

The Economical Dinner Party. A wily Crocodile, Who dwelt upon the Nile, Brought himself one day to give a dinner.

With paper, pen, and ink, He sat him down to think, And first of all, Sir Lion he invited;

The northern Wolf, who dwells In rocky Arctic dells; The Leopard and the Lynx, by blood united;

Then Mr. Fox, the shrewd— Not very big of build— And Michael Duck, who is sober step at last;

And Mr. Frog, serene In gait and little green, Who walks with ease, and loves himself so lately.

But when—the covers raised— On empty plates they gazed, Each on the other looked with ire, intent on

Mr. Frog was small, She softly swallowed him, and made no mention.

This Mr. Fox perceived, And saying: "By your leave, Some punishment is due for this transgression."

He grabbed her in his claws, Then much to his dismay, By Mr. Lion was taken in possession.

The Wolf, without a growl— In spite of tooth and claws— Let the meeting of the Lynx to tell the story;

At his relations' late, Made mention of that wolfish monster's fate.

The Lion raised his head— Since Lion King he is— "It is better to King to look his dinner."

Then with a nod and a wink, With might of law and sin, And made a meal up in that appetite's dinner.

Then saw in sudden fear, Sir Crocodile's dear, And heard him speak words of feeling, of devotion.

"Since all of you have done, Well willed to your mind, You surely cannot grant me satisfaction."

very foolish. "Alice, haven't I got a place where I can lay my head?"

"Don't talk nonsense," said his wife sharply. The idea of a sober man going to bed with his boots on.

"Would you rather I'd get—?" "I'd rather you'd get some common sense," she said.

"But I am so sleepy," answered her husband, "my head is as heavy as lead, and I cannot keep my eyes open."

"Laziness! sheer laziness!" said his wife sharply. Mr. Skinner went down stairs and disappeared.

The last words his wife heard him say were that there was rest for the weary, but she was picking up the embroidery on the misused sham with a pin, and did not heed him.

She was a distinguished woman; distinguished in the town where she lived, as being the cleanest housekeeper in it.

No girl could be found neat enough to live with her; all the mottoes in her house were to the effect that cleanliness is akin to godliness.

She dusted every article of furniture in the house several times every day; she scrubbed so often that the children had chronic diphtheria; she scrubbed so clean that at last she scrubbed through her kitchen floor into the cellar, and was nearly lost to the community.

It was a perpetual warfare between her and dirt. The front parlor was never opened to the family, and although Mr. Skinner had furnished it he had never sat down in it a moment since.

Its air was that of a tomb. After it had been opened to company for an afternoon, the children went round with dannels about their throats and drank ginger tea.

It was the handsomest parlor in the community, too, and had the family pictures and their marriage certificate framed and hung up there.

When dinner was ready—and it was a good dinner, too, for Mrs. Skinner was a notable cook—she asked the children where their father was.

They did not know. This seemed strange; she questioned them closely but they had not seen which way he went when he passed through the room.

"Didn't he say where he was going?" she asked, wondering, for Mr. Skinner never went out on Sundays with out his family.

"I should say you did," answered his wife, "and the dinner is all eaten up, but I'll fix you up something nice, and she went out taking the children with her.

How much of it Mr. Skinner ever knew it is impossible to say, but there was an immediate and satisfactory change that at first amazed and then delighted him.

He could lay down anywhere when he was tired and his wife would throw a shawl over him, and leave him in peace.

He has even been seen to lie down on the sofa in the parlor where he took his tip Van Winkle sleep, and nobody disturbs him.

Mrs. Skinner was at least a woman of sense, and when she realized that one hair of that grizzly-gray head was worth more than all the pillow shams in the world to her, she put the last one away in the company of a demented assortment of superfluous tidies.

And they are, really and truly, and not in any eulogical sense, a "happy family" now.

A Typical Mexican City. A correspondent writes that Chihuahua is a fine and typical Mexican city of 20,000 inhabitants, of which number perhaps 2000 are of foreign birth—

German, American and some Chinese. I was told that there was probably not half a dozen stores in use by the entire Mexican population, nearly all of their cooking being done over an earthen vessel in which a few sticks or bits of charcoal are placed, or more rarely in an open fireplace.

Coal has not been found in Northern Mexico, and all of the wood is in the form of faggots of pino or live oak, brought from the mountains on the backs of burros, each load of which (about three or four armfuls) costs 20 cents, and must pay a municipal duty on entering the city.

Even at the leading hotel, only the kitchen and one other room occupied by the family of the proprietor has a stove or any provision for fire. In the office the only heat was derived from a small earthen vessel set in the corner, in which some charcoal was burning.

Glass windows are also a luxury in the city, and in all Mexico. A few of the stores and better dwellings have recently placed glass windows in the street-fronts, but by far the greater portion are closed with heavy wooden shutters behind grated iron bars, and when light is required either the entire shutter is opened or a smaller one set into the larger.

As in the city all houses are built on the street line, and are rarely over one story in height, a person walking along the narrow sidewalks can easily look in through these openings and observe the domestic economy of the occupants. The houses all have one main entrance, with large double doors leading through a passage to the plaza, or inner court, and through this access is had to all the apartments.

These plazas are universally open to the sky, and nearly all of them are filled with flowers and trees, such as the fig, pomegranate, orange, etc., which, being sheltered from the windows, grow luxuriantly. Few of the rooms, except those fronting the street, have any windows, all light coming in through the open door, which fact I mournfully comprehend, as I am now occupying such a room, and am compelled, for light, to sit with my doors wide open, and my chilled fingers can with difficulty guide my pen.

Fortunately these spasms of cold are rare and of brief duration. Ex-Gov. George T. Anthony, of Kansas, tells me that two weeks ago he could have given me luscious strawberries and cream, the fruit picked from his own vines in the open air, and even now his garden is bright with roses and fragrant flowers.

He says that many of the small fruits bear two crops a year, the first blossoming in the early spring and again in the late fall. Roses are almost perennial, and we picked flowers to-day by the roadside even while the snowflakes were falling upon them.

THE COWBOY.

Not Such a Terror as He Seems, says the Veracious Hill Top.

So much amusing talk is being made recently about the blood-bedraggled cowboy of the wild West, that I arise as one man to say a few things, not in a dictatorial style, but regarding this so-called or so-styled dry land pirate, who, mounted on a little cow pony and under the black flag sails out across the green surge of the plains to scatter the rocky shores of time with the bones of his fellow man.

A great many people wonder where the cowboy, with his abnormal thirst for blood, originated. Where did this young Jesse James, with his gory record and dauntless eye, come from? Was he born in a buffalo wallow at the foot of some rock-ribbed mountain, or did he breathe the thin air along the brink of an alkali pond, where the horned toad and the centipede sang him to sleep and the tarantula tickled him under the eum with its hairy legs.

Careful research and the cold, hard statistics show that the cowboy, as a general thing, was born in an unostentatious manner on the farm. I hate to sit down on a beautiful romance and squish the breath out of a romantic dream; but the cowboy who gets too much moist damnation into his system and rides on a gallop up and down Main street shooting out the lights of the beautiful billiard palace, would be just as unhappy if a mouse ran up his pantalon leg as you would, gentle reader. He is generally a youth, who thinks he will not earn his \$25 per month if he does not yell and whoop and scare little girls into St. Vitus's dance.

I've known more cowboys to injure themselves with their own revolvers than to injure any one else. This is evidently because they are more familiar with the hoe than they are with the Smith & Wesson.

One night while I had rooms in the business part of a territorial city in the Rocky Mountain cattle country, I was awakened at about one o'clock, a. m., by the most blood-curdling cry of "murder!" I ever heard. It was murder with a big M. Across the street, in the bright light of a restaurant, a dozen cowboys, with lead helmets and flashing silver brand, long leather chaps, Mexican spurs and orange silk neckties, and with loading revolvers, were standing. It seemed that a big, red faced Captain Kibb of the band, with his skin full of valley tan, had marched into an ice cream resort with a self-cooker in his hand, and ordered the vanilla cream for the gang. There being a dozen young fellows at the place, mostly male and female, from a neighboring town, indulging in cream, the proprietor—a meek Norwegian, with thin white hair—demanded it and tried to do so. He said something to that effect, whereat the other eleven men of alcoholic courage, let off a yell that froze the cream into a solid glacier and shook two kerosene lamps out of their sockets in the chandeliers.

Thereupon the little Norwegian said: "Gentlemen, I can't neller like dot spreadin' and dot kind of a ting, and you fellers put dot blubber pants on and dot funny glee and such a ting like dot better keep kaim'd of quiet, or I shall call up the policeman and he will put you in dot hole."

Then they laughed at him and cried yet again with a loud voice. This annoyed the ice cream agriculturist, and he took the oil as handle that he used to jam the ice down around the freezer with, and peeled a large area of scalp of the leader's dome of thought, and it hung down over his eyes so that he could not see to shoot with any degree of accuracy.

After he had yelled "murder!" three or four times he fell under an ice cream table, and the milk-eyed Scandinavian broke a caster over the organ of self-esteem, and poured red pepper and salt and vinegar and Holland sauce and other relishes on the place where the scalp was loose.

This roused the brave but murderous cow gentleman and he begged that he might be allowed to go away. The gentle superintendent of the ten stamp ice cream freezer then took the revolvers away from the 1844 Dane and kicked him out through a show-case, and saluted him with a bouquet of July oysters that suffered severely from malaria.

All cowboys are not singularly; but out of twenty you will generally find one who is brave when he has his revolvers with him; but when he forgets and lets his slippers at home on the piano, the most tropical violet-eyed dude can climb him with the butt end of a sunflower and beat his brains out, and spatter them all over that school district.

In the wild, unfettered west beware of the man who never carries arms, never gets drunk, and always minds his own business. He doesn't go around shooting out the gas or intimidating a kindergarten school, but

when the brave frontiersman, with a revolver in each boot, and a bowie knife down the back of his neck, insults a modest young lady and needs to be thrown through a plate glass window and then walked over by the populace, call on the silent man who dares to wear a clean shirt and human clothes.

Poisonous Wall Paper.

The following emanating from a firm of practical manufacturers, of Edinburgh, may be a useful contribution to the discussion on the subject of poisonous colors in wall papers: "In a long and practical experience as color manufacturers, we have never known arsenic used in the manufacture of any color suitable for wall paper except emerald green. This bright and beautiful color has never been equalled by any non-arsenic green; but it is expensive, and of very poor covering properties. For greens, blues, browns, reds, yellows, etc., either dry or in oil, the color maker has no need to use arsenic, and we cannot conceive what object would be served by his doing so, and certainly he would not do so in reducing a color to a tint with white. Years ago, a yellow was used called 'king's' or 'vanary' yellow, containing arsenic; but it is long out of date, and was only used by coach painters. The whole matter rests upon the medium by which the tint or color is fixed to the paper or wall, and the volatility of any component part. Even emerald green is perfectly harmless if properly covered in oil or varnish; but when used in glazes and showy papers where there is little or no fixed material, we can understand there is danger if exposed to undue heat. In better class papers it is seldom used. In regard to abstaining from the use of poisonous metallic substances in the manufacture of wall papers, we can only say, that, unless scraped off and eaten, they are perfectly harmless."

The Mystery of Dreams.

A man fell asleep as the clock tolled the first stroke of twelve. He awoke, and saw the twelfth stroke had died away, having in the interval dreamed that he had committed a crime, was detected after six years, tried and condemned, the shock of finding the halter around his neck aroused him to consciousness, when he discovered that all these events had happened in an infinitesimal fragment of time. He bemoaned, wishing to illustrate the wonders of sleep, told how a conviction man being a gluck, found himself, terrified, made a poor showing, that he lived as one for sixty years, bringing up a family and working hard, and how, upon waking up, found his long dream, so short a time had he been asleep that the narrow-necked gourd bottle, filled with water, which he knew he overturned as he fell asleep, had not time to empty itself. How fast the soul travels when the body sleeps! Often when we awake we shrink from going in the dull routine of a social existence, regretting the pleasant life of dreamland. How is that? Sometimes when we go to strange places, we fancy that we have seen it before. Is it possible that when one has been asleep, the soul has drifted away, seen the place, and has that memory of it which so surprises us? In a word, how far dual is the life of man, how far not?

Salaries of Post-Laureates.

When James I appointed Ben Jonson poet laureate he gave him an annual salary of 100 marks, equal to \$375. On Jonson's request a petition to "The best of monarchs, masters, men," Charles I increased the poet's pension to \$500, giving him some three of Canary Spanish wine out of our store of wines yearly. The salary was quite adequate for the convenience of life at the time, being the same as was paid to the king's physician, but both pension and purchase were often in arrears. Davenant was nominally laureate for thirty years, but owing to political connection and the Puritan assembly was far from obtaining regular payment of his salary. Dryden was made laureate and historicalographer royal in 1673, the two appointments joined in one part of giving him \$1000 a year—equal to at least \$5000 nowadays—and thelerce of Canary, his salary being subsequently increased to \$1500, with an additional pension of \$500, dependent on the king's pleasure.

Telegraphing Without Arms.

At the school for telegraphy in An Arbor, Mich., one of the students has not the use of his arms, yet he sends and receives messages all right. On the table in front of him is a pen and stick. Taking the pencil between his teeth he can write a good hand if that is what one would call it, and with the stick in his mouth and resting on the key he can send messages at the rate of about seventeen words per minute. His name is Monty Shottwell, of Concord, Jackson county.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

The mounting of the shell of the horseshoe crab is described in the American Naturalist for October. In this animal the shell splits open around the front edge; and when the animal draws itself through the rent it appears as if it were spewing itself out of its shell. On the other hand, the lobster, in casting its shell, draws itself through a rent along the back of the carapace.

A writer of mathematical bent, says the Scientific American, finds from the census returns that there are about 17,000 dentists in the United States, who he estimates, pack into the teeth of the American people a ton of pure gold annually. Continuing his speculations, he predicts that in the twenty-first century all the gold in the country will be buried in the graveyards.

From a large number of experiments with the antennae of insects, Mr. C. J. A. Porter is led to conclude (1) that the antennae are not the organ of any one or any combination of what we call the five senses—bearing, seeing, smelling, touching, and tasting; (2) that the power of direction does not lie in the antennae; and (3) that the antennae are the organ of some sense not possessed by us.

Turntables occur in the afternoon, generally between two o'clock and evening, four being called the tornado hour. Turntables move from south-west to north-east, generally first about twenty degrees north, and their linear movement is ordinarily from thirty to forty miles an hour. Sometimes, or on sunny days, or when the temperature is very high, and the air is thoroughly saturated with moisture, the tornadoes occur when the electrical conditions are large, or when the air is highly charged with electricity.

Finland, the last-born daughter of the sea? In J. C. Fenwick says, the only country of Europe in which ear-flags—that is, the practice of setting fire to the trees in order to clear the ground—is still carried on extensively. The object of the practice is to prepare the earth for agriculture, but as much of the wood is used for the soil for the cultivation of the seed contemplated, and this is the peculiarity of the usage. The trees growing on the spot selected are burned, and the soil is then sown with the seed, and the ground thus cleared not be permanently cultivated under cultivation, it is likely to become covered again with a copious self-sown forest of higher potential value.

Going to "Ran" Dakota.

"Yes, we're going to Dakota," said one of the party, "I'll be right with you on board a Lake Shore train, near Toledo. We're going out to Dakota to run it."

"To run it?" I inquired. "Yes, we mean to run the state, when it becomes a state. Jim over there'll be governor, Henry'll be state treasurer, John will be congressman, and I guess a United States senatorship will be good enough for me." Then the whole party laughed, and another spoke up.

"It isn't as bad as that, stranger. But we have a scheme. We're going out to settle in two or three adjacent counties. After we get started we're going to bring a lot more of our friends out. Some of us are lawyers, some doctors, one a newspaper man, two merchants, and you can bet we are all politicians. We'll go into some of those new counties, help each other into the offices, and when the state is organized, perhaps we'll be strong enough to capture something pretty good. You know it doesn't take a very large crowd of fellows to pull a little state like that. And we're all from Ohio, too. But keep it quiet, stranger, because the blamed news papers might get hold of it."

A Grand Deed.

"Did you ever accomplish anything in your life that might be called grand or noble? Some action that would distinguish you from your fellow men and to which you can now look back with pleasurable emotions?" was the entire ethnographic question put by a visitor to a state-prison convict.

The poor convict mused for a moment and then replied: "Yes, I have. I once did a grand deed that gave me distinction of a certain sort, but," he added, bitterly, "I cannot say that I look back upon it with any pleasurable emotions."

"Oh, very sorry," returned the visitor, who was a good man, "that you cannot find pleasure in its contemplation. It might afford you pleasure and consolation in this your hour of trial and darkness. May I ask what this grand deed was?"

"Yes, you may," replied the poor prisoner, while his voice trembled choked with emotion. "It was grand larceny."

The Old Churchyard.

Breathe soft and low, oh whispering wind, Above the tangled grass so deep, Where those who loved so long ago Forgot the world and all its care, No frowning shaft or sculptured urn, No monumental empyræan pile, Tells to the curious passer-by Their virtues or the time they died.

I count the old familiar names, O'ergrown with moss and lichen grey, Where tangled briar and creeping vine Across the crumbling tablets stray. The summer sky is soft and blue; The birds still sing the sweet old strain; But something from the summer sun For something that will not come again.

So many crosses have been hushed— So many names have ceased to live— So many tablets I need to touch— Awe-struck I never breathe of clay— The names would wince from me— I cease to hear its praise or blame; The mossy marble tells no tale— No hollow sound or empty fame.

I only look that, calm and still, They sleep by and their names are with, Beyond the flow of passing days, Beyond the shadow of the roll I only feel that, good and well, I had upon the highway here, And good with you, as you are here, To be like the stone slabs here.

HIMOROS.

A counter fit—A ready-made suit. A knotty question—What kind of a tie do you wear? In hop year the girls are liable to jump at any chance. "Samuel at conclusions?" Reading the last chapter of a serial story. "Pras-hand inside a glass by the pond, but there's no water in the shaft."

"Why is it that our children are like a song? Because it is a little old." "Grief is a poor physician. It relieves the slight, but will return one to pine away." The claps who fill the hotel among the wild steers are the mosquitoes of the west.

Nowadays, when little children sneak into the pastry baskets, they become minor spies. A diphtherian is seldom injured by a fall and he probably picks up a spring if the water is good. It is said an Arizona judge refused to let the bench to become a hotel water. The judicial crime may be a man's vanity, but it does not always fill the void created by the want of three square meals a day.

When Shakespeare wrote "All the world's a stage, and men and women merely players," the great dramatist could not have had in his mind's eye of how many the world would be in the nineteenth century anxious to play as famous as Juliet.

A gentleman was giving a little Kokoi baby boy some peanuts the other day. The good mother said, "Now, what are you going to say to the gentleman?" With childish simplicity the little fellow looked up in the gentleman's face and replied: "More!"

He—Before you give my old overcoat to that beggar, my dear, had you not better look through the pockets? She—Which did you wear it last? He—The latter part of last March, I think. She—Then I know there's nothing in the pockets? He—How so? She—Because that was before you stopped drinking.

An exchange contains an editorial entitled "Modesty the age," but it would entail too much labor. Ninety-nine out of every hundred women who have passed their 25th birthday would have their age modified so they might tell their friends they were only 18 years of without lying about it. The scheme is not practicable.

Speed and Eases.

It appears from some figures given in a recent speech by M. Baudin, the chief engineer to the North of France railway company, that, in point of speed at any rate, English railways still stand first. The actual speed attained there sometimes reaches 65 miles an hour, while in France, Germany and America it never exceeds 62. The average "train speed" is, of the speed measured by the time taken between terminal stations is 25 miles an hour with English express trains, and 15 with French. M. Baudin points out that the English railways have no advantage to start with, for it is not obligatory, as it is in most foreign countries, to station the crossings. In the matter of fares, England and France enjoy the distinction of charging third class passengers more than any other country except Turkey. The average fare in Turkey is 8.75 centimes per kilometre (2 miles), in France 6.75, and in England 6.75. Norway is by far the cheapest country for railway traveling, the third class fares there averaging 1.4 centimes, and next comes Russia and Belgium, where the average fare is 4.75 centimes per kilometre.

A HAPPY FAMILY.

BY MRS. M. L. RAYNE.

It was Sunday, Mr. Skinner was tired, and thought he would lie down on the sofa in the back parlor and rest. People never learn by experience, and it was no exception to the common rule.

He lay down and crossed his feet with a parade hardly justifiable under the circumstances. His wife came in and saw him.

"Why, Lot Skinner!" she exclaimed. "If I ever heard of the like! Lying down on that new sofa with your boots on, and oh, my goodness! your head on that lace tudy I had done up only last week. You are the most inconsiderate man I ever saw in my life!"

Mr. Skinner got up and his wife smoothed out the tudy and rearranged it.

"The idea of anybody putting a head on that tudy," said Mrs. Skinner, who had no intention of using slang. "I did suppose you had more sense."

"I used to have," said Mr. Skinner good-naturedly. "Ya-a-h. I could take a nap if I could find a place to drop down. Ya-a-h."

"You had better read your Bible," said Mrs. Skinner. She was a good, uncomfortable woman, so clean and neat and orderly that she made her family wretched with her domestic drill.

Something called Mrs. Skinner off then, and when she came back Mr. Skinner was gone. She sat down and took a look, when a thought struck her, and she bounded from her chair as if it had been a cannon ball.

Yes, it was just as she feared; her husband had gone up stairs, and she found him stretched out on the bed, on top of a white counterpane, his grizzly, gray head sunk deep into a white, starched pillow-sham, with these words embroidered in the center: "Sleep sweet, beloved!"

He was not only asleep, but snoring, with a look of sweet content on his wide open mouth.

"L-o-t Sk-in-n-e-r!" He got up in a manner that would have done credit to a gymnast, and stood staring at the fearful hollow in the bed and the wrinkle dent in the pillow-sham.

"I declare I forgot," he said, looking

very foolish. "Alice, haven't I got a place where I can lay my head?"