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PAPA'S LETTER.

I was sitting in my study,
Writing letters, when I heard,
"Peace, dear mamma, May I tell you
Mamma must be 'sturbed,
"But I'm tired of the kitty;
Want some ozer ring to do.
Writing letters, is 'on mamma?
Tan't I write a letter, too?"
"Not now, darling, mamma's busy;
Run and play with kitty now."
"Ma, no, mamma, let me write letters—
Tan't I write a letter, too?"
I would paint my darling's portrait,
As his sweet eyes searched my face—
Hair of gold and eyes of azure,
Form of childish, witching grace.
But the eager face was clouded,
As I slowly shook my head,
Till said, "I'll make a letter
Of you, darling boy, instead."
So I parted back the tresses
From his forehead high and white,
And a stamp in sport I pasted
'Mid its waves of golden light.
Then I said, "Now, little letter,
Go away and bear good news;"
And I smiled as down the staircase
Cattered round the little shoes.
Leaving me, the darling hurried
Down to Mary in his glee;
"Ma'ma's writing lots of letters;
I's a letter, Mary—see!"
No one heard the little prattler
As once more he climbed the stair,
Reached his little cap and tipper,
Standing on the entry stair.
No one heard the front door open,
As he slipped the latch and ran;
As he floated o'er his shoulders
In the crisp October air.
Down the street the baby hastened,
Till he reached the open door;
"Ma's letter, Mr. Postman;
Is there room for any more?"
"Case de letter's doin' to papa;
Papa lives with 'em, 'on know.
Mamma sent me for a letter;
Does 'on find 'at I tan go?"
But the clerk in wonder answered:
"Not to-day, my little man."
"Ten I'll find another office;
I'ase I must go if I tan."

THE ECHIN DIAMONDS.

Arthur Stangate, attorney-at-law, was my brother. He had succeeded to my father's business, and no name was more esteemed and trusted in all Runnington, and it was a rich and important place. My brother's office were in the town, two miles distant, but he did almost as much business among the gentry at his own private house as he did in the town. Most of the great folks employed him; but his best client was Sir Etchin Eckford, a ci-devant Indian judge, very wealthy, and the possessor of some rare and costly jewels, known in this country as the Etchin diamonds. Their name even makes me shudder now. One evening, as Arthur was preparing to return to his office, where important business would detain him all night, Sir Etchin's groom left a parcel, with a note. The latter stated that the former contained the famous Etchin diamonds, which the owner thought safest to entrust to Arthur's care, as he had been unexpectedly called to London. "I don't care what deeds they leave with me," said my brother; "but I don't like such trusts as these. Still, I suppose I must keep them." Of course he could not send them back; so taking the parcel he at once proceeded to his study to lock it in the iron safe. I went with him, and with a woman's curiosity and love for jewelry, brought a peep at the gems before they were put away. Arthur, the best brother in the world, instantly removed the paper cover discovering a square morocco box, brass bound, with the key tied to the handle. Opening it, he showed me the gems. They were, indeed, magnificent, set in massive Indian fashion. Many of the diamonds were yet uncut. One by one, bracelets, bangles, necklets, Arthur lifted, and flashed in the lamplight before my dazzled vision. He was holding a superb emerald and diamond necklace in his hand, for my admiring eyes, when he happened to raise my eyes, a cry of alarm burst from my lips. "What is it, Nell?" asked Arthur. "The man!" I replied. "See, the window is uncurtained, and I am sure I saw a man looking in from the tree outside." "Nonsense!" cried Arthur. "Those windows are fastened, and I am sure I saw a man looking in from the tree outside." "See, Arthur," he said, "those windows brought a few threads of silver to your hair, but"—and he held up a magnificent bracelet—"they have put gold on your wrists. The baronets ask you to accept this for your bravery in preserving the Etchin diamonds."

A GOOD FATHER.

Dr. Graham having passed a very creditable examination before the Army Medical Board, was commissioned as assistant surgeon in the United States Army in 18— and ordered to report for duty to the commanding officer at Fort McKavett, Texas. There were no railroads in the western country at that time, and the usual way of getting to Texas was by the Mississippi river to New Orleans, and then crossing the Gulf to stage it up through the State. Dr. Graham was very desirous of examining the Western country mineralogically, so applied and received permission from the War Department to go by way of Arkansas and the Indian Territory to his post. On his arrival at St. Louis he shipped the greater part of his baggage by way of the river, and taking only what he could carry on horseback, started on the prairie. While in St. Louis, at the Planter's Hotel, he formed the acquaintance of a gentleman who, learning where he was going, gave him a letter of introduction to his brother, who was a farmer, living on his route in Arkansas. It is not necessary for us to follow him on his road, or tell what discoveries he made in the interest of science; sufficient it is that one day towards dusk, he reached the western gentleman to whom he had written the letter, and knocked at the door and presented his letter to the judge (even in those days every one was a judge in Arkansas), who would not have needed it to have accorded him an open-handed welcome; for travellers were a God-send, and news was as much sought after then as now. After a short visit, he proposed to go on to the next town, about four miles off, where he intended to put up for the night. The judge would not listen to his leaving, and was so cordial in his desire for him to stay that he would have been rude not to have done so. The judge, after directing one of the servants to attend to his horse, invited him into the dining-room, where he was introduced to the wife and daughter of his host, and also to a substantial western supper, to which he did ample justice. After supper they adjourned to the parlor, and he entertained his new-made friends with the latest news from the outside world. The judge brewed some stiff whisky punch, which Graham, socially inclined, imbibed quite freely. The old couple retired, and left their daughter to entertain him; and whether it was the punch or what, at all events he made her love to her, and finally asked her to be his wife and go to Texas with him, to which she consented. She, being very unsophisticated and innocent, took everything he said in downright earnest, and with her it was a case of "love at first sight."

CONFISCATION OF THE AMERICAN PATENTS.

Hitherto one of the special features, and we believe, special permits, of the American patent system has been the issuing of patents for invention without restriction or drawback in the way of after charges or conditions. An inventor applies for a patent, and, if his claim is good, the patent is granted; and there the matter rests for the allotted term of years. The patentee can sell or transfer his right the same as other property. He is not obliged to develop the invention commercially, nor to pay any more fees. If through disincorporation or inability the patent is not used, the right to use it is not forfeited. Of course the presumption is that the great mass of patents, if workable, will be worked, and the country will begin to profit thereby without delay. If not, the life of the patent soon expires, and the invention falls into the common stock of knowledge, to be used or neglected as its value may determine. Our readers are aware that in the proposed amendment of the patent law (Senate Bill 300, section xi.) an attempt is made to abolish this feature of the law. The reasons for so doing are succinctly stated in the report of the Patent Committee submitted to the Senate March 8. We quote: "One inconvenience of the enormous increase in the number of patents granted is that many of them are for things of inconsiderable practical utility. Such patents are not merely useless, they stand in the way of every future inventor who may wish to make an advantageous use of some little feature which forms an incidental part of them. There are really obstructive patents; the thing they describe is useless in itself; they do not disclose an invention which will be so valuable when the practical difficulties of applying it have been overcome as to lead any one to spend time and money in the endeavor to overcome them; they lie dead and useless, practically abandoned as worthless by their owners. Such patents have no reason for existence, for they neither constitute nor create any progress in the useful arts. Something can be done in restricting better examination when they are granted, but not much, for attempts at the outset to judge of the degree of future usefulness are found by experience to lead to fatal mistakes. The examination must be confined to the question of novelty. "Section 11 undertakes to extinguish these worthless patents, by requiring the payment of a fee of \$50 when the patent is about four and one-half years old, and \$100 when it is about nine and one-half years old. The sums are large enough to make an owner think twice about paying them for a patent which, after four or nine years' trial, holds out no prospect of usefulness, while at the same time they are not too onerous for patents of any value. The plan is in use in England, and in a modified form on the continent of Europe, and judging from the experience of those countries will probably extinguish one-half of the patents granted. It will take hold of just those patents which, useless themselves, reappear in the form of reissues, and cause those annoyances for which the worthless patents are granted, and not the ability to obtain the reissue is really responsible. "This reason we hold to be clearly fallacious at several points. Grant that many patents are of inconsiderable practical utility, shall we therefore rob the inventor of that little because it is small? "How can a patent, or the idea which it covers, be justly called worthless and at the same time desirable to another? A's patent is undeveloped and worthless. Why? Because B, wants to use it! "It is naught, it is naught," saith the buyer. Shall the government, therefore, agree with him to the detriment of the owner? "If a patent really lies dead and useless, practically abandoned as worthless by its owner, will it be killed by a deader by legislative enactment? A patent that is dead through inherent worthlessness is an incompetent of harm as any other worthless bit of paper. If it has life enough to be an object of desire to anybody, there is no reason why the would-be user should not pay for the privilege of owning or using it. There is no danger that he will pay more than he thinks it is really worth to him. "But, it is argued, it is desirable to get out of the way patents that are worthless and yet may be reissued and so become troublesome. Will the reissue of a patent on an inherently worthless invention give it force and vitality? "It sometimes, indeed quite frequently, happens that an invention is practically abandoned through many years, not through its own demerit, but because the inventor foreruns his time. Financial success implies an immediate demand, which does not always exist for an invention that is radically novel and valuable. The invention, even when unprofitable, may greatly hasten the social or industrial changes which in after years will make it a great public benefit and also a source of profit to the owner. Shall we, therefore, punish the inventor by confiscating his property because he invented too soon? In how many cases is the inventor urged on by the hope of ultimately educating the community up to the use of his invention, though the immediate prospect is black enough, and so is encouraged to make and develop his invention to his own cost through many years? Take away the assurance that his patent once gained will hold his right until the community grows up to the appreciation of it, and you take away one of the strongest inducements to invent. "Even if I die before my reward comes," the inventor says, "the patent will remain as a legacy to my family." Very often it is all he can hope to leave them. "There is another way of looking at this question. Suppose if true that a certain percentage of the patents issued are at once worthless and a hindrance to the progress of the arts. How large is that percentage? There are in force to-day, say, 100,000 patents; we believe that the actual number is even greater

A HOUSE OF RESCUED CHILDREN.

About six hundred children of both sexes are taken care of at the House of Refuge, in this city, partly at the expense of the State, partly at the cost of the city, and partly by contributions of large numbers of charitable people, many of whom are now dead. They have been placed in the House, in large proportion, through commit by the Courts of this and other counties as juvenile offenders against the laws, and, in many instances, at the solicitation of parents or other guardians because the children were unmanageable outside. They are in course of discipline to draw them away from evil companionship and evil ways, and of training in habits of order, cleanliness, obedience and industry, and they are being instructed in the elements of a common school education, in regular work at trades or other useful occupations, and in good morals, with the beneficial surroundings of home influences. To make an inspection of this institution the Board of Managers sent invitations to Senators and members of the Legislature, the Judges of the Courts of that part of the State entitled to commit juvenile offenders to the House, and a number of citizens who have shown earnest interest in the welfare of its inmates; and about twenty gentlemen assembled at the House of Refuge yesterday. It was the design of the Managers to show their official and other visitors the nature and objects of the institution; how it is in its essence a reformatory school and not the prison some suppose it to be; how its methods for the reform of its inmates are carried on; and what are its results in the way of rescuing the children committed to its care from their former surroundings of neglect, vice and crime, and in putting them on the way to becoming well-behaved and useful men and women in their after life. So far as this design could be promoted by explanation and opportunity for inspection, it was accomplished yesterday during a most interesting visit and inspection, lasting from four to five hours, through the dormitories, dining-rooms, school-rooms, work-rooms, chapels and play-grounds, the inmates being all assembled, the boys in their departments and the girls in theirs. The visitors saw some six hundred children, clean in their persons, comfortably, though plainly and inexpensively clad; obedient, orderly and entirely manageable in their deportment; bright and happy, if their expression and action may be taken as proof; and advancing in school education and knowledge of useful work, so as to pass some of the means of which they had been formerly deprived for taking care of themselves when they shall go out to the duties and responsibilities of life. The attention of the visitors was then called to what was the condition of these children, and to the evil fate that they inevitably have been theirs, if they had been left to run the course they had entered. Some of them had parents that neglected them and allowed them to run wild; some had helpless parents that could do nothing for them; some had drunken and debauched or criminal parents, who taught them nothing but their own evil example; some had no parents, nor any one to care after them and all of them had been surrounded by some form of demoralizing influence that led them into vicious habits or offences against the law. Very few of them had what the rest of the world call "Home." Within the shelter of the Refuge all this had been changed. Those had a home that never knew poverty; they were clean, who had never been clean in their lives until they entered the Refuge; they were tidy and comfortable who had never known such a thing as a whole or wholesome garment; they were at work who never understood the meaning of useful industry; they were seeing the light of education who had been in the dense darkness of ignorance, and they were surrounded by good influences whose ears had been habituated to coarse, foul and shocking talk of every description. More than this, society had been relieved, not only from the pests these boys and girls were, but from their future progeny, who, in accordance with known results, must have multiplied the census of vice and crime. Possibly it may not have been strictly necessary for the Managers to make this special exhibit of the nature and the beneficial work of their institution, but it was well to do so, as it has heretofore been as well understood by the Legislature as it must certainly be hereafter through the Senators and members who made the visit yesterday. These, we believe, saw that the institution needs the fostering encouragement of the State for the good of the State, as well as for the individual good of the rescued children within the shelter of its walls.—Philadelphia Ledger.

father-in-law or the unsophisticatedness of his wife.—Harper's Magazine, for January.

than that. How many of them are a source of "annoyance" through patent litigations and the like? To say one per cent. would be a gross exaggeration, and certainly not more than half of these would be that under the exterminating influence of the proposed rule had it been in operation. Accordingly, to get rid of a few patents, alleged to be mischievous, it is proposed to subject the entire class of future patentees to penalties at once uncalculated for and unjust. Grant all that is charged against the "worthless" patents, so called; to get rid of them by such means would be paying altogether too much for the whistle.—Scientific American.

Varieties.

—A Pittsburg justice has decreed that a flag pole in a public highway, even with the glorious stars and stripes flying from it, is a nuisance and must come down. —It is believed that the Colorado potato-beetle is abandoning the cultivated potato and returning to what has been discovered was its first love—the bull-nettle. —Mr. James T. Field, in his lecture on the poet Byron, says that the late Dr. Lyman Beecher became so interested in the author of "Childe Harold," and so eager to help him morally, that he thought at one time of going to Europe to convert the poet. —The Boston Traveller complains that the streets of that city are not swept, and says that there are men and women, too, in the city who are wearing old clothes because the streets are not in a suitable condition to allow them to wear better garments. —Herr Walther has given his library of Goethe literature to the Goethe Society of Vienna. It contains over 400 works, many of which are rare editions of the poet's writings, publications concerning him and translations of his poems into various languages. —Australia the telegraph wires are preserved from being tampered with by having a device attached which conveys an electric current to any one who touches them. Thousands of miles of wire are thus protected without watching, the natives being in terror of the poles. —The San Francisco schools, among many other good things, have a corps of twenty-two substitute teachers. They are paid \$3 a day for actual service in a primary class, \$4 in a grammar class, and \$5 for remaining at the office half a day to answer calls. They report regularly every morning at the rooms of the board and are sent out to various schools on the receipt of telegraphic signals. —An old gentleman in Key West took his son's watch to show him how easily he could be robbed, and then asked him the time. The young man was distressed, and he said he had never stolen. "Never mind," said his father, "I took it to show you how easily you could lose it; here it is." But as he felt in his pocket to return it, he was surprised to find that some thief more adroit than himself had taken it. —An eager and unknown young man called on a clergyman in Warren, N. J., a day or two ago, and said he wished him to marry him to a young lady later in the day, and had set his heart upon \$5 as the fee that he should pay for the important service; but, unfortunately, he had but \$3, and would like to borrow \$2 of the clergyman to put in the envelope with it. The clergyman was worldly wise, and the youth went away without the \$2. And he did not come back to be married. —The Government of Honduras is making great efforts to develop the agricultural resources of the country. Coffee planting has been vigorously carried on, and the Government makes free grants of land to all persons desirous of undertaking the cultivation of coffee, of sugar or of cocoa, and gives free transport of the necessary material and labor to the site of the grant. Besides these advantages, planters are exempt from military service, and all implements and materials necessary for the use or formation of plantations are admitted into the country free of duty. Strangers are admitted to the same privileges as citizens of the republic. —Dean Stanley has returned after his active and agreeable visit to the United States, where he met the sort of reception any person who knew the country could have known him to receive. But telling differs from realizing, and in the realization the Dean appears to have been alike surprised and gratified. There are few who would be greeted more warmly; for the tone of the Dean's mind is somewhat akin to that pervading the United States, while he is the scion of a great family and the dignity of a cathedral hallowed in American thought. In that position Dean Stanley had the opportunity of paying many attentions to American ecclesiastics and men of note; and he did so, not to curry favor, but because he liked the people. He is both respected and admired in the United States.—Anglo-American Times, London. —Although the late ex-King of Hanover had the grievous affliction of blindness, he had also a great consolation in the person of his eldest daughter, Princess Erletria. This lady was his constant companion, leading him and sketching for him with her kind voice all interesting persons and things surrounding them. The king would enter a museum or other public place like a man with good eyes, and, when on his daughter's arm, never failed to return salutes addressed to him, from whatever direction they might come. It was evident that there was some system of telegraphy known to the two, and from long habit the king had become so expert that he rarely made a mistake. At a dinner he was led up to the host or hostess, bowed at the right moment, and went through the ceremony with all the ease of a man who could see.