakings. In the autumn of 1894, being then in Johannesburg—about six months ago—and feeling the want of a holiday, I determined to go on a shooting expedition through the Transvaal toward the sea. Accompanied by two Zulus, I carried out my intention, and after some weeks of traveling we found ourselves in the low country bordering on Swaziland. Here, quite by chance, I made a remarkable discovery. In the dried-up channel of what had been a river I came upon traces of diamonds. The find, to my eyes, was most promising; but before I could pursue my investigations further one of my Zulus, dispatched to get food from a neighboring kraal, came hot-foot with the news that the Swazis were up in arms. Irritated by some act of Boer oppression, they seemed inclined to wreak their vengeance on me, and so we fled forthwith for our very lives. Before leaving I drew up a plan of the place so that it could be found again.

"After various adventures I reached Durban and took ship for England. Meeting Gibson in London I acquainted him in general terms with my discovery, stating that in the course of my journey I had found diamonds. I had intended to take him into partnership in this affair, but the knowledge which I gained immediately afterward that he had swindled me in the matter of some gold mines changed my purpose and I broke with him for good.

"Now the value of my find is problematical. Diamonds have not yet been found in paying quantity in the Transvaal. This place may be a second Kimberley, and shake the De Beers monopoly. It is quite possible. Therefore I want the ground pegged out in the usual way, and to register myself as the owner, but if Gibson could get hold of the map he would forestall me. It is not convenient for me to go myself just now, as I have some important business in hand, so not to delay obtaining the claims. I have ordered Howard to peg them out and register in my name, but he can do nothing until he has the particulars contained in this. Now, do you understand?"

"Yes, but how far is Gibson cognizant of your plans?"

"He has found out that I intend sending the map immediately to Johannesburg. This office is watched. You will be shadowed on leaving, and when they find that you are a passenger on the Roman they will conclude that you are

my messenger. It will be your business to nullify that belief."

"I see."

"You had better pretend to be a new sub-manager sent out by me to represent my interests in Johannesburg. Now, can you, do you think, conceal the map in such a way that these thieves cannot get hold of it?"

"I will do my best," I said at length.

"Trust no one," concluded my employer, giving me money for my journey and the boat ticket. "Rely on yourself alone. Put the map in your breast pocket for the present, but find a sealer hiding place before you go on board. Good-by, and good luck to you."

My preparations were soon made, and the following morning found me on board the Roman. I had reduced my luggage to as small a compass as possible. It consisted of two small portmanteaus, which would go under my bunk, some wraps and a few novels, with "Lock on Gold," the latter obtained from my employer to sustain my character as a mining manager, and with its covers incased in gray calico. I had joined the ship at the docks to avoid the crush at Waterloo and to see the mouth of the Thames. There were two other men in my cabin, for the ship was full, every berth being taken, but they had not yet come on board, so I arranged my belongings at leisure, and then went on deck as we left the dock to smoke and view the river and the miles of wharves and shipping as we slowly and majestically steamed out to sea. The ship was nearly empty and I passed a quiet twenty-four hours anticipating the coming duel which was to take place and wondering if my simple scheme would be successful.

The mailbags and passengers came on board at Plymouth and a scene of animation and confusion followed, but a rough sea and head wind calmed the exuberance of many of the company, and the dinner tables in the saloon that evening showed an abundance of empty seats. Both my cabin mates smoked and I left them white and groaning. Fortunately I was a good sailor, and having enjoyed my dinner, later in the evening found myself in the smoking-room smoking one of "Jim" Gibson's cigars and engaged in a chat with that worthy, who was most friendly and evinced some curiosity about myself.

I told my tale, which he accepted with perhaps suspicious readiness.

"Employed by Tring, are you? Peppery fellow; I know him well. We used to be friends; now he hates me like poison."

He introduced me to his friends, Spellman, Dunbarton and Vandermit, who severally expressed themselves delighted to make my acquaintance.

The first two or three days my adversaries only skirmished, tried to pump me, and dropped broad hints as to the advantages which would follow if I joined them—hints I ignored.

As, however, they felt pretty sure that I was the bearer of the coveted map, my portmanteaus were searched more than once, and my spare clothes when I was absent from my cabin. It was Spellman who was told off for his portion of the quest; finding I was not very cordial toward him he struck up a friendship for one of my cabin mates, which gave him an excuse for entering at all hours. I did not think it advisable to enlighten the latter, as my attitude was to blandly ignore my adversaries' behavior.

Spellman's researches proving of no avail, the great endeavor to discover if I had the paper took place about a week after Madeira was passed. I was playing in a whist tournament and noticed that Dunbarton and Vandermit were playing nap with the two men who shared my cabin. I guessed that Spellman was making a thorough search, and as soon as I was at liberty I hurried there.

It had indeed been thorough. Every article had been taken out of the portmanteaus and examined, and the portmanteaus themselves cut and hacked in search of a secret hiding place. Everything had been scrutinized, even the gray calico cover pulled off "Lock" to make sure that nothing was between it and the binding. Nor was this all, for while I surveyed the wreck I became conscious of an overpowering feeling of drowsiness and knowledge came to me that I had been drugged. Too late I remembered having just accepted a drink from Gibson, but I had only sense enough left to tumble into my bunk before falling into a heavy sleep.

They no doubt searched me to the skin that night, for I slept as the dead, but though I woke next morning with a bad headache I felt well pleased, for no result had rewarded their toil. Of course, I made a fuss as to the conduct of some mysterious thieves, who had not even spared the lining of my boots, and certain inquiries were instituted, which came to nothing. I innocently complained to Gibson as to the bad quality of his whisky, and there apparently the matter ended, for I was molested no more.

Gibson continued good friends with me, and often came and chatted as I languidly studied "Lock on Gold" in my deck chair. As a practical mineralogist he pointed out the best parts to study, and I imbibed much information valuable enough had I designed to turn miner. He was an amusing man, his creed simple enough—"Get money, honestly if you can; but get money." A more efficient auctioneer for selling the numbers of the ship's run in the daily sweeps it would be impossible to find, and I enjoyed the privilege of acting auctioneer's clerk, with "Lock" for a desk on my knee.

It was 4 o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon when we reached Cape Town, and Gibson managed to get away by that evening's train, leaving two of his followers to bring his luggage on next day, when the rest of the passengers bound for the Rand traveled.

The third morning after landing found me in Fox street, Johannesburg, seeking Howard's office. I had just seen the name in the window, and had ascended the steps to the door of the building when a passer-by pulled up on recognizing him. It was Gibson.

"Hullo," he said, "where are you off to now?"

The time for caution was passed, victory was mine, and I could safely enjoy my triumph. I surveyed the baffled financier with a smile of infinite satisfaction and replied:

"I am the bearer of a certain document from Mr. Tring to Mr. Howard."

From the expression on my face and the accent on my words he read the truth and knew that I had baffled him, and his face changed. Words failed him, for he was taken quite by surprise and bewilderment rendered him speechless.

Enjoying his discomfiture a few seconds, I turned and went in, leaving him on the pavement below, the most unhappy man in Johannesburg.

Having entered the outer office and given my name to a clerk, I was speedily shown into Mr. Howard's private room. He greeted me warmly and in the same breath inquired if I had been successful.

I said I had.

"That's good news. I've just got my mail and heard of your coming. Look—you see, the envelope has been tampered with. You are sure Gibson hasn't set eyes on the map?"

"Absolutely," I replied, then gave him a short account of the efforts to secure it.

"Ay, ay, they wouldn't stick at much. You're fortunate to get here with a whole skin. But where is it, after all?"

In answer I produced "Lock on Gold" and, taking my penknife, cut off the gray calico cover, which I had put on again after it had been pulled off. Then, inserting the point into the cover itself, I cut it open. There, snugly concealed, lay the precious map. I had, before leaving London, cut the cover open with a sharp knife, and placing the map in between, glued up the edges with great care. Being unable to absolutely conceal the fact that the cover had been cut, I had put the calico cover over, and when it had been torn off by the eager searcher he had never noticed that the binding itself had been cut.

Thus, safely and securely, the map had traveled, unseen by any eye, untouched by any hand, and now, having placed it in the possession of Mr. Howard, my mission as a special envoy was over.

With the knowledge gained by the map Howard took steps which very shortly made the land where Pepworth Tring found diamonds the property of that worthy, and I knew no more, as nothing further has been heard of the discovery—no company has been publicly formed to work it. But I have a strong suspicion that the find turned up trumps, and that the reason of the silence is that it is too good a thing for the public to be admitted.—Chambers' Journal.

Our Smaller Colleges.

"There are a few striking facts about the small American college," writes Edward W. Bok in the Ladies' Home Journal. "One striking fact is that sixty per cent. of the brainiest Americans who have risen to prominence and success are graduates of colleges whose names are scarcely known outside of their own States. It is a fact, also, that during the past ten years the majority of the new and best methods of learning have emanated from the smaller colleges, and have been adopted later by the larger ones. Because a college happens to be unknown two hundred miles from the place of its location does not always mean that the college is not worthy of wider repute. The fact cannot be disputed that the most direct teaching, and necessarily the teaching most productive of good results, is being done in the smaller American colleges. The names of these colleges may not be familiar to the majority of people, but that makes them none the less worthy places of learning. The larger colleges are unquestionably good. But there are smaller colleges just as good, and, in some respects, better. Some of the finest educators we have are attached to the faculties of the smaller institutions of learning. Young girls or young men who are being educated at one of the smaller colleges need never feel that the fact of the college being a small one places them at a disadvantage in comparison with the friend or companion who has been sent to a larger and better-known college. It is not the college; it is the student."

Unworthy Books.

A healthy body undoubtedly conduces to a healthy condition of the mind, but it does not produce intellectual activity. The only way to accomplish intellectual results is to work the mind. Hard work of any kind is never easy—it may be satisfying and exhilarating, but not easy. When you really work your brain you know it; even to concentrate your attention to begin a task is a serious effort. Many wise workers say that when you have learned the power of concentration you have solved the problem of effective intellectual work. That is the first stumbling-block that the person who does not habitually read books, even for recreation, encounters. It is so difficult to pin your attention to the printed page, for you think of things nearer at hand with which you are familiar. But a sensational novel captures the uneasy attention sooner than more thoughtful books; therefore, people of untrained minds are the greatest devourers of unworthy books.—Ladies' Home Journal.

Girls should disabuse their minds of the idea that their husbands will lick any man who speaks disagreeably to them.



The Depth of Sun-Spots.

Within a few years the question has been raised whether sun-spots are really depressions, or holes, in the sun's surface, as they have generally been considered to be by astronomers. Prof. Ricco of Catania concludes, as the result of a long series of observations, not only that the spots are cavities in the sun, but that their depth can be approximately measured. He states that the average depth of twenty-three sun-spots measured by him was about 640 miles!

America's Many Languages.

Dr. D. G. Brinton, the archaeologist, said in a recent lecture that in North and South America no less than 120 or 130 absolutely distinct languages exist. As the growth of language is very slow, he thinks the fact of the existence of so great a variety of speech on the western continent proves that the native-red men have inhabited them for many thousands of years. Another proof of the antiquity of the American Indians, according to Doctor Brinton, is the fact that they represent a distinct human type, and the formation of such a type requires thousands of years.

The Diamond Beetle.

One of the most beautiful of insects is the "diamond beetle" of Brazil. According to the recent investigations of Doctor Garlazzo, the sparkling colors of this beetle, which blazes with extraordinary brilliancy in the sunshine, originate in an entirely different way from the lues of butterflies. The scales of the diamond beetle appear to consist of two layers, separated by an exceedingly thin interspace, and the light falling upon them experiences the effect of interference, so that the resulting colors correspond with those of thin plates, or of the soap bubble.

Murderous Baboons.

A species of baboon inhabiting the colony of the Cape of Good Hope has become a pest to the farmers by destroying their lambs. The baboons haunt the clumps of cactus scattered through the fields, and exhibit much cunning in keeping out of the reach of their human enemies. It is asserted that they have taken note of the fact that women do not carry firearms, and therefore need not be feared. But when a man appears the baboons instantly take to their heels. On this account the farmers have lately devised the plan of dressing in women's apparel when they set out to shoot baboons.

An Appeal for the Elephant.

Monsieur Foa, a French explorer of Africa, has recently made a strong appeal for the protection of the elephants remaining on that continent. He declares that the great beasts should be preserved not merely as curiosities but as animals which might become very useful under domestication. Formerly, as he points out, elephants were domesticated in Africa, and he believes the same thing could be done again today, and that it would well pay to do it. But unless protected against slaughter the elephant will have disappeared from Africa before civilization has reached the heart of the dark continent.

Goldfish-Farming.

The raising of goldfish is a special industry, and one of the largest "goldfish farms" is at Spring Lake, Indiana. When young the goldfish is said to resemble in color and general appearance an ordinary minnow. After a while they turn dark, becoming occasionally almost black. Then a reddish hue begins to appear, the true golden color being developed at the average age of one year or less. A few individuals, however, never change their original silver color, and sometimes the red and gold hues make their appearance only in patches. Not infrequently goldfish develop two or more tails.

Pine-Bark Boats.

Everybody is familiar with the birch-bark boats, or canoes, of the American Indians, but the fact is not so well known that some of the aboriginal inhabitants of the western shore of this continent were accustomed to make boats of pine bark. A model of one of these in the Smithsonian museum served recently as a text for a talk by Prof. Otis T. Mason on the evolution of boats. The boat in question was, he said, an exact representation of those in use along certain parts of the Columbia river. It is made of the whole skin of a pine tree, which is turned inside out, the ends being cut obliquely and drawn together in such a manner that the vessel has a pointed ram under water at each end. Directly across the Pacific ocean from the Columbia is the River Amur in Asia. Prof. Mason thinks the fact that similar boats are found on the Amur may have a bearing on the problem of former emigration from Asia to North America.

A Substitute for Amputation.

A new and simple mode of treatment has been introduced in France," says the Medical Times, "by which it is claimed a large proportion of injured limbs now usually amputated can be saved. The method, which is due to Dr. Reclus, was recently described before the French Congress of Surgery, and is thus explained:

"Whatever the extent or gravity of the lesions, he never under any circumstances amputates the injured limb, but merely wraps it in antiseptic substances by a veritable embalming process, leaving nature to separate the dead from the living tissues. This method of treatment possesses the double advantage of being much less fatal than surgical exeresis, and of preserving for the use of the patient, if not the entire limb, at any rate a much larger part than would be left by amputation. "He advocates this very conservative treatment on account of the excellent effects of hot water, which he uses freely. After the skin has been shaved and cleansed from all fatty substances by ether, etc., in the usual way a jet of hot water 60 to 62 degrees C. (140 to 144 degrees), but not higher, is made to irrigate all the injured surfaces and to penetrate into all the hollows and under the detached parts of the wound without exception. This is the only way of removing all clots and to wash away all foreign bodies, together with the micro-organisms they may contain. The advantages of hot water at this high temperature are three-fold: First, hot water at this temperature is antiseptic, heat greatly increases the potency of antiseptic substances; second, it is hemostatic (blood-stanching); third, it helps to compensate for the loss of heat resulting from the bleeding, and especially from the traumatic shock. After the "embalming" process, and the dead tissue has been separated from the living, the surgeon has nothing to do except to divide the bone at a suitable spot. According to Reclus the results attained are remarkable."

FOLLOW IN EACH OTHER'S WAKE.

Plan to Save the Motive Power of Steamers.

It is a wise steamer master who knows how to handle his boat so that she will get the benefit of the power of a steamer in front of her. In old-time races this was a favorite trick, and that it has not been forgotten even in this late day was shown recently. The boat ahead was the larger and faster in deep water. She was going at the usual rate of speed. Another steamer of light draft, smaller and perhaps a trifle faster in shallow water, bound the same way, came up on the port quarter of the other just enough out of the way to avoid the current from the wheel of the other, but still close enough to get the benefit of the suction caused by her displacement as she moved through the water. Finally, the run being all the time made in river water, the stern steamer gave a spurt and slowly passed the other and beat her a short distance to the dock.

The danger of this close proximity of the two is that should the boat ahead part her wheel chains, take a sheer to port and drift across the bow of the other, the great speed of the stern steamer would have sent her crashing through the other with great loss of life and property. Still another objection to speeding in competition is the liability of the engineer, in his excitement, to forget all thoughts of care of his boilers, and to shove in coal until the smokestack is red hot from base to top. By intensely heating, the boilers and other parts of the plant are weakened and to that degree made unsafe for further use.—Detroit Free Press.

The Way He Proved It.

A small boy cyclist had some fun with a park official one evening recently. He was riding without a light and was stopped by an officer, who asked him in gruff tones where his light was, says the New York Commercial Advertiser.

"Why, it's here," exclaimed the rider, in surprise.

"Yes, but it's out," solemnly asserted the patrolman.

"Well, it was lighted at that last turn."

"Sunny, it's cold; couldn't have been lighted this evening," triumphantly announced the officer.

"Huh! That thin metal cools in a minute. I'll light that lamp and wait until it gets red hot, put it out, then ride to the next corner and back, and when I return it'll be cold."

"All right, try it," assented the acute policeman.

The boy lighted the lantern, waited until it grew red hot, turned it out and started, and that kid is going yet, for he rode right on, and the wise officer retired to think it over and incidentally to kick himself.

An Eagle with a History.

In no section of New York State are eagles so numerous as among the highlands along the Hudson River. Dozens of them can be seen daily circling far up in the air or swooping down after their prey. Probably the pioneer of them all, certainly the most interesting, is one which was wounded over 100 years ago. His home is on Turk's Head, above Garrison's. His habit of flying sideways and the peculiar droop of his right wing makes him an easily recognized object. This droop was caused by the shot of a British soldier, who, while passing up the Hudson on a man-of-war, was ordered by his captain to shoot the eagle as it soared quite a distance aloft. The soldier's marksmanship was good, but it cost him his life. A band of patriots, hidden in the rocks, saw the deed, and, as the ship lay well toward the shore, their volley killed the sharpshooter. The wounded eagle was cared for by the patriots and the bird still flies over Turk's Head.

A Dickens Memento.

Charles Dickens' "Guild of Literature and Art," started enthusiastically in 1851 to assist and provide for authors and artists in difficulties, has just been put an end to by a private act of Parliament. Whatever property is left is transferred to the Royal Literary Fund.

No man's trouble is as great as his signa.

EDUCATIONAL COLUMN

NOTES ABOUT SCHOOLS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT.

Thirty Per Cent. of School Children in the United States Are Near Sighted—A Free Public School System Is Our Noblest Institution.

The Age of Spectacles.

We commonly call the period we live in the "age of steam" or the "age of electricity," but it would perhaps be more accurate to call it "the age of spectacles." Look where we will, in the schools, the churches, the shops, the courts, the marts of business or the resorts of pleasure, we find a large proportion of the people using spectacles in some form or other. In the United States at least 30 per cent of the school children are myopic, or near-sighted, and this is only one of the defects from which eyesight suffers. As people grow up and grow older the vision is affected in other ways, so that it is not unreasonable to say that the vast majority of the people about us wear or ought to wear spectacles.

In the Review of Reviews Dr. Allport of Minnesota discusses the subject of the defective eyesight of American children. He shows that human eyesight is degenerating and that this degeneracy has become hereditary. The cause of the degeneration is the excessive strain upon the eye produced by intellectual pursuits. In other words, "the intellectual progress and the ocular degeneration of the human race are inseparable companions."

This relationship is proved by the fact that among savage races, or those which have made little or no intellectual progress, the eyes are normal and the percentage of defective sight very small. Among Indian children only 2 per cent are affected by myopia, and among negroes only 2 1/2 per cent. Of 2,600 Mexican children only 8 were near-sighted, 60 far-sighted and 10 astigmatic. In the United States 30 per cent of the school children have defective eyes, while in Germany, where all sorts of intellectual pursuits abound and the typography of books is of the most execrable description, 50 per cent of the children are myopic.

Dr. Allport does not argue from these statistics that we must abandon study and revert to a state of nature. Nor does he conclude that we will necessarily lose our eyesight altogether and become permanently blind, but he urges the absolute necessity of watchfulness over and care of the eyes of the children. School principals particularly should be trained in the detection of the eye disorders and boards of education should employ skillful oculists to examine the school children and also to instruct the teachers.

This system has been introduced in Minneapolis with the most favorable results. Last year 23,049 pupils in the public schools were examined and 7,289, or about 31 per cent, were found defective. The percentage of defectives in the different school buildings also varied greatly, ranging from 10.49 per cent, the maximum number being discovered in a building of notoriously poor and unhygienic character. This shows the necessity of healthful and properly constructed school buildings, where the light may be unobstructed.

Defective eyes cannot in all cases be cured, but they can be so alleviated by the use of glasses that no strain is brought upon them and the defects are not increased. In the case of children this practically saves the eyes.

The Army of School Children.

Statistics that cover a country as large as the United States are usually of such great magnitude and so complicated that they are not easily comprehended, but the figures presented to the Commissioner of Education in his report recently published tell their story plainly and eloquently.

The report covers the year ending July 1, and shows a total enrollment during that year in the schools and colleges, both public and private, of 15,907,197 pupils, an increase of 308,975. Of this number 14,465,371 attended public institutions. Estimating the entire population of the country at about 70,000,000, it will be seen that one out of every five persons attends the public schools. If the adult population, comprising those who have passed the school age, was deducted from the total population of the country the proportion of those attending school would of course largely increase. But without making this calculation the proportion as it stands is creditable.

Of all the free institutions of the land the public school system is probably the noblest. Its successful institution was the guarantee that this nation was not born to die. Its existence now is the bulwark against both internal and external attacks. Other nations believe an army of fighters is better than an army of school children. Their money goes for the training and maintenance of a host of fighters. The United States believes a mind taught to think is better than a body taught to fight. Its money goes for the preservation of the public school system. The sudden rise of this country among the nations of the world and its prosperity to-day seem to indicate that the latter is the best policy.—Philadelphia Times.

Domino Combinations.

One of the most wonderful examples in mathematics is that relating to combinations in dominoes. It is calculated that two persons may play the game ten hours a day, making four moves a minute, and that they could continue so moving for 118,000,000 years without exhausting all the combinations of the game, which are 248,528,211,840.

The leaf of the cocoon tree is nearly thirty feet long. A single leaf of the parasol magnolia of Ceylon affords shade for fifteen or twenty persons.