

THE VALENTINE DEMOCRAT

L. M. RICE, Publisher.

VALENTINE, - NEBRASKA.

No woman has ever really thought the photographer succeeded in doing her justice.

Gustave Dore's "Hell" is to be staged. This seems to be getting pretty low down.

Marion Crawford has decided to dramatize one of his novels. If it takes well, he will arrange to dramatize the other 94,728.

Mary MacLane received 100 offers of marriage while she was in the East. No wonder Mary thinks the East is "a crazy old place."

Some ministers are eliminating the word "obey" from the marriage ceremony. It's of no consequence, since the world is meaningless, anyway.

The strike has not been without its benefits. It has led to a more general recognition of the fact that "anthracite" is a noun and means "hard coal."

While there is nothing so exciting as a church fight, it is generally agreed that it is much better to pray for our brother than to bat him with a verbal ax.

The United States and Great Britain landed marines in Samoa and ended a revolution. The international arbitrator has decided against them. Blessed be the peacemakers!

Speaking of the surgical operation of gastrectomy, or cutting out the stomach, a writer in the *Lancet* says he "does not look upon the operation as a favorite one." Still he must acknowledge that it is very interesting.

A man who attempted to present a paper to the sultan of Turkey was swooped down upon by bashi-bazouks and cast into prison. He was released after when it was discovered that the document was not a bill, but a petition for a government job.

We are feeling much relieved since Herr von Brand, burgomaster of Bamberg, Bavaria, has declared that the felling of the United States arms over the American consulate was the "wanton act of an individual." We therefore ignore the act, which were impossible if it had been an official insult.

"Our Lady of the Beeches" is the title of a novel that is just out. If for "Beeches" one could read "Breeches" the romance would have a strong interest for various and diverse husbands who are subdued and delectatory when the partners of their joys and sorrows are in the vicinity.

H. N. Pillsbury, the champion American chess-player, has announced that he will play no more championship matches, but will devote himself to the practice of the law. The temptation to make a profession of a sport or a game in which one is expert is strong upon many young men, but most of those who yield to it soon become unutilized for anything else. Mr. Pillsbury sets a good example.

American women seem to be holding their own in diplomacy as well as elsewhere. The new British Ambassador to the United States married an American; the wife of the new French Ambassador is also an American, and the Belgian minister married his wife on this side of the ocean. But proof that the women of this country can successfully meet the competition of the world was not needed. Every American type of beauty is unsurpassed, and every American lover would challenge the world to produce the equal of the girl he likes best.

Why should old age be so dreaded? One would think, by the way some people trick themselves out and try to avoid showing the marks of time, that old age was a crime. Yet old age may be one of the most beautiful times of life. Over and over again we hear it remarked how good looking Mrs. So-and-So has become, and that her white hair has softened her face and given her a beauty she never had before. That her wrinkles, too, seem to add to her charms, for they are amiable wrinkles, and seem to be a sort of reflection of bygone smiles and kindly, gentle impulses and thoughts. Old age is really never hideous unless it is vicious; so why so many people should desire to hide it is a mystery to many. Every right-thinking person respects old age, and sees nothing repulsive or ludicrous in it unless it masquerades as youth.

In spite of the continued assertion that enthusiasm for historical fiction is on the wane the number of new publications continues about the same, and reports of others on the way still come in. At the meetings of the New England History Teachers' Association in Boston Professor Richard Burton said an intelligent word to say on the subject of historical novels. He believes an immense interest has been aroused in the past generally, but especially in our own national and colonial past. He thinks historical fiction aids immensely the study of history, especially with the young, and that itsogue will continue. At the same time he says publishers are very careful at present about accepting this kind of fiction unless written in the best style. Professor Burton is in a position well fitted to speak on the question. His

close connection with a leading publishing house enables him to look at the question from a commercial point of view, while his former position as instructor in a large university has given him experience enabling him to judge of the value of historical fiction upon the minds of the young. Whether the historical novel is cause or effect of the present interest in the past or whether each is cause and each is effect is hard to say. One thing, however, is certain—the amount of poor stuff that has passed current in the guise of history has had its day. The public is already discerning between good and poor work in this line, and only the fittest is to have a chance to exist.

The question what we shall eat continues to be an absorbing one to the human race. There are moments in the life of many a woman when the world seems to her nothing but a vast market, from which she must snatch such food as she may, and spend her whole force in preparing it, only to see it disappear from her tired hands before the greedy demands of appetite. Against the depression of this mood there are a few remedies. One is found in the determination of the housewife that in her home the food shall be so cooked and served as to remove the meal as far as possible from the mere process of feeding, and allay it with the satisfaction of those appetites that we call the higher. The meal swallowed hastily in a hot, untidy room, from a table heaped rather than spread, is a degradation alike to cook and to eater. On the other hand, a meal served with accessories so gorgeous as to dazzle all the senses is no less vulgar. A meal, be it humble or rich, set forth with the dignity and seamliness which come from clean linen, well-ordered dishes, and plenty without surfeit, becomes a function as worthy of a high spirit as the reading of a good book or the hearing of music. There are two kinds of good cooking. One of them is represented by the work of the accomplished French chef. His sauces are "creations," and his omelette is worth the price of a week's food for a family. The other kind is as simple as it is inexpensive. A dish of green peas prepared by a New England farmer's wife; a bowl of "hasty pudding" eaten in the kitchen where it was cooked; a plate of macaroni from the hand of an Italian peasant woman—these may be truly triumphs in the art of cookery. The conclusion of the whole matter—healthful for the tired housekeeper and for the overfed millionaire—is that food is a means to life, not life itself; and that whoever overvalues or undervalues it fails to live fully and richly.

Did Pelee Rob Oil Wells?
Speaking of the decrease or almost total disappearance of the gas pressure which was so long one of the great peculiarities of the Beaumont field, there is a novel theory advanced. Some men who study such things say that just about the time of the eruption of Mont Pelee and the destruction of St. Pierre the gas pressure began to lessen and in a short while almost entirely disappeared. The theory is that the gas which was under the ground at Beaumont extended laterally under the earth all the way down through the Caribbean Sea and when it accumulated in large quantities under Mont Pelee the explosion came and the supply was exhausted there. In support of this wonderful theory attention is called to the fact that the famous oil pool in the Gulf of Mexico, south of Beaumont many miles, and which has been the wonder of mariners for years and years, is on a direct line between Beaumont and Mont Pelee. So the people who deal in syndicates and monolines and anticlines, says the *New Orleans Picayune*, find comfort in believing that the eruption of the volcano is what has caused all the damage at Beaumont.

The Genuine Article.
A certain lady of title recovered from a rather severe illness. An adept with the brush, and a regular exhibitor of water colors in connection with the local art gallery, it was supposed she had overworked herself. When the doctor was called in an old nurse, who had been in the family many years, bored the medical man with her opinions as to the cause of the attack.

"It's them long hours an' hard work of the paintin' what's done it," she remarked directly she saw him. The doctor was preoccupied and scarcely heard the remark.
"Has her ladyship exhibited any traces of hysteria?" he suddenly demanded, turning to the talkative nurse.
"Oh, no, sir," was the unexpected reply; "they was water colors, all on 'em—real beauties, too!" — *Detroit News-Tribune.*

Bridget as a Mrs. Malaprop.
Bridget, who came to this country last year, has a limited vocabulary, and while she is learning fast, some of the words and expressions that she has acquired do not always fit, her ear not having been accurate in getting the right term. Thus the other day she said to her mistress:
"Mam, shall I fix that Kansas back duck for dinner?"
Again, Bridget was telling a tale of a missing friend in this city, when she exclaimed:
"Do you know I believe when Katie turns up she'll be found in the Potash Field!"

While at work on Friday a tremendous blast near by in the subway rattled the dishes in the kitchen and the girl cried out:
"There goes that rapid transom again."

THERE SHONE A STAR.



It stars by the million-fold above! In the wide blue spaces we watch and love; Stars like grains of sand by the sea. Though with whirling clusters of worlds they be, But once through the gates of heaven ajar, When a Child was born, there shone a Star.

Over desert places its golden light; Flamed like a torch the living night; Bowing low to the wonderful East, In stately procession, king and priest, And a marvelous moving caravan Sought for the gift that had guarded a man.

When, banners of glory waving far, Once, for his people, God kindled a Star. The Emperor sat in his purple robe; Holding the scepter that swayed the globe; Bent the knee to the laboring oar— Little to him was a groan the more; Wreathed with laurel the conqueror strode, Trampling hoar on his haughty road; The cry of the anguished quivered far, And lo! in the darkness there shone a Star.

Out from a cave in the riven rock A candle flickered; who will may mock; That thread of flame was the answer sent From Earth to the Star in the firmament.

On the silence trembled a Babe's first breath, Child to be Lord of Life and Death; Safe as a bird in the tiny nest, In the mother's arms, on the mother's side, While the loving kine stood wondering near, And the angels sang on the midnight air, And the midnight waned, and the dawn's Sweet in where brightly there shone a Star. —Margaret E. Sangster, in *Woman's Home Companion.*

WON HIS CHILDREN'S LOVE

WRINKLES of care furrowed the forehead of John Howard, wholesale leather merchant of New York, as he sat in the library of his home, and his hair was tossed into disorder by the combing of his nervous fingers. His dull eyes gazed into the red depths of a great fire, but read no crimson pictures there.

"This was the man the world had called 'complacent John Howard.' Eight years before, when he married, people expected a change in his habits, but they were disappointed. He had merely added another part to his machinery. He had carefully chosen the kind of woman who would helplessly become a part of a machine.

When children came they, too, were compelled to become parts of the orderly, silent machine controlled by John Howard. Meek little mites they were. No one suspected that they were children.

There were three of them: Mary, a girl of seven; Anna, a girl of five, and John, a boy of four. By direction of John Howard, good, plain names were given to them, names that would wear. Meek Mrs. Howard would have chosen differently, but she was not consulted.

When the children came, John Howard laid down the rules for their conduct and keeping; and never afterward bothered himself about them. If he saw them once a day it was by accident. One of his rules, conditions, was that he was never to hear them, save when he wished. As a result John Howard was a father without children—and the children had a living father, but were fatherless.

All this would have continued but for one inevitable little incident in life called "death"—for death, after all, is a part of life, and dying very often the main part of living. The entrance of Mrs. Howard into the life of her husband had made no perceptible change in it. Her death had thrown every part of it out of gear. There were three waifs in his house who came at his bidding and looked at him in a frightened sort of way.

"How was he to win the love of his children?" How John Howard longed to enter that play room! But he never dared. He was afraid his entrance would drive them forth, and he realized that this room was their own little world. Sometimes, in agony, he listened at the door, and learned how different they were from other children.

How he longed for them to ask him for something! What joy he would take in granting them any wish! But they had been brought up to ask for nothing, to expect nothing, save on one day in the year. That day was Christmas. On that day they could expect wonderful new presents, they knew, from a mysterious person called Santa Claus. The late Mrs. Howard had cultivated this one dear delusion in them, and so perfectly that they never dreamed that either she or their father had anything to do with the annual midnight visit of the good little fat man. Of him they talked months before he came and months after he left. And with the presents he left they played from one Christmas until the next, patiently waiting for the new ones and carefully guarding the old.

Discouraged at his failure to win even the confidence of his children, John Howard hired that hopeless substitute for a mother, a nurse, to take care of them. With business acumen and lack of ordinary common sense he secured a grim New England school teacher for this delicate position; and in less than a week she succeeded, by perseverance and industry, in casting more of a shadow over the lives of the three waifs than ever John Howard had. But the waifs had been taught not to complain, and John Howard knew nothing about it.

One lingering hope remained in his breast. Could he make the coming Christmas so happy for his children that he could win their love? He resolved that he would take charge of the holiday himself, and the preparations he made for it were extravagant. The presents purchased for all the preceding Christmas celebrations at his house were as nothing compared to the array that stood before him on the floor, on tables and on chairs, this Christmas eve when he sat so broken in heart before his grate fire. "Something had happened." A mistake had been made. The New England school

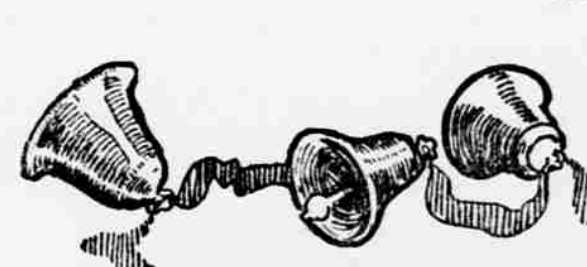
teacher, in the interests of white-winged truth, had told his children there was no Santa Claus. This he had learned while listening at the door of their playroom that afternoon. And he, who had so carefully rehearsed the part of Santa Claus for the performance that night, felt that it would be a hollow mockery, now that they knew, as we all do some day, too much.

With a promptness and decision that had characterized him always in business, John Howard peremptorily dismissed the New England school teacher, giving her a month's salary and no explanation for his strange conduct. The children should have the hollow mockery of Christmas at any rate. But the essence of it was gone. He had heard his children declare, between sobs, that they would never hang up their stockings again, and after all it is the stocking and not the tree that is the essence of Christmas—and the mystery of mysteries thereof is the wonderful fact that Santa Claus can spend so much time and take so much pains in filling the stockings.

But John Howard was human. He himself had looked forward to this Christmas with greater expectations than had any of his children. He rose from bed and put on his dressing gown and slippers. Then, with a little night lamp in his hand turned very low, he went stealthily into the bedroom where his children slept. Their clothes were laid neatly on three chairs, and from each chair he took a stocking and pinned it where the sleeping children had been accustomed to pin them in previous years.

After this he made frequent trips to the library and brought up load after load of toys, candies and trinkets. And then he began to fill the stockings. It was slow work. He had seen his wife do it once. He had watched her then in a mechanical sort of way. It was on the preceding Christmas eve. She was ill and nervous and afraid to go about the house alone. In a grumbling, protesting way he had accompanied her.

CHANGING THE SCORE.



Like some prayer triumphant falling On the ear, The past is past forever, In this hour its bonds we sever, And its clouds shall darken never Our New Year.

List, the New Year bells are swaying High and low, Pulsing, peeping, praising, praying, As they go, Now may every sin be shriven, And our hearts from sorrow riven, All forgiving and forgiven Here below. —Minneapolis Housekeeper.

Making Preparations.
"I want to get a turkey, and a bottle of paregoric, and some mince meat, and some peppin pills, and some cranberries, and some furniture polish, and a quart of oysters, and a package of court plaster, and some sweet potatoes, and a fire insurance policy."

Here the market man smiled merrily and inquired:
"Going to eat all that?"
"No," responded the customer, "but the family Christmas dinner occurs at my house this year." —Baltimore American.

The Annual Greeting.
"A Happy New Year to you!" This is the greeting which is heard on every side as we cross the threshold of the new year. It has become a custom to repeat it. In many cases it has little meaning, and is nothing more than an empty compliment or an idle wish. How much do you mean

SANTA CLAUS' BIG JOB.



Said Santa Claus on Christmas eve, in jolly, good, fat glee, "To judge by all these stockings here, they've turned the hose on me."

How glad he was now that he had! He dropped a moderately heavy object into the toe of each stocking to hold it down—then an orange to make it capacious. After this he slipped in a present for the sake of a surprise, and on top of the present he put a layer of candy. He wondered that the "tick-tick-tick" of the candies as they dropped did not awaken the sleeping children.

He was slow at the work. It was early down when he finished. He blew out the little night lamp and sank into a chair, burying his face in his hands, and his heart in memories. Suddenly he looked up and saw his three children standing about him in the arc of a circle.
"It's papa," cried his eldest girl, rushing into his arms. "Papa is Santa Claus. It is papa who has been so good to us and we haven't loved him."
"It's papa," echoed the younger daughter.

"Papa—Santy Clause," said the boy.
And they, too, sidled up to him and clung to him, their little eyes beaming with love.
And then John Howard knew that his stocking had been filled, also—with the love of his children.—*Criterion.*

CHRISTMAS FEASTING.

During the middle ages the whole Christmas season was given up to revels and jollity, in which eating and drinking had a prominent part. The Saxon instinct of our English ancestors led them to make of every holiday an occasion for feasting. Plenty to eat and to drink was their idea of a festival, no matter how sacred might be its associations. On Christmas they not only lined their stomachs with good capon, as did Shakespeare's justice, but stuffed themselves with all sorts of rich, nourishing food and strongly compounded puddings and pies.

ORIGIN OF MINCE PIE.

English plum pudding and mince pies both owe their origin, or are supposed to, to an occurrence attendant upon the birth of Christ. The highly seasoned ingredients refer to the offering of spices, frankincense and myrrh by the wise men of the East to the Christ Child.—*New York World.*

GIVING HIM A CHANCE.

"Harriet, you ought to give me my choice of a Christmas present once in a while."
"Well, Harry, I'm willing; do you want a lamp shade, a sofa pillow or new lace curtains?"

SHATTERED HER IDEALS.

Miss Askit—Why is Miss Wunder so pessimistic about Christmas?
Miss Tellit—She hung up a \$12 pair of silk hose last year, and some one stole them.

WHAT YOU WOULD NOT WISH DONE TO YOURSELF DO NOT UNTO OTHERS.—CHINESE.

THE NEW YEAR.

List, the New Year bells are ringing To and fro, Messages of comfort bringing Clear and low, Over mead and plain and valley, Where the forest giants rally, Up through park and street and alley Paeans flow.

A REAL SAINT.

Old Santy is no phantom grim—The cheer he brings cures many ills; Thro' dreamland's door we follow him, And lose the thought of New Year's bills.

