SPECIAL NOTICES.

Advertisements for these columns will be taken until 12:30 p. m. for the evening and until 8 p. m. for the morning and Sunday editions.

Advertisers, by requesting a numbered check, can have answers addressed to a numbered letter in care of The Bee. Answers so addressed will be delivered upon presentation of the check only. Rates, 1 1-2c a word first insertion; 1c a word thereafter. Nothing taken for less than 25c for the first insertion. These advertisements must be run consecutively.

SITUATIONS WANTED.

LADY STENOGRAPHER DESIRES PERMANENT position in wholesale house; thoroughly competent; best of references. Address O 40, Bee. A—M688 28*

WANTED—MALE HELP.

$60 TO $150 A MONTH AND EXPENSES PAID salesman for cigars; experience unnecessary; standard goods; Little Clerk cigar machine free to each customer. Bishop & Kline, St. Louis, Mo. B—M785M*

MAN WANTED—LIBERAL COMPENSATION; experience or not. Stock guaranteed to grow. Address with stamp. Brown Bros. Co., Nurserymen, Chicago. B—802-M2*

WANTED, THOROUGH EXPERIENCED, first class drapery salesman; no other need apply. Boston Store, Omaha. B—M426

WANTED, FIRST CLASS, EXPERIENCED AI linen salesmen; no other need apply. Boston Store, Omaha. B—M427

WANTED, YOUNG MEN TO LEARN BARBER trade; can be fitted for first class situation or furnished good location for business after only 8 weeks practice; every advantage given apprentices; complete outfit of tools donated; more experience in 2 months than in shops in 2 years; very interesting catalogue mailed free. Chicago Barber School, 283 So. Clark St., Chicago. B—M591-28*

ANY ONE CAN EARN $5 TO $20 DAILY TAKing orders for "Cuba and the Fight for Freedom." Elaborately illustrated; sells at sight everywhere; unemployed men and women do you know this is your opportunity to make money. Books on credit; freight paid. Send 25 cts. postage for outfit; full particulars on application. Ad. Globe Bible Pub. Co., 723 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. B—589-30*

SALESMAN WANTED, OR GOOD SIDE LINE. Give references, Standard Cigar Factory, Lynchburg, Va. B—M623-2*

WANTED, MORE MEN TO LEARN BARBER trade; only 8 weeks required; steady situations guaranteed; tools donated; wages Saturday's catalogue free. St. Louis Barbers' College, 819 N. 9th St., St. Louis, Mo. B—M621 2*

SALESMEN WANTED TO CALL ON PHYsicians only in Omaha and vicinity in the interests of leading medical publishers. Spare time work and speedy income. Also one for central Nebraska. Address P. O. Box 1552, Philadelphia, Pa. B—M689 27

HELPWANTED—FEMALE.

A GIRL WHO IS EXPERIENCED IN OPERating and finishing shirts in a steam laundry; steady work and good pay. Address with references, Lock Box 13, Billings, Mont. C—M495 27

WANTED, GIRL FOR GENERAL HOUSEwork; no washing. Apply 2606 Poppleton ave. C—M569

WANTED, GIRL FOR GENERAL HOUSEwork at 1815 Chicago St. C—M632 28*

FOR RENT—HOUSES.

HOUSES IN ALL PARTS OF THE CITY. THE O. F. Davis Company, 1505 Farnam. D—695

HOUSES. BENAWA & CO., 108 N. 15TH ST. D—696

MODERN HOUSES. C. A. STARR, 925 N.Y.LIFE. D—697

FOR RENT—NICE SOUTH FRONT, 8-ROOM brick house, with all modern improvements and in first class condition. Inquire on premises, 2249 Half-Howard street. D—219

HOUSES, WALLACE, BROWN BLK, 16 & Doug. D—698

HOUSES FOR RENT—LARGE LIST, FROM $5.00 up. McCague Investment Co., 1506 Dodge. D—699

FOR RENT—BRICK RESIDENCE LOCATED at the southwest corner 17th and Douglas sts., formerly the residence of the late Henry Doud. Especially suitable for office of physicians or dentists. Apply to the superintendent of The Bee building, room 105, Bee bldg. D—272

MODERN 5-ROOM COTTAGE; ALSO 5-ROOM cottage, with barn. L. S. Skinner, agent, 510 N. Y. L. bldg. D—579

CHOICE HOUSES AND COTTAGES FOR RENT all over city, $5 to $50. Fidelity, 1702 Farnam st. D—606

LARGE LIST. F. D. WEAD, 16 & DOUGLAS. D—731-A29

FOR RENT—HOUSE OF TEN ROOMS; MODern conveniences; very handy to business. Inquire at 209 S. 16th st. D. T. Mount. D—M749

FOR RENT—MODERN FLATS, LANGE BLK., 606 S. 13th st. D—M197-M11

FOR RENT—ONE OF THE MOST DESIRABLE cottage homes in the city. Large grounds. J. H. Dumont, 1413 Harney st. D—M318

FLAT OF 5 ROOMS, 1611 LEAVENWORTH st. D—M521 28*

FOR RENT, 7 ROOM COTTAGE, 3111 Webster St. Also after May 1, 8 room cottage, 1817 Capitol Avenue; 7 room cottage 2021 Webster St. Henry W. Yates. D—549-M3

8-ROOM MODERN HOUSE, $25.00. 6-room d-tached house, $15.00. 5-room house, central, $15.00. Apply 2616 Capitol ave. D—M534-M1*

FOR RENT, HANDSOMELY FURNISHED 8-room house at 1102 So. 30th ave. D—M573 2*

FOR RENT, DURING JUNE, JULY AND August, large well furnished house on Georgia Ave; convenient to Car line; references required. Fidelity Trust Co., 17th & Farnam. D—682-27*

FOR RENT, 8 ROOM HOUSE; LARGE ROOMS; all modern conveniences. No. 408 N. 24. D—681-27

SMALL HOUSE; FURNISHED; $20.00. MRS. P. C. Hall, 2025 St. Mary's Avenue. D—687-27*

8 ROOMS, MODERN, 825 SOUTH 24TH ST. D—M652—M8*

NEAT SIX-ROOM HOUSE, FINE, CENTRAL location, 832 So. 21st street. D—M658 30

10 ROOM BRICK HOUSE, MODERN CONveniences. Very handy to business. W. F. Clark, 2205 Douglas street D—M 683 29*

FOR RENT.
65 acres plow land; adjacent to So. Omaha; $2.50 per acre.
60 acres hay land, near So. Omaha; $2.00 per acre.
6-room flat; modern, 2119 Farnam st.; one of most desirable in city; $18.00 per month.
POTTER & GEORGE COMPANY.
16 & Farnam sts. D—645 28

NEARLY NEW 8-ROOM HOUSE; ALL MODern improvements; first class condition; cheap. 2412 Seward street. D—361-25*

FOR RENT—FURNISHED ROOMS.

FURNISHED ROOMS FOR LIGHT HOUSEkeeping. 1919 Dodge. F—M244

3 FURNISHED ROOMS FOR HOUSEKEEPING for man & wife. Rent taken in board, 719 N. 17. F—363

FURNISHED ROOMS, HOUSEKEEPING; COOL large lawn. 2611 St. Mary's. F—545-28*

FURNISHED ROOMS. 2106 CASS. F—579-27*

NICELY FURNISHED ROOMS; LIGHT HOUSEkeeping; double parlors. 602 No. 18th st. F—M647 30*

FURNISHED ROOMS FOR LIGHT HOUSEkeeping. 1924 Douglas. F—M634 28*

FURNISHED ROOMS AND BOARD.

FURNISHED STEAM HEATED ROOMS; MODern conveniences; board. 602 So. 13th. F—700

ROOMS AND BOARD. 2319 DOUGLAS. F—M126-M10*

ROOM AND BOARD. 204 S. 25TH. F—M485-29*

NICELY FURNISHED ROOMS WITH BOARD; rates reasonable. The Rose, 2059 Harney. F—578-M8

DESIRABLE FRONT ROOMS, WITH EXCELlent table; references. 202 No. 18th st. F—M667 28*

ELEGANTLY FURNISHED ROOMS, WITH board; transients accommodated. 1514 Dodge st. F—M668—M2*

"THE ALBANY," 2101 DOUGLAS—ROOMS furnished and unfurnished. Place for wheels. F—M 682 M1*

FOR RENT—STORES AND OFFICES.

FOR RENT—THE 4-STORY BRICK BUILDING at 916 Farnam st. This building has a fireproof cement basement, complete steam heating fixtures, water on all floors, gas, etc. Apply at the office of The Bee. I—910

BUSINESS HOUSE FOR RENT—NEW THREEstory and basement brick building, 66x132, southwest corner of Howard and Fifteenth streets; suitable for jobbing or manufacturing purposes. Address Chas. Turner, 2316 Farnam street. I—699

FIRST CLASS BRICK STORE BUILDING, 1011 Farnam, three stories and basement; will alter to suit tenant; low rent. 214 1st Nat'l B'k bldg. I—701

AGENTS WANTED.

AGENTS WANTED, FOR THE SALE OF AN article for use in churches of all denominations; for particulars address Eckerman & Will, Syracuse, N. Y. J—M551 27*

WANTED, AGENTS; CAN MAKE $50.00 weekly in any locality; failure utterly impossible; will prove it or forfeit $100.00. Address P. O. Box 5293, Boston, Mass. J—M566 27*

WANTED—TO RENT.

IF YOU WANT GOOD TENANTS FOR YOUR houses list them with Fidelity, 1702 Farnam st. K—697

WANTED—ABOUT MAY 1ST, A MODERN 10 or more, room detached house, with lawn; will pay liberal rent if suited; state location. N 36, Bee Office. K—985—

STORAGE.

STORAGE, FRANK EWERS, 1214 HARNEY. M—702

PACIFIC STORAGE AND WAREHOUSE CO., 908-910 Jones. General storage and forwarding. M—701

FOR SALE—FURNITURE.

FOR SALE, MY ENTIRE FURNITURE AND household goods, all as good as new. This is a rare opportunity for great bargains. Mrs. S. Lehman, 523 North 20th st. O—M374

FOLDING BEDS FOR SALE; ALSO OTHER furniture. 1924 Douglas. O—M685 28*

FOR SALE—HORSES AND WAGONS.

ONE TOP DELIVERY WAGON, $75; USED only one month; two good family carriages; "bargains;" one furniture wagon; $50; Hoke wagon, $50. Drummond Carriage Co., 16th and Harney streets. P—M114 M3

FOR SALE, PAIR HEAVY MULES; VERY cheap. Theo. Williams, Benson, Neb. P—M493 27*

FOR SALE MISCELLANEOUS.

BEST HARDWOOD HOG AND CHICKEN fence; also "all wire." C. R. Lee, 901 Douglas. Q—705

B. HAAS, FLORIST, 1813 VINTON ST., TEL. 776, has a large assortment of young and old plants, suitable for pot, decoration and bed plants; Easter lilies, cut flowers and roses; everything at greatly reduced prices. Q—M492

LAWN HOG & CHICKEN FENCE, ALL WIRE cheaper than wood. Wire Works, 403 South 14th. Q—691-A29*

SEED SWEET POTATOES; VERY LOWEST rates for a few days; don't write; send for what you want. Theo. Williams, Benson, Neb. Q—M494 27*

FOR SALE, 9 HEAD FRESH MILK COWS, cheap. Call afternoon, yard 25th & Burt St. Q—583-27*

DON'T BUY A BICYCLE TILL YOU'VE SEEN the Union and National Bicycles; the two leading wheels sold in Omaha; a large line of all other makes from $30 and up; cash or easy payments. A. L. Deane & Co., 1116 Farnam Q—M 295—M 14.

FOR SALE, STEAM LAUNCH; A GREAT bargain; 20 feet long steam launch in good condition; cost $1,000; will sell for $300; must have cash. Address Peter C. Jensen, Dannebrog, Neb. Q—M631 28*

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$150.00 FIVE HORSE GASOLINE ENGINE, $40; six horse steam engine, $20.00; six cell battery complete, 718 N. 16, Omaha. Q—533-25*

I HAVE FOR SALE ABOUT 75 TONS OF nice, thick and clear ice. Address John Nelson, Oakland, Neb. Q—553-25

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WANTED, HORSE, HARNESS AND BUGGY, to be well kept for its use; light usage and good care; references, if desired. Address O 33, Bee. R—M661 27*

SOILED CARPETS CLEANED BY NEW PROcess; destroys moths; color or fabric not injured. Write The Carpet Cleaners, 1712 Douglas. R—M686 27*

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MRS. DR. H. WARREN, CLAIRVOYANT, REliable business medium; 8th year at 119 N. 16th. S—706

MASSAGE, BATHS, ETC.

MADAME SMITH, 1522 DOUGLAS STREET, 2D floor, room 11, massage, steam, alcohol and sulphurine baths. T—M663—M2

MME. AMES, FORMERLY OF ST. LOUIS MASsage and baths, 507 S. 13th St., 2d floor, room 10. T—914-M7*

MRS. DR. LEON, ELECTRIC MASSAGE PARlors; refreshing and curative; don't fail to call. 417 S. 11th st., upstairs. T—M375 28*

PERSONAL.

BATHS, MASSAGE, MME. POST, 319½ S. 15TH. U—707

MISS VAN VALKENBURGH DESTROYS PERmanently by electricity, superfluous hair, moles, warts, etc. Room 4-6 N. Y. Life bldg. U—708

RUPTURE CURED; NO PAIN; NO DETENtion from business; we refer to hundreds of patients cured. O. E. Miller Co., 207 N. Y. Life Building, Omaha, Neb. U—M552

VIAVI—A HOME TREATMENT FOR UTERINE troubles. Physician in attendance. Consultation or health book free. 246 Bee Bldg. U—729

NEW YORK GLOVE STORE AND MANICURing parlors, 1519½ Farnam. U—M259-M11

MRS. A. JACOBSON REMOVED TO 1142 North 18th street. U—M334 30*

THE PEOPLES DISPENSARY, 1522 DOUGLAS St.; treats diseases of the sexual organs of both sexes with unfailing success; 25 years practice; ladies' with delayed courses consult at once; delay dangerous; confinement $10; charge for medicine only. U—M112 M9*

WANT 20 ACRES TO TEND ON SHARES. R. W. Johnson, 4238 Miami st. U—536-25*

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ANTHONY LOAN AND TRUST CO., 218 N. Y. Life. Loans at low rates for choice security in Nebraska & Iowa farms or Omaha city property. W—710

CITY LOANS. C. A. STARR, 925 N. Y. LIFE. W—714

MONEY TO LOAN ON IMPROVED OMAHA real estate. Brennan, Love Co., Paxton blk. W—712

LOANS ON IMPROVED & UNIMPROVED CITY property. W. Farnam Smith & Co., 1320 Farnam. W—713

GEO. P. BEMIS, LOANS, PAXTON BLOCK. W—717

MONEY TO LOAN ON IMPROVED OMAHA property at 5, 5½, 6 and 6½ per cent. Paxton & Thomas, room 207, First National Bank bldg. W—719

MONEY TO LOAN ON CITY PROPERTY. $500.00 up to $50,000.00. Fidelity Trust company. W—M574

FROM $100 UP. F. D. WEAD, 16 & DOUGLAS. W—732-A29

MONEY TO LOAN AT LOW RATES. THE O. F. Davis Co., 1505 Farnam St. W—711

6 PER CENT MONEY TO LOAN ON OMAHA real estate & Neb. farms. W. B. Melkle, Omaha. W—713

MONEY TO LOAN—CHATTELS.

MONEY TO LOAN ON FURNITURE, PIANOS, horses, wagons, etc., at lowest rates in city; no removal of goods; strictly confidential; you can pay the loan off at any time or in any amount.
OMAHA MORTGAGE LOAN CO.
306 S. 16th St. X—719

MONEY TO LOAN, 30, 60, 90 DAYS; FURNIture; pianos, etc. Duff Green, room 8 Barker blk. X—720

BUSINESS CHANCES

CRIPPLE CREEK GOLD STOCKS, SAFE AND sure; $5 and upwards invested often brings fabulous and quick returns by placing your orders with the Van Buren Investment Co., (Incorporated), bankers and brokers, 803 16th St., Denver, Colo. Y—721

FOR SALE—NEAT STOCK GENERAL MDSE.; good location in good town; invoice $2,000; terms reasonable. Address Lock Box 45, Tabor, Ia. Y—M540 27*

BUSINESS CHANCES.

(Continued.)

MACHINIST, MOULDERS; TWO COMPETENT mechanics working together can hear of a splendid chance to make money; business well established and plant thoroughly equipped. Address George R. Bell, Cashier, Grand Island, Neb., or P. M. Wales, Troy N. Y. Y—907-M4

FOR SALE, ABOUT 2,000 LBS. MINION TYPE, 700 lbs. agate, 600 lbs. brevier type, 150 pair two third type cases, 40 double iron stands for two-third cases. This material was used on The Omaha Bee and is in fairly good condition. Will be sold cheap in bulk or in quantities to suit purchasers. Apply in person or by mail to The Bee Publishing Co., Omaha, Neb. Y—713

WANTED, AN IDEA, WHO CAN THINK of some simple thing to patent. Protect your ideas; they may bring you wealth. Write John Wedderburn & Co., patent attorneys, Washington, D. C., for their $1,800 prize offer and list of 200 inventions wanted. Y—M241-30*

CRIPPLE CREEK, COL. IF YOU WANT RELiable information on any and all kinds of business or personal matters, inclose 25 cents in stamps to Charles W. Purvis, box 1511 Cripple Creek, Col. Y—254-28*

FOR SALE OR TRADE, STATE OF NEbraska; bona fide patent. Address A, 128 Baughn St., Council Bluffs. Y—M799-M2

FOR SALE, A CLEAN STOCK OF HARDware, stoves and tinware; about $5,000; cheap for cash. Address O 22, Bee. Y—548-M23

WE CAN SELL YOUR BUSINESS. FURNISH capital or partner. Stetson, 330 New York Life Bldg., Kansas City, Mo. Y—M561 27*

FOR RENT, $25.00 THREE MONTHS IN ADvance, for a complete meat market building; only one market in town of 1,000 inhabitants. Address J. G. Blessing, Arlington, Neb. Y—M563—M1

$250 BUYS FULL SET BUTCHER'S TOOLS; rent of shop and slaughter house for one year; doing good business; owner has other business. Address C. J. Keirle, Florence, Neb. Y—M642 27*

THE NATIONAL LIFE OF HARTFORD, Conn., writing classified business, (first-class and under average risks), desires managers for Nebraska, (two districts). Best thing in life insurance. Address, for ten days, with reference, E. R. Logan, manager agencies, Denver, Colo. Y—M630 27

FOR EXCHANGE.

TO TRADE, FOR A STOCK OF DRY GOODS, clothing, or boots and shoes, first-class real estate, located in a good western Kansas town, consisting of a store building and residence, both renting well; also farm adjoining town; will pay cash difference if such is required. Address Abgert Kahn, 403 East 5th St., Sedalia, Mo. Z—M123

IRRIGATED RANCH, IMPROVED 440 ACRES, Idaho for Omaha property. F. D. Wead, 16 and Douglas. Z735-A29

WANTED—MDSE. OF ALL KINDS, FURNIture, mills, farms and cattle in exchange for other property. Perry & Guigle, Exeter, Neb. Z—M530 27*

WE HAVE A PARTY WHO HAS A FINE lot less than 1 mile from P. O., worth $2,500; inc. $650; wants to trade equity for equity in house and lot; will assume $1,500 to $2,000. Fidelity Trust company, 1702 Farnam street. Z—M554 27

A FINE $500.00 LOT TO EXCHANGE FOR GOOD driving horse. Fidelity Trust company, 1702 Farnam. Z—M650 28

FOR SALE—REAL ESTATE.

BARGAINS, SALE OR TRADE, IN CITY PROPerties and farms. Jno. N. Frenzer, opp. P. O. RE—723

GEO. P. BEMIS, HOUSES, LOTS, IRRIGATED farm lands, loans, 305 and 306 Paxton block. RE—724

ABSTRACTS. THE BYRON REED COMPANY. RE—725

HOUSES & LOTS, $900 to $1,200 EACH; VACANT lots, from $500 up, on 36th & 37th, Farnam & Dodge. H. D. Reed, 212 S. 14th St. RE—274

FARM LANDS. C. F. HARRISON, 912 N.Y. Life RE—M503-M20*

FOR SALE,
7-room house, modern; large barn; very desirable; south of Kountze Place; price, $3,000.00.
8 choice lots Saunders & Himebaughs Add, 2 blocks from motor line; price, $1,000.00 cash.
5 acres; 2 miles So. Omaha; suitable for gardening purposes; price, $450.00.
Also a number of 5 and 6-room cottages, which can be sold cheap.
POTTER & GEORGE COMPANY.
16 & Farnam sts. RE—646 28

PASTURES.

HORSES AND CATTLE PASTURED; 1½ miles west of Florence. Apply Hans Nelson, Florence, Neb. —M557 27*

WANTED, HORSES TO PASTURE; HALF mile west of Fort Omaha. D. P. Redman. 577—M1*

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MIDLAND HOTEL, COR. 16TH AND CHICAGO; American & European plan; steam heat & baths; all modern improvements; rates reasonable. 728

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FURNITURE PACKED, MATTRESSES MADE and renovated, window cushions made; prices reduced. M. S. Walklin, 2111 Cuming. Tel. 1231. 729

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WANTED, PUPILS IN VOCAL AND INSTRUmental music; best references; reduction in terms for summer season. Address O 3, Bee. 409 30

GEORGE F. GELLENBECK, BANJO AND guitar teacher. 1815 Chicago St. 109

YOU ARE SHORT-SIGHTED IF YOU DO NOT examine the Russel piano before buying or renting. Wm. H. Schmoller, 318 McCague bldg. M—643 2*

ARTISTIC PIANO TUNING BY MR. LEONhardt; office at Mrs. Benson's store. 493—A25*

BICYCLES.

THE RIDING SEASON HAS COMMENCED and our prices make it possible to buy a wheel at unusually low figures; terms to suit purchasers; Union, National and Napoleon are acknowledged leaders; we have some $100.00 wheels, barrel hubs, large tubing, fine finish, at $50.00; second-hand wheels of all makes at all prices. A. L. Deane & Co., 1116 Farnam M526 M22—

OMAHA BICYCLE CO., BEST PLACE TO BUY bicycles; bicycles repaired. 322 N. 16th St. 730

WESTERN BICYCLE & GUN CO., 2416 CUMing St. We sell $100.00 '96 models for $85.00 731

MEDICAL.

MAKES A SPECIALTY OF FEMALE AND chronic diseases; private hospital, gives vapor baths; cures cancers and tumors without a knife. Dr. P Lieber, 1912 Leavenworth St., bet. 19 and 20th Sts., Omaha Neb., Tel. 976. 585-M24*

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SHRUBBERY, FRUIT & SHADE TREES; LOWest prices. F. R. Martin 30 house W. D. & D Inst. 488—M19*

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A SPECIALTY Primary, Secondary or Tertiary Syphilis permanently cured in 15 to 35 days. You can be treated at home for the same price under same guarantee. If you prefer to come here we will contract to pay railroad fare and hotel bills, and no charge, if we fail to cure. If you have taken mercury, Iodide potash, and still have aches and pains, Mucous Patches in mouth, Sore Throat, Pimples, Copper Colored Spots, Ulcers on any part of the body, Hair or Eyebrows falling out, it is this Syphilitic BLOOD POISON that we guarantee to cure. We solicit the most obstinate cases and challenge the world for a case we cannot cure. This disease has always baffled the skill of the most eminent physicians. $500,000 capital behind our unconditional guaranty. Absolute proofs sent sealed on application. Address COOK REMEDY CO., 307 Masonic Temple, CHICAGO, ILL.

WILCOX COMPOUND
TANSY • PILLS
Safe and SURE. Always reliable. Take no substitute. For sale by all druggists, $2.00. Send 4 cts. for Women's Safeguard. WILCOX SPECIFIC CO. 229 South Eighth Street, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

The Open Shutter

By Stanley J. Weyman.

A Story From the Memoirs of a Minister of France.

(Copyright, 1896, by the Author.)

For one man who in these days recalls the thousand great and wise deeds of the late king, a thousand remember his occasional freaks, the duel he would have fought or his habit of visiting the streets of Paris by night and in disguise. That this last has been much exaggerated I can myself bear witness, for though Varenne or Coquet, the master of the household, were his usual companions on these occasions, he seldom failed to confess to me after the event, and more than once I accompanied him.

If I remember rightly, it was in April or May of the year 1606 that he surprised me one night as I sat at supper, and, requesting me to dismiss my servants, let me know that he was in a flighty mood, and that nothing would content him but to play the Caliph in my company. I was not too willing, for I did not fail to recognize the risk to which these expeditions exposed his person, but, in the end, I consented, making the only condition that Maignan should follow us at a distance. This he conceded, and I sent for two plain suits and we dressed in my closet. The king, delighted with the frolic, was in his wildest mood. He uttered an infinity of jests and cut a thousand absurd antics, and, rallying me on my gravity, soon came near to making me repent of the easiness which had led me to fall in with his humor.

However, it was too late to retreat, and in a moment we were standing in the street. It would not have surprised me if he had celebrated his freedom by some noisy extravagance there, but he refrained and contented himself—while Maignan locked the postern behind us—with cocking his hat and lugging forward his sword and assuming an air of whimsical recklessness, as if an adventure were to be instantly expected.

But the moon had not yet risen, the night was dark and for some time we met with nothing more diverting than a stumble over a dead dog, a word with a forward wench, or a narrow escape from one of those liquid douches that render the streets perilous for common folk and do not spare the greatest. Naturally, I began to tire and wished myself with all my heart back at the arsenal, but Henry, whose spirits a spice of danger never failed to raise, found a hundred things to be merry over, and some of which he made a great tale of afterward. He would go on, and presently, in the Rue de la Pourpointerie, which we entered as the clock struck the hour before midnight, his persistence was rewarded.

By that time the moon had risen; but, naturally, few were abroad so late, and such as were to be seen belonged to a class among whom even Henry did not care to seek adventures. Our astonishment was great therefore when half-way down the street—a street of tall, mean houses neither better nor much worse than others in that quarter—we saw, standing in the moonlight at an open door, a boy about seven years old.

The king saw him first, and, pressing my arm, stood still. On the instant the child, who had probably seen us before we saw him, advanced into the road to us. "Messieurs," he said, standing up boldly before us and looking at us without fear, "my father is ill, and I cannot close the shutter."

The boy's manner, full of self-possession, and his tone, remarkable at his age, took us so completely by surprise, to say nothing of the late hour and the deserted street, which gave these things their full effect—that for a moment neither of us answered. Then the king spoke. "Indeed, M. l'Empereur," he said gravely; "and where is the shutter."

The boy pointed to an open shutter at the top of the house behind him.

"Ah!" Henry said. "And you wish us to close it?"

"If you please, messieurs."

"We do please," Henry replied, saluting him with mock reverence. "You may consider the shutter closed. Lead on, Monsieur; we follow."

For the first time the boy looked doubtful; but he turned without saying anything, and passing through the doorway, was in an instant lost in the pitchy darkness of the entry. I laid my hand on the king's arm, and tried to induce him not to follow; fearing much that this might be some new thieves' trap, leading nowhither save to the poire d'angoisse and the poniard. But the attempt was hopeless from the first; he broke from me and entered, and I followed him.

We groped for the balustrade and found it, and began to ascend, guided by the boy's voice; who kept a little before us, saying continually, "This way, messieurs; this way!" His words had so much the sound of a signal, and the staircase was so dark and ill-smelling, that, expecting every moment to be seized or to have a knife in my back, I found it almost interminable. At last, however, a gleam of light appeared above us, the boy opened a door, and we found ourselves standing on a mean, narrow landing, the walls of which had once been whitewashed. The child signed to us to enter, and we followed him into a bare attic, where our heads nearly touched the ceiling.

"Messieurs, the air is keen," he said in a curiously formal tone. "Will you please to close the shutter?"

The king, amused and full of wonder, looked round. The room contained little besides a table, a stool and a lamp standing in a basin on the floor; but the alcove, curtained with black, dingy hangings, broke one wall. "Your father lies there?" Henry said, pointing to it.

"Yes, monsieur."

"He feels the cold?"

"Yes, monsieur. Will you please to close the shutter?"

I went to it, and, leaning out, managed, with a little difficulty, to comply. Meanwhile, the king, gazing curiously at the curtains, gradually approached the alcove. He hesitated long, he told me afterward, before he touched the hangings; but at length, feeling sure that there was something more in the business than appeared, he did so. Drawing one gently aside, as I turned from the window, he peered in; and saw just what he had been led to expect—a huddled form covered with dingy bed clothes and a gray head lying on a ragged yellow pillow. The man's face was turned to the wall; but, as the light fell on him, he sighed and, with a shiver, began to move. The king dropped the curtain.

The adventure had not turned out as well as he had hoped; and, with a whimsical look at me, he laid a crown on the table, said a kind word to the boy, and we went out. In a moment we were in the street.

It was my turn now to rally him, and I did so without mercy, asking if he knew of any other beauteous damsel who wanted her shutter closed, and whether this was the usual end of his adventures. He took the jest in good part, laughing fully as loudly at himself as I laughed; and in this way we had gone a hundred paces or so very merrily, when, on a sudden, he stopped.

"What is it, sire?" I asked.

"Hola!" he said, "The boy was clean."

"Clean?"

"Yes; hands, face, clothes. All clean."

"Well, sire?"

"How could he be? His father in bed, no one even to close the shutter. How could he be clean?"

"But, if he was, sire?"

For answer Henry seized me by the arm, turned me round without a word, and in a moment was hurrying back to the house. I thought that he was going thither again, and followed reluctantly; but twenty paces short of the door, he crossed the street, and drew me into a doorway. "Can you see the shutter?" he said. "Yes." Then watch it, my friend."

I had no option but to resign myself, and I nodded. A moist and chilly wind which blew through the street, and penetrating our cloaks made us shiver, did not tend to increase my enthusiasm, but the king was proof even against this, as well as against the kennel smells and the tedium of waiting, and presently his persistence was rewarded. The shutter swung slowly open, the noise made by its collision with the wall coming clearly to our ears. A minute later the boy appeared in the doorway, and stood looking up and down.

"Well," the king whispered in my ear, "what do you make of that, my friend?"

I muttered that it must be a beggar's trick.

"They would not earn a crown in a month," he answered. "There must be something more than that at the bottom of it."

Beginning to share his curiosity, I was about to propose that we should sally out and see if the boy would repeat his overture to us, when I caught the sound of footsteps coming along the street. "Is it Maignan?" the king whispered, looking out cautiously.

"No, sire," I said. "He is in yonder doorway."

Before Henry could answer the appearance of two strangers coming along the roadway confirmed my statement. They paused opposite the boy, and he advanced to them. Too far off to hear precisely what passed, we were near enough to be sure that the dialogue was in the main the same as that in which we had taken part. The men were cloaked, too, as were we, and presently they went in, as we had gone in. All, in fact, happened as it had happened to us, and after the necessary interval we saw and heard the shutter closed.

"Well," the king said, "what do you make of that?"

"The shutter is the catchword, sire."

"Ay, but what is going on up there?" he asked. And he rubbed his hands.

I had no explanation to give, however, and shook my head; and we stood awhile, watching silently. At the end of five minutes the two men came out again and walked off the way they had come, but more briskly. Henry, moreover, whose observation was all his life most acute, remarked that whatever they had been doing they carried away lighter hearts than they had brought. And I thought the same.

Indeed, I was beginning to take my full share of interest in the adventure; and in place of wondering, as before, at Henry's persistence, found it more natural to admire the keenness which he had displayed in scenting a mystery. I was not surprised, therefore, when he gripped my arm to gain my attention, and, as the window fell slowly open again, drew me quickly into the street and hurried me across it and through the doorway of the house.

"Up!" he muttered in my ear. "Quickly and quietly, man! If there are to be other visitors we will play the spy. But softly, softly; here is the boy!"

We stood aside against the wall, scarcely daring to breathe, and the child, guiding himself by the handrail, passed us in the dark without suspicion and pattered on down the staircase. We remained as we were until we heard him cross the threshold, and then we crept up, not to the uppermost landing, where the light, when the door was opened, must betray us, but to that immediately below it. There we took our stand in the angle of the stairs and waited, the king, between amusement at the absurdity of our position and anxiety lest we should betray ourselves, going off now and again into stifled laughter, from which he vainly strove to restrain himself by pinching me.

I was not in so gay a mood myself, however, the responsibility of his safety lying heavily upon me, while the possibility that the adventure might prove no less tragical in the sequel than it now appeared comical, did not fail to present itself to my eyes in the darkest colors. When we had watched, therefore, five minutes or more—which seemed to me an hour—I began to lose faith, and I was on the point of undertaking to persuade Henry to withdraw when the voices of men speaking at the door below reached us and told me that it was too late. The next moment their steps crossed the threshold and they began to ascend, the boy saying continually, "This way, messieurs, this way!" and preceding them as he had preceded us. We heard them approach, breathing heavily, and but for the balustrade, by which I felt sure that they would guide themselves, and which stood some feet from our corner, I should have been in a panic lest they should blunder against us. But they passed safely, and a moment later the boy opened the door of the room above. We heard them go in, and without a second's hesitation we crept up after them, following them so closely that the door was scarcely shut before we were at it. We heard, therefore, what passed from the first, the child's request that they would close the shutter, the hasty compliance and the silence, strange and pregnant, that followed, and which was broken at last by a solemn voice. "We have closed one shutter," it said, "but the shutter of God's mercy is never closed."

"Amen," a second person answered in a tone so distant and muffled that it needed no great wit to guess whence it came, or that the speaker was behind the curtains of the alcove. "Who are you?"

"The cure of St. Marceau," the first speaker replied.

"And whom do you bring to me?"

"A sinner."

"What has he done?"

"He will tell you."

"I am listening."

There was a pause on this, a long pause; which was broken at length by a third speaker, in a tone half sullen, half miserable. "I have robbed my master," he said.

"Of how much?"

"Fifty livres."

"Why?"

"I lost it at play."

"And you are sorry?"

"I must be sorry," the man panted with sudden fierceness, "or hang!" Hidden though he was from us, there was a tremor in his voice that told a tale of pallid cheeks and shaking knees and a terror fast rising to madness.

"He makes up his accounts tomorrow?"

"Yes."

Someone in the room groaned! it should have been the culprit, but unless I was mistaken the sound came through the curtains. A long pause followed. Then, "And if I help you," the muffled voice resumed, "will you swear to lead an honest life?"

But the answer may be guessed. I need not repeat the assurances, the protestations and vows of repentance, the cries and tears of gratitude which ensued, and to which the poor wretch, stripped of his sullen indifference, completely abandoned himself. Suffice it that we presently heard the clinking of coins, a word or two of solemn advice from the cure, and a man's painful sobbing; then the king touched my arm, and we crept down the stairs. I was for stopping on the landing where we had hidden ourselves before; but Henry drew me on to the foot of the stairs and into the street.

He turned toward home, and for some time did not speak. At length he asked me what I thought of it.

"In what way, sire?"

"Do you not think," he said in a voice of much emotion, "that if we could do what he does, and save a man instead of hanging him, it would be better?"

"For the man, sire, doubtless," I answered drily; but for the state it might not be so well. If mercy became the rule and justice the exception—there would be fewer bodies at Montfaucon and more in the streets at daylight. I feel much greater doubt on another point."

Shaking off the moodiness that had for a moment overcome him, Henry asked with vivacity what that was.

"Who is he, and what is his motive?"

"Why?" the king replied in some surprise—he was ever of so kind a nature that an appeal to his feelings displaced his judgment. "What should he be but what he seems?"

"Benevolence itself?"

"Yes."

"Well, sire, I grant that he may be M. de Joyeuse, who has spent his life in passing in and out of monasteries, and has performed so many tricks of the kind that I could believe anything of him. But if it be not he—"

"It was not his voice," Henry said, positively.

"Then there is something here," I answered, "still unexplained. Consider the oddity of the conception, sire, the secrecy of the performance, the hour, the mode, all the surrounding circumstances! I can imagine a man carrying favor with the basest and most dangerous class by such means. I can imagine a conspiracy recruited by such means. I can imagine this shibboleth of the shutter grown to a watchword as deadly as the 'Tuez!' of '72. I can imagine all that, but I cannot imagine a man acting thus out of pure benevolence."

"No?" Henry said, thoughtfully. "Well, I think that I agree with you." And far from being displeased with my warmth (as is the manner of some sovereigns when their best friends differ from them), he came over to my opinion so completely as to halt and express his intention of returning and probing the matter to the bottom. Midnight had gone, however; it would take some little time to retrace our steps; and with difficulty I succeeded in dissuading him, promising instead to make inquiries on the morrow, and having learned who lived in the house, to turn the whole affair into a report, which should be submitted to him.

This amused and satisfied him, and, expressing himself well content with the evening's diversion—though we had done nothing unworthily either of a king or a minister—he parted from me at the arsenal, and went home with his suite.

It did not occur to me at the time that I had promised to do anything difficult; but the news which my agents brought me next day—that the uppermost floor of the house in the Rue Pourpointerie was empty—put another face upon the matter. The landlord declared that he knew nothing of the tenant, who had rented the rooms, ready furnished, by the week; and as I had not seen the man's face, there remained only two sources whence I could get the information I needed—the child, and the cure of St. Marce