THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELER

Items Particularly Interesting Regarding the Road.

A LIVELY COMMUNICATION.

Mysterious Disappearance of a Well Known Traveling Man—Suicide—Accident—Terse and Jesty—Personal.

The Drummer and His Grip.

Savannah News.

Though the rain and sleet are falling,
And the roads are "awful muddy,"
Though all men "hard times" are bawling,
Though a fellow's nose gets ruddy,
Though the rivers may be frozen,
And the frost may bite and nip,
They can never stop the advent
Of the drummer and his grip.

Though the trains may all be smashing,
Though the horses all go lame,
The drummer, like the bedbug,
Will get there just the same.
And when his time is over,
Will come smiling from his trip,
For he always makes "connection,"
Does the drummer with his grip.

Ah, he teaches us a lesson,
With his energy and grit,
Things that "paralyze" most people
Don't astonish him a bit.
And he's ever bright and cheerful,
And a smile is on his lip,
He's a daisy from away back,
Is the drummer with his grip.

Give him a kind word always,
He'll give you back the same:
For the doings of some "black sheep"
Don't give the whole tribe blame.
For down, clear down to nades,
Some so-called "good men" slip,
While along the road to heaven
Goes the drummer with his grip.

So Fascinating.

She has some lace about her throat,
About her wrists some lace I see;
Upon her pretty hat I note
A bit of lace—and now I see,
For when she slightly lifts her skirt
In crossing some too sloppy street,
There is a flash, an instant's flirt,
Of lace that's somewhere near her feet.

It somehow fits her, all this lace,
It's delicate and picturesque;
It fits her softness and her grace—
Here I sit mooning at my desk
About her and the lace! Egad!
Some other train of thought I'll try;
Too real a dream of lace I've had.
She's my wife—and lace comes high!

JOE BUSH AGAIN.

A Prominent Traveling Man Goes at Him in Great Shape.

BLACK HILLS, S. D., March 22.—To the Editor of THE BEE: "Is there any danger of our being robbed by highwaymen on this road?" "No, sir; the whilom road agent and his various pals have gone into the hotel, livery, barber shop and telephone business, and the roads are quite safe." These remarks I overheard five or six years ago while riding from "Scoop" to Deadwood in one of old man Smith's hacks. The question was propound by a genuine specimen of the genus tenderfoot (the down east brand) evidently on his first trip to the hills, and the Pickwickian reply had come promptly from the lips of a grizzled, gruff Omaha grocery drummer, having the unmistakable appearance of the old timer. And of this short conversation I was most vividly reminded while perusing the commercial travelers' columns of your last two Monday editions. The communication of the furniture drummer and the reply thereto by Joe Bush of Buffalo Gap, anent the 50 cents charge for telephoning the enormous distance of an entire block, succeeded in jogging my recollection thereof. Now, Mr. Editor, both parties are strangers to me and the furniture man, belonging to the drummer brigade, is per se expected to hold his own, while Joe Bush's letter shows him to be fully able to take care of himself. But even the worm will turn when trodden on, and since I have myself time and again been mulcted 50 cents for a short distance telephone message, the spirit moves me to do a little kicking about this and several other nuisances and schemes of petty robbery practiced systematically on us poor drummers. I know only too well that my kicking will do no good whatsoever for we are and always will be singled out as the legal, lawful prey of the hotelmen, (friends J. R. B. and J. G. K., this is not meant for you) liverymen and other benevolent institutions too numerous to mention. But an indulgence once in a while in sound vigorous "beefing" does the heart good and relieves pentup nature. It seems Joe Bush goes rather too far in his remarks. Could he not have shown sufficient courtesy to a gentleman who had called upon him on business to have made the telephone communication a matter of his own and save the 50 cents charges? Most certainly the drummer's firm would do so were Joe Bush to visit them, and so would any wholesale house in Omaha or elsewhere. But perhaps Joe Bush thinks with a great many others that it is the proper caper to "work a sucker for all you can while you have him." Often and often have I heard this phrase, often and often has its practical illustration been attempted upon me. Those of our fraternity who use the telephone line frequently no doubt deem it an outrage to pay 50 cents for each message, often sent only a distance of three or four blocks, and in fact there are no tenable grounds on which the telephone company can base such an outrageous charge. However, this telephone company is not the only institution keeping up totally unwarranted ante-bellum charges while prices of nearly all of life's commodities have fallen to a normal and hard times basis in the "hills." What justification is there in charging $6 for a team and buggy to go a distance of thirteen miles, starting after breakfast and returning before supper? Or whereby is a combination of liverymen justified in uniformly demanding $25 besides feed and stabling for the team, for a fifty mile trip, occupying two days, from three of us? (One of my experience last summer.) Are hay, corn and oats still hauled three or four hundred miles by wagon, at enormous expenses, or do not the "hills" produce them? What right and reason is there in the barbers holding us up to the tune of 50 cents for a hair cut and 25 cents for each shave in a country which sells beer for 5 cents a glass? Is the freight on the soap used by them so enormously high that such charges are warranted? I know they will say: „Everybody is charged these figures." But to a great extent this is not so, for the native gets a reduction in almost every case and can and does buy commutation tickets from the barbers at muchly reduced rates. Besides, we drummers pay spot cash, no collectors are required to run after us on the 1st of each month, and that fact alone should procure us reduced rates instead of advanced rates. Far from getting any benefits for paying cash, we get it in the neck wherever there is half a chance. Everybody seems to lay for us, to try for a whack at the dollars in our pockets. Let us enter a small country town, carry our grips from and to the depot and be the only stranger in a dining room full of farmers, stockmen and town folks, let the grub be no matter how ordinary and scant of choice, the drummer has to pay a half dollar invariably, while the old hayseed who sat in the very chair adjoining him and ate five times the quantity consumed by the drummer complacently hands a quarter to mine host and as often as not is treated with a cigar by the landlord into the bargain. It is less than a week ago that a traveling man under precisely the above circumstances was compelled to pay 50 cents for a so-called dinner, said dinner consisting of a quarter section of dried apple pie accompanied by a glass of water. Shades of Shylock! How often have I paid 10 cents for a cigar and within five minutes observed the genial landlord openly hand two out of the identical same box to a "native" in return for a dime! But a comparatively few years ago the peanuts on several trains used to demand and obtain from us 10 cents for a daily paper, until the newspapers put a stop to this species of robbery. If today we attempt to buy any fruit or a book on a train, the original selling price has been scraped off the front page and the price raised to double the original figure, where as the "peanut" will in most cases sell us his apples and oranges, etc., by the quarter's worth only. Let us step into a saloon to refresh the inner man in company with a friend or two, and three chances out of five an uninvited stranger of the genus bum steps up to take a drink with the drummer. I am not exaggerating, I have experienced all these things time and again.

But enough of the kicking for today, I will reserve the rest for some other occasion, and indeed I have plenty "stuff" left. But I fear, Mr. Editor, this letter of mine has already outgrown the limit of space you have set apart for communications from the boys. If so, you may publish my screed in quarter sections or in any manner you see fit to.

With my best wishes to the fraternity of which I have the honor to be one of the oldest members, I remain,

FRED L. PERKINSON.

R. Hume Butcher.

No sadder message was ever telephoned from Fremont than the one received Tuesday morning by the Consolidated Coffee company announcing the death of their salesman, Mr. R. Hume Butcher. Mr. Butcher arrived in Fremont Saturday and stopped at the New York hotel, complaining that he was not feeling well. When called upon Monday by some of the traveling men he complained of pain in the region of his heart and by their advice sent for a physician, who said that he was suffering from neuralgia of the heart, but did not think at first that he was in a dangerous condition. Everything possible was done, but instead of rallying under treatment, as was expected, he gradually grew worse, becoming unconscious about midnight and remained so until 1:30 o'clock a. m., when he died.

Mr. Butcher had been in the employ of the Consolidated coffee company for a number of years, and was highly respected and regarded by them as not only a firstclass salesman, but having a higher quality, in that he was the soul of honor in all his dealings with his fellow men. No man ever had the entire confidence of his employers to any greater extent than Mr. Butcher, and none ever deserved more. On receipt of the message Mr. Gates, treasurer of the Consolidated coffee company, telegraphed his friends and relatives and went immediately to Fremont and took charge of the remains, bringing them to Omaha. On the next day his brother arrived and the body, after having been embalmed, was taken to Fort Royal, Va., for burial.

There is a sad home in old Virginia over the loss of the most loyal son it has ever been the writer's pleasure to know. The Elkhorn road has lost one of its pioneers and the traveling fraternity a companion who was brave as a lion, tender hearted as a child and one of the noblest works of God—an honest man.

F. F.

The W. C. Patrick Fund.

The following named traveling men have contributed, through W. L. Eastman, to the support of the widow and two children of their late brother, W. C. Patrick, who died on January 10, 1890, from mountain fever, contracted on his December trip to the Black Hills.

F. H. Daniels, $2; M. Dee, $2; M. D. Harvey, $3; W. B. Dingman, $2; E. J. Cullen, $1; W. I. Sholes, $1; S. B. Holloway, $2; Baird P. Hill, $1; C. S. Martin, $1; R. H. Mosgrove, $2; Milner & Marnell, $2; S. H. White, $2; George N. Hail, fifty cents; W. A. Sherman, $2; Bob Branch, $1; Star Play Whiting, $1; W. A. Gould, $1; E. D. Lord, $2; C. A. Diamond, $2; E. McIntire, $2; J. V. West, $1; Charles A. Coe, $2; E. J. Roe, $2; W. H. Harrison, $2; W. E. Place, $2; J. F. Wertz, $1; J. W. Richards, $1; W. H. Chapman, $1; E. A. Walter, $1; J. C. Kohl, $2; William Murr, $1; S. H. Hart, $1; W. J. Dunkin, $1; E. S. Struter, $1; Kent Cunningham, $1; John N. Harpham, $1; James T. Thompson, $1; James Hamilton, $1; J. L. Houston, jr., $1; John Costello, $2; O. L. Livingston, $1; W. H. Brown, $1; W. L. Eastman, $2; making a total of $60.50. This amount Mr. Eastman has forwarded to the treasurer of the N. W. T. M. A. to be added to that previously collected.

The appeal sent out by the board of directors contains some terse and practical words, in speaking of the deceased:

"Big hearted, large souled, industrious; always going to save money next year; and to this kind of man 'next year' never comes. He had a good income, and each year spent it all and some more. He was always 'hard up.' He is dead! He had good points; let us remember them. He was a kind husband and an indulgent father. His faults are in the grave with him. His widow and his two little children survive him, and nothing but our contributions will keep them out of the poor house."

Notice.

Will the traveling man who wrote the first communication that appeared in THE BEE regarding Joe Bush's telephone charge of 50 cents please send his name to this office again. It will occasion him no trouble whatever, and may result in good to him and many other traveling men.

Drummer and Lunatic.

Mr. E. C. Evans, a Des Moines traveling man, had an experience about ten days ago that he will long remember, and one which he does not care to repeat. He was working towns on the north end of Rock Island, just south of Ruthven. He boarded a train about 8 o'clock in the evening for Ruthven. He had just comfortably located himin the car when an insane man rushed in and made himself lord of all he surveyed. He was wild with rage. The conductor was not long in giving way and made his way to the head end and rode the rest of the distance to Ruthven on the engine. The brakeman and other traveling man mounted the cupola seats and considered themselves well out of danger. Mr. Evans' ride with his unwelcome companion was not all sunshine, but he states no conductor ever appeared on the scene for railroad fare.

Sued His Firm.

J. E. Atwood has brought an action against the firm of John Anisfield & Co., Topeka, Kan., for $1,600. Atwood declares that during the year 1889 he had a contract to travel for Anisfield & Co., in the states of Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri; with a guaranteed salary of $1,000 he was to have a commission of 5 per cent on all sales over $20,000, but the firm paid him only the $1,000 and refused to pay him his additional commission which amounted to $400, and instead of leaving him to work the territory alone according to contract they put on another man for part of the time and refused to accept Atwood's sales, keeping him idle; he says he is an experienced salesman and could have sold $50,000 worth of goods if the firm had kept its contract. He has also come into possession of the claim for $100 by E. P. Atwood, formerly salesman for Anisfield & Co.

A Traveling Man's Suicide.

John Pike, aged thirty-nine, a commercial traveler for Coffin & Co., harnesses, Boston, committed suicide last week at Reading. The suicide was a very deliberate one. Mr. Pike left his home about 5:30 in the morning, taking with him a double-barrelled shotgun. He went to the orchard on the Putnam farm, some distance from his house, and removing one shoe and stocking, evidently placed the muzzle of the gun against his stomach and pulled the trigger with his toes. The deceased had suffered for two weeks past with la grippe, and it is supposed his mind became affected. He leaves a widow.

Strange Disappearance.

John M. Bulkley, a traveling man in the employ of N. C. Fairbanks of Chicago, on a visit in Minneapolis, is missing, and his family in Chicago and his friends fear that he has been foully dealt with. He was last seen at the company's office in St. Paul Monday morning. He arrived in Minneapolis Monday night, intending to remain over visiting friends till the next night. Leaving his satchel in Minneapolis he went over to St. Paul the next morning, left his card at the company's office and has not been seen since.

Samples.

W. B. Lanius, formerly of Paxton & Gallagher, but now traveling for a Chicago house, was in Nebraska City Thursday. Will is one of the most popular men on the road, and his old friends will all be glad to see him back in Nebraska.

J. R. Brinker, with Reid, Murdock & Fischer, Chicago, made his regular thirty day trip through eastern Nebraska last week. He says he is going to slaughter the ducks on the Loup this week in company with a few Lincolnites.

Frank Martin, of C. Willman & Sons, St. Joseph, was in Nebraska City the first of last week. Frank is partial to school marms.

L. P. Utterback, the Chicago dry goods man, spent a few days with his family at Nebraska City last week.

A. S. Willer, the popular young drug salesman from Omaha, registered at the Grand Pacific, Nebraska City, Wednesday.

Clarence Eagle of the Consolidated Coffee company, went south on the Missouri Pacific the first of the week.

J. H. Mehl, who has been on the road for Klopp, Dreibus & Co. for the last four years, has accepted a position in the house and will no longer carry a sample case. He was very popular on the road and will be greatly missed at his old haunts, but John was married about two months ago and can't stand it to go away from home.

Frank B. Ridenour, who travels for Kirkendall, Jones & Co. of Omaha, just finished a very successful trip through western Missouri and southern Iowa. Frank has a great faculty of making friends and has a larger coterie of warm ones in his territory than almost any other man in the west. His face is always wreathed with a broad smile when he comes in contact with an old customer.

McCracken, the popular shoe man who travels for W. V. Morse & Co. of Omaha, met with an accident at Tecumseh last week. Some one mixed mucilage with his hair oil and "his every hair stands on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

J. C. Kahl makes the main line of the Union Pacific. He is selling goods in the territory formerly worked by Billy Eastman and he is getting the old names on the list. John is a rustler.

Ed Culver, E. H. Stapp, Arthur Shutz and Dan Fuller have formed a quartette and are now singing, "United We Stand, Divided We Fall."

Billy Stevens, the cracker man from Omaha, was at Corning, Ia., last week attending the merchants' carnival.

Barnett, the representrtive of Darrow & Logan in Iowa, is always at the front in taking orders in the wholesale hat and cap line.

"Burt" Eastman, who travels for the Phelps, Dodge & Palmer company, Chicago, is always at the ladies' waiting rooms when "McGinty's" express comes in from Columbus. "Burt" is a connoisseur of womanly loveliness.

O. J. Kenyon, the passionately handsome wall paper man, always parts his hair in the middle. He was in western Nebraska last week.

A sad, sweet smile struts o'er Jack Garrett's face when you mention the name of Lincoln. Jack is a dandy and travels for an Omaha hat and cap house.

W. H. Hogan carries the left hind foot of a "possum" in his back, left pocket. It is needless to state that Hogan sells shoes.

Sam Kohn travels for the Kilpatrick-Koch dry goods company, Omaha. He carries a Waterbury watch and when he is not showing samples he is invariably winding the watch. Sam spent forty-two Sundays last year in Ware Lake, Ia.

John Baty, jr., of Kirkendall, Jones & Co. has sold foot gear for this well known house for a decade and has his headquarters at Ogden, Utah. He enjoys a very satisfactory trade which is constantly increasing.

Frank Hunter, who travels for a large clothing house from Cincinnati, is very popular with his trade in Nebraska and Iowa. He is very fond of society and frequently attends church societies and parties in the small country towns.

E. S. Clay sells hardware for a Chicago house and now has headquarters at Red Oak, Ia. He also sells buggies and wagons.

George Marty sold dry goods at Imogene, Ia., last Tuesday. He reported several scalps in the wampum belt.

G. F. Martin threw the augur into several Iowa merchants last week in a very successful manner. He sells hardware for Lee Clark, Andreson & Co. of Omaha.

At the Hotels.

At the Barker—C. E. Thompson, Boston; Robert A. Mansfield, New York; C. Mullen, New York; E. W. Gavan, New York; John W. Sadler, Lincoln; J. B. Bishop, Red Oak; W. A. Fisher, Red Oak; L. B. Brady, New York; W. F. Conner, Boone, Ia.; D. Heffernan, Anselmo, Neb.; M. F. Dunlap, Chicago; George Sheppey, Chicago; F. C. Hallinger, Fremont; William R. Morse, Cincinnati; William Hartington, Chicago; A. Hirsh, Chicago; L. H. Thomas, Portland; P. M. Campbell, McCook; J. D. Draper, Marion; Harry Squires, Arkansas City; W. E. Gaitside, Chicago; J. J. Moorhead, Dunlap, Ia.; Charles Knapp, St. Louis; C. A. Wilson, Fremont; M. D. McFarland, Bellevue, Colo.; T. C. Marshall, Canton, O.; W. M. Gentry, Quincy; E. Rich, Lincoln; Ben Tuthill, New York; John A. Keheo, Platte Center; D. Ray, Grand Island; R. F. Hill, New York; T. H. Krause, Port Huron, Mich.; J. H. Roach, St. Paul, Minn.; J. T. Ackerman, Ainsworth; M. Anderson, Hastings; J. S. Taylor, Kansas City; M. T. Cox, Dubuque; C. Diehl, Erie, Pa.; N. Gorman, St. Joseph; J. E. Roper, Davenport; M. Mora, New York; J. M. Woodruff, Denver; L. T. Brainard, Nebraska City; A. H. Seebolm, Baltimore, Md.; J. Watson, Kansas City; H. C. Goodman, Louisville, Ky.; Thomas J. Blocker, Baltimore; J. B. Pardee, Rochester, N. Y.; W. E. Pearce, Philadelphia; William Urquhart, Seneca Falls; H. Loder, Staten Island, N. Y.

At the Murray—S. S. Moore, Jr., New York; E. C. Carrey, Oswego, N. Y.; V. C. Chase, Oswego, N. Y.; J. McElroy, Chicago; F. O. Whitford, Chicago; Frank Baldwin, New York; S. D. Babcock, New York, G. L. White, Indianapolis; J. Vosburg, St. Louis; R. E. Woodson, St. Louis; E. C. Baker, St. Louis; J. F. Trout, Chicago; J. M. Layton, Chicago; W. N. Decker, Cnicago; C. F. Kuse, F. Davis, I. L. Adlu, W. A. Nelslot, L. M. Bushnell, G. H. Bixby, C. V. Woodward, R. G. Gerling, John A. Gonder, W. D. Adams, A. W. Pullen, H. H. Kelsey, H. M. Reed, J. Rattney, Chicago; P. R. Blaksell, Buffalo, N. Y.; W. B. Shuyurk, N. M. Drake, C. M. Spencer, A. Babcock, Louisville, Ky.; C. R. Bacon, Grand Rapids, Mich; J. R. Tassry, New York; L. R. Townsand, R. W. Wonneld, M. Curtis, George M. Rouse, St. Louis; R. O. Rullers, J. P. Nathan, C. G. Cunningham, H. H. Branch, P. R. Goodrich, New York; E. H. Stapp, M. Sherman, Des Moines; T. M. Block, E. M. Connell, New York.

At the Merchants—Benjamin Howard, H. Link, Kansas City; S. L. Gannn, Miles City, Mont., J. L. Richards, Buchanan, Mich.; C. F. Heintz, Austin, Tex.; H. O'Hara, St. Louis; O. N. Wilson, Nebraska City; Harry E. Sloane, Peoria, Ill.; A. M. Wheeler, Minneapolis, Minn.; Martin Hensel, Richmond, Va.; J. H. Mockett, Lincoln; M. T. Cox, Dubuque; G. W. Quinn, St. Louis; N. J. Biiss, Lake City, Minn.; W. G. Mercer, Burlington; J. B. Crum, Dunsieth, N. D.; J. M. Hammer, York, Pa.; J. A. Richardson, San Diego, Cal; John J. Halligan, Ogallala; C. E. Chandler, Chicago; B. W. Henshaw, Denver; H. S. Kuhl Aspinwall, Ia.; O. N. Hartshorn, Boulder, Col.; L. Angene, Fostoria, O.; Frank E. Hartigan, Crete; J. A. Eyler, Omaha; Ben Hayden, Omaha; C. N. Brewster, Omaha; W. E. David, Ft. Calhoun; E. G. Thomas, Sioux City; D. H. Thomas, Elk City; Fred Bronson and wife, Sioux City; C. H. Tate, Cincinnati; E. D. Shomaker, Kansas City; N. K. Van Husen, Sioux City; G. D. Urly, New York; William F. Paine, Chicago; W. H. Hess, Lanark, Ill.; H. C. Kelf, Denver; A. J. Metcalf, Kearney; H. C. Metcalf, Kearney; F. G. Cusack, St. Louis; John N. Middelidorf, Covington, Ky.; H. H. Keidecker, Covington, Ky.; G. C. Kirby and wife, Omaha; H. A. Lee, Kingman, Kan; Thomas I. Neill, Council Bluffs; J. Bartu, Chicago; C. C. Higgins, Hiawatha, Kan.; Henry Baker, Kearney; E. Hildebrand, Chicago; David Patterson, North Platte; W. D. Thompkins, Omaha; H. L. McWilliams, Ogallala.

At the Paxton.—John M. Gormes, St. Louis; J. Simon, St. Louis; C. M. Hahl, St. Joseph; J. V. Dyer, St. Joseph; Alfred Clifford, S. Louis; H. E. Lantry, Colorado Springs; N. W. Lovitt, Kansas City; George Ashwell, New York; W. J. Mayer, Chicago; C. S. Huffman, St. Louis; S. Dreyfuss, New York; John R. Wilson, Deadwood; N. C. Chapman, Minneapolis; A. Emden, Chicago; Charles Stein, Chicago; E. D. Easton, Washington, D. C.; Robert B. Benham, Washington, D. C.; H. H. Robinson, Kimball; L. D. Russ, Chicago; V. C. Chase, Chicago; E. L. Olds, Racine; William B. Taylor, New York; C. F. Carnei, Elmira; E. H. Johnson, Chicago; F. Craft, Cincinnati; H. Brady, Chicago; W. J. Hencock, Gerversville; M. D. Hathaway, Chicago; C. A. Dodge, Salt Lake City; D. W. Redfield, Chicago; D. B. McIlwaine, New York; Wells Gorhn, Chicago; George A. Dascomb, Atchison; W. D. Drake, Cleveland; George L. Shoup, Idaho; George A. Robinson, Louisville; Frank Hunter, Cincinnati; Alex Williams, Hailey; Jesse Rose, Denver; J. L. Woods, Fort Dodge; D. M. Woods, Reed, Ill.; G. E. Elsey, Chicago; G. H. Gun, Hastings; A. Moore, Auburn; O. W. Greene, Kearney.

At the Casey—C. G. Underwood, St. Joe; J. V. Studley, St. Louis; F. H. Streiby, Chicago; S. H. Chase, Salt Lake City; John Engle, Chicago; M. F. Allanbough, Salt Lake City; M. Hartsbin, Lexington, Ky.; B. W. Tobias, New York; J. T. Clark, Alma; J. K. Soden, Chicago; M. W. Millard, Burlington; C. W. Wommelsdorf, Omaha; O. H. Phillips, Beatrice; W. H. Putelle, Minneapolis; John Mullowney, Omaha; A. H. Hampt, Buffalo, N. Y.; J. C. Junill, Boston; J. W. Porterfield, Detroit; B. P. Morian, Dunkirk, N. Y.; Henry De Lamater, Jackson, Ill.; H. R. Toft, Gloversville, N. Y.; J. D. Calton, Jackson, Mich.; E. W. May, Des Moines; L. D. Robbins, Boston; Charles W. McKean, St. Joe; Frank Hall, Chicago; W. W. Nichols, St. Louis; T. B. Hutchinson, Chicago; Thomas Porter, Detroit; E. W. Dehlendorf, St. Louis; J. H. Chambers, Hatkinson, N. Y.; Orange Jull, Orangeville, Fla.; Theo Krabenhoft, Davenport; O. G. Walroth, Pittsburg; J. J. Jones, William Miner, Chicago; H. W. Look, Milwaukee; R. C. McCanyhey, Chicago; J. H. Dixon, St. Joe; G. W. Jones, Chicago; J. W. Lusk, Pittsburg; Thomas F. Kringen, Chicago; L. W. Robbins, Jersey City; Charles Gilmore, Missouri Valley; M. C. Roberts, Chicago; W. F. Hammond, Chicago; E. L. Streed, Woodhall, Ill.; A. M. Walkins, Milu; Samuel W. Edmunds, Washington, D. C.; G. W. Lovelady, Detroit; A. H. Seebohm, San Francisco.

Don't Go Off Before You are Ready, Particularly on a long journey, be fully prepared. You cannot be, permit us to say, unless you are accompanied with the travelers and tourists vade mecum. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, most genial of appetizers, acclimatizers and promoters of digestion. Against sea sickness, malaria, cramps and colics begotten of badly cooked or unwholesome food and brackish water, nervousness, increased by travel, chronic billiousness and constipation, the Bitters is a sovereign preventive. It imparts a relish to food not altogether to your taste, and prevents it from disagreeing with you. Never was there such a capital thing for the unfortunate dyspeptic who stands in dread of the best cooked meal. Stomachic trouble caused by ill prepared viands aboard ship, on steamboats, and rations hastily bolted at railway restaurants, is soon remedied by the Bitters, which gives a quietus, also to rheumatism, kidney troubles and insomnia.

Dr. Birney, practice limited to catarrhal diseases of nose and throat. Bee bldg.

AUNT ANN.

Eva Best, in Detroit Free Press: A low, leaden cloud hangs over Crowden lodge. Up from the valley, where the creek lies rigid in its pall, a little gust has come, bringing already a few sharp, stinging, icy needles, and many soft, slowly-falling flakes of snow. Night closes in. The 6 o'clock bells ring out a glad release to the toilers in the big foundry on the western suburb of this city, and lights are at last shining through many a window pane, sending golden shafts across the fast-whitening pavements, now filled with bustling home-goers.

When Kerry Owen flings open the gate and advances toward the kitchen door of his own domicile he feels the nearness of some unusual happening. Somebody is in that kitchen besides Jo, and he knows it. His quick intuitions are not at fault, for he soon heard voices as well as the melodious clatter of dishes; hears what sounds oddly to his unaccustomed ears—a peal of laughter, bona fide, and, well, yes, a bit boisterous; for Josephine Owen is a strong, healthy, hearty woman, and her laughter is worth the hearing, when at rare intervals it can be provoked into some such manifestation of hilarity as the present outburst.

"Oh, Aunt Ann, you are too ridiculous!" comes through the key-hole along with a tiny stream of light; and then Kerry knows.

Aunt Ann—how well he remembers her; the sweet-faced woman who used to hold his boyish heart captive by her manifold charms—the cider cellar, the great barn at Millmore, the buckeyes, the paw-paw bushes, the persimmon tree down by "the run!"

And when the door swings back beneath his hand and he carries a pretty well tired out, homely-clad form into the warmth and light and cheery bustle of the little kitchen, he sees Aunt Ann.

A great lump rises in his throat and the light from the lamp on the cozy-looking red tablecloth multiplies itself strangely in his tear filled-eyes; and in another second Aunt Ann has clasped him in her gentle embrace and has given him a kiss of greeting.

"Why, Kerry, lad, I'd never have known you—what a great handsome fellow you've grown, for a certainty! Your eyes are are still as big as saucers and your crop of curls keeps coming on beautifully; but bless me! if there isn't a suspicion of white about your temples. How old are you now, my boy?"

"Only forty, Aunt Ann; only forty this fall, and it has been—"

"Just twenty-five years since you tried to ride the colt—the colt we decided to christen 'Jordan,' because, you said, 'Jordan was a hard road to travel!'"

How they laugh together at the amusing recollections! How he questions his dear relative about the thousand and one things beloved in his boyhood, and how completely Jo seems dropped out from their sympathetic, cheery chattering. She hears Aunt Ann tell Kitty about selling the Richland county farm and directly a frown chases Jo's smile away. It's a little frown—a very little scowl—but it seems to have come to stay. Not exactly ugly tempered—no, Jo is not that yet; but she has grown to take life so seriously and talk so little. As a girl she was sympathetic and responsive to a degree; but after seventeen years of married life—after the placing of three precious little forms out of sight—she, the wife of the "foundry boss," Kerry Owen, has come to count her shut in life a simple round of thankless duties, with whatsoever of sweetness and lightness it once promised long since dead. She has, in all these prosey, homely years, grown silent and unresponsive and what one might be excused for calling selfishly sorrowful; and tender-hearted Kerry, respecting her sorrow, has allowed the gloom to settle about his home, until under the dark shadow of unconscious oppression, life has grown into a monotonous neutral-hued length of days at the foundry, and evenings—where?

If Jo could answer that question she would be a relieved woman; that he goes each night to some reprehensible headquarter where there are cards and dice and something to drink, she never for a moment doubts.

Aunt Ann is the cheeriest of old ladies alive. Her memory is reliable enough to fetch back even the wrath of Blue John, the Cochin China rooster that Kerry was so fond of because of his "gameness;" the ghost of Mooly, a bovine, that, in very opposition to her name, possessed the longest and most terrible horns on record. Now he revels again in the thought of the leaf shadowed spring house, the corn crib, the smoke house roof and the martin boxes above it. While the cold, soft flakes fall without the pinkest of apple blossoms drift in roseate showers just within the radius of memory's quickest hedge; and he only leaps the stream of consciousness at the sound of Jo's curt call to supper.

"Jo, dear, what delicate muffins! Kerry, aren't they meltingly good?"

"H'm! Sh—oh—yes—of course. Aunt Ann, do you recollect the frog pond?"

"Yes, I remember. But aren't these chops done to an exquisite turn, Kerry?"

"H'm. Chops! O yes, our butcher has good meat always. And than——"

"And this milk toast—isn't it——"

"Aunt Ann, Kerry is no epicure." The key note of Joe's voice is discordant. "He eats what I set before him and that's all. I really think that he doesn't know half an hour after what I've given him. I'm glad you like my cooking Aunt Ann; I have had nothing else to do but perfect myself in that art ever since—since——" but poor Jo disappeared within the pantry.

"Thinking of the children, Aunt Ann. Her life is dreary enough these days."

"It needn't be; it has been seven years since little Jim died. Has she had nothing to feed upon in all this time but these sad memories, Kerry?"

"Don't know, I'm sure, Aunt Ann. I——"

"Have you ever tried to cheer her up?"

"I?"

"You! Not the butcher nor the baker, did you think—they are all the persons she seems to see daily except yourself."

"Aunt Ann, you speak in riddles."

"A prize given for the best solution," says this old lady, as Jo reappears, fetching, as a very evident "make believe" reason for her recent disappearance a dish of golden honey in its comb.

"Kerry, Jo, do you remember that bright winter wedding day of yours—when the farm was dressed in white and every herb and twig had donned diamonds for your bridal? Only a week until its seventeenth anniversary—in what reckless dissipation common to such a day shall we indulge?" asks the elderly guest, bending the dainty lavender satin rosette of her cap full upon her host and hostess in turn. "To think how old and big the children—bless me!" For Jo has again hurriedly taken refuge within her sanctuary, the pantry.

"You cannot mention the word 'children,' Aunt Ann—Jo can never stand it."

"Why?"

"Why?" Because—because—"

"Because she has grown so terribly selfish in her sorrow—that's the blunt and homely truth. It would do her good to talk of them—Kerry, do you ever keep any holidays here—birthdays or Christmas or—anything?"

"What! Jo and I? I should think not, indeed!"

"Humph! Going? Well, I'll promise not to worry Jo any more, Kerry. Here, I'll hold your overcoat."

The outer garment is donned, and in a moment more the door shuts Kerry out into the white night.

"Jo!"

"Yes, Aunt Ann."

"Kerry has gone away."

"That's nothing new. He never stays at home with me in the evenings any more."

"Jo, what do you mean? Where has he gone?"

"Goodness knows!"

"Well, I'm glad badness doesn't! Look how the snow has piled itself up in the window ledges; how cold it must be getting! Seems to me I'd rather sit by fire in the sitting room ——"

"There is no fire in the sitting room, Aunt Ann. Kerry can sit out here in the kitchen as I do. One fire saves coal."

"'Saves coal'—well, yes. I suppose it does. But I'd gladly put a bushel of coal against a glass of strong drink. Does Kerry drink, Jo?"

"I suppose so—I don't know. He never did before little—Jim ——"

"No," catching at Jo as she rushes past her towards the protecting darkness of the pantry, "you shan't be such a weak woman as that any longer! Why, bless you, child, you can't mean that you find it too hard to say, 'Thy will be done,' after all these years?"

"Oh, Aunt Ann," sobs poor Jo, "I believe—I could—if only—Kerry—would be—the man—he once—was!"

"The 'man'—the lover, you mean!"—mighty drily this.

"I could stand it," wails on Jo, mechanically, beginning her task of putting away the little printed teacups, "but he goes off the minute he has swallowed his supper—heaven knows where!"

"And the better if heaven does know where."

"And I am left alone with—with—my—my memories!"

"Strange he should care to leave you so," mused the little old lady aloud. "A supper done to a turn; a handsome wife—you are handsome, Jo; a cosy little nook by the bright grate fire in the sitting-room—"

"I said that I never used the front room, Aunt Ann. It is the parlor, you know; I have no real sitting room—"

"O, yes, to be sure—I forgot. So you're keeping it clean, dark and ready—for whose funeral, Jo—yours or Kerry's?"

"Aunt Ann!"

"That's exactly who I am, my dear; and if you don't both live to bless 'Aunt Ann' for a few years before either of those funerals takes place, why, there's no power in the spirit of love that actuates me! We'll have a wedding anniversary this year if we never had one before! What if our bodies do grow old and wrinkled—our hearts are young and our real selves, the rejoicing souls of us, are basking, even now, in the sunshine of perpetual youth. We shall have a bride's cake and a groom's cake; and I, myself, shall make angel food that I promise will melt in your mouth!"

"Aunt Ann!"

"Present at roll-call! But this indignation meeting is too one-sided. Hang up your dish pan, Jo, and come and sit beside me. When Kerry was a lad I used to tell him stories by the hour; and now I'm going to tell his wife one; will you listen?"

"Gladly, Aunt Ann."

"Once upon a time there was a happy family who lived in a bustling, thriving little manufacturing town in the very heart of America. The father and mother were strong, healthy people; but their anxiously watched-over children grew to be strangely delicate. Once when the parents were in an agony of dispair over the frail tenure their little ones held upon life, there came a knock at the door, and a man, wise and benevolent entered the house. He tried to speak to them of the beauful works of life and its laws; but He spoke in an unintelligible language which sounded like a profanation in their ears. At last, dispairing to make himself understood, He offered to take all the little ones to His own home, where, under the golden sunshine and beside the still waters, they should never again know suffering, sickness or sorrow. He promised to lavish the great love of his wealth upon them; and after awhile to come Himself and show the father and mother the way to their precious little ones. And then, knowing best, He, without more ado, took the children with Him and went away. The father was grieved, but he comforted himself that he should see his dear ones again, and a thought of the beautiful country to which they had journeyed, of their freedom from sickness and sorrow, lessened the grief of parting. But the mother moaned and wept and would not be comforted. Her maternal heart kept the loneliness uppermost—she could not joy in fancy at the thought of her children's bliss, at their freedom from pain, at their beautiful home in the Summer Land; but ever about her was wrapped the somber shadow of her grief, until the house was a house of perpetual mourning, and all who came therein shuddered at the gloom. Jo, did you ever think just what it is to be the mother of three angels?"

"Oh, Aunt Ann!"

"Present, as before. And can't you see that the glad meeting is not so very far off, after all? Why, Jo, dear, compared to the life everlasting what is this span of little years? A breath—a nothing! And there's that dear Kerry of yours shut out into the lesser gloom of the cold night because of the greater gloom and selfish coldness within doors!" * * *

The week before the anniversary passes quickly and almost happily.

Besides the neat little stitches she puts lovingly and helpfully into a prospective wedding present that Jo is manufacturing under the rose for Kerry, Aunt Ann inserts in the poor worker's heart wedges of wisdom she has garnered during her life-long experience, driving them home with the maliet of truth, until Jo's heart expands and expands under the great and persistant pressure, and, lo! it is at last opened wide to receive Aunt Ann's comforting lessons, and she comes to comprehend into what a state of error she has fallen. * * *

Kerry Owen, now superintendent of the Mammoth boiler foundry over near Crowden Ledge, turning to leave the snug little office to make his way home at midnight, finds his exit barred. A tall, well-built young gentleman, of serious countenance, stands squarely in his path.

"Oh, no, Owen; not so fast, old fellow! Do you happen to recollet that this is the eve of the anniversary of your wedding day—needn't look so astonished that I chance to know all about it! And you needn't think to get off in that style!"

"It's a style in which I usually get off, sir," laughs Kerry, looking an inquiry into the young man's quizzical countenance.

"It's a style well enough adapted to every-day use; but, as I said before, tomorrow is your wedding anniversary, and—God bless you, Kerry Owen—I must show the gratitude of my heart in some way!"

"Nay, Mr. Geoffrey——"

"Your negations will not stand, man, before my positive affirmations. For the sake of all you have done for a young fool upon whose shoulders too much responsibility was thrown at first—a responsibility that would have crushed him had you not put your strong wise shoulder to the wheel—I give you this with more love than the world will credit George Geoffrey with possessing. It is heavy, I know, Owen; but my sleigh is at the door—and let your wife have the first peep, man; do,