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The average duration of human life is said to be increasing at the rate of ten years each century.

It is said that the sale of the average novel does not exceed 1000 copies, and that publishers regard themselves as unusually fortunate when called on for a second edition.

The Chicago Times notes that rural delivery of the mails is being generally supported by the different farmers' organizations. The Grange has taken special interest in it, and following the action of the National Grange the various State Granges have endorsed the measure.

Governor Knapp, of Alaska, calls attention in his annual report to the slowly developing cod fisheries that promise to become an important industry. Two San Francisco firms have gone into the business extensively, and their catch is valued at more than \$500,000 annually. There are immense banks off the Aleutian Isles where the fish abound, and the fishing grounds have never been half explored. "It is not improbable," predicts the St. Louis Republic, "that Alaska will soon furnish all the codfish this country will be able to consume."

There are great evidences of progress in the make-up of dairy schools at the present time, the American Dairyman is gratified to note. Minnesota is coming forward with a beauty, while many other States can boast of excellent work done in this line. This branch of the dairy, the school, we consider the most promising of any. If the young people can be made to take a live interest in those schools, there is no telling how high they will push the science in the future. The children of to-day are the men of to-morrow, and if we can put the knowledge we now possess in the heads of our children, then their children will be prepared to carry forward the science to its utmost limit.

A philanthropic French gentleman has bought in the neighborhood of Paris a large piece of ground, on which he intends to build a new sort of charitable institution, which will go by the name the Hospitality of Work. There genuine workmen who are in distress because they are out of employment will be given work to do, and be paid daily for it, food being also provided for them at very reasonable rate. The founder used to waste a good deal of his money in amateur charity, but he was cured by an experience. He found a wretched woman abiding beneath a few filthy rags in a box in a garret, and opened his heart and purse to her until he discovered, to his infinite wrath and disgust, that the garret was a theatrical property, so to speak, for wringing the hearts of the benevolent, and that the shivering outcast actually lived in great comfort with her husband in a snugly furnished room on the first floor. This object lesson opened his eyes effectually, and hereafter he will help only those who help themselves.

The Great Western Railway Company, of England, figures in another curious suit. All trains on that road are bound by a castiron contract to remain for ten minutes at Swindon, in the interests chiefly of a refreshment bar. The other day, however, a train only waited seven minutes, and in consequence a Mr. Lowenfeld was left behind. Thereupon Mr. Lowenfeld ordered a special train to his destination, and gave in payment therefore a check for \$160, which he stopped at the bank. As a matter of course the company sued for the money, and Mr. Lowenfeld in his defense argued that they had committed a breach of contract in leaving him behind, and that they ought to be held responsible for the expense which he had incurred through their negligence. Mr. Justice Mellish, however, held that it was "unreasonable to allow a passenger to put the company to an expense to which he would not think of putting himself if he had no company to look to." Would Mr. Lowenfeld, he asked, have ordered a special train if he had the least idea of paying for it himself? He thought not, and ordered the defendant to pay the \$160. At the same time it was clear, he said, that the company was responsible for the cost of the journey of Mr. Lowenfeld from Swindon to his destination, and for minor incidental expenses, for dispatches, etc. He thought \$15 would about meet the requirements of the decision. An easy calculation will show that Mr. Lowenfeld lost his train, his time, his temper, and \$145.

LOVE INDEED.

Our love is done!
I would not have it back, I say,
I would not have my whole year May!
But yet for our dead passion's sake,
Kiss me once more and strive to make
Our last kiss the supreme one;
For love is done.

Our love is done!
And still my eyes with tears are wet,
Our souls are stirred with vain regret;
We gaze farewell, yet cannot speak,
And firm resolve grows strangely weak,
Though hearts are twain that once were one.

Since love is done,
But love is done!
I know it, vow it, and that kiss
Must set a finis to our bliss.
Yet when I felt thy mouth meet mine
My life again seemed half divine,
Our very hearts together run!
Can love be done?

Can love be done?
Who cares if this be mal or wise?
Trust not my words, but read my eyes,
Thy kiss bade sleeping love awake;
Then take me to thy heart; ah! take
The life that with thine own is one.

Love is not done!
—Toronto Truth.

NAPOLEON'S WOOLING.

BY GEORGE A. HARRIS.

LOOKING his own supper over a blazing wood fire one hot evening in July, Napoleon Crowe felt that he was indeed born to misfortune like the sparks that flew upward.

For forty years he had tilled the stony, stubby little farm which at its best had never yielded its owner more than a precarious living, and now at the age of sixty he was alone in the world, having a few months previously buried his third wife.

Whether it was owing to an inherent delicacy of constitution, a lack of appreciation and tenderness on his part, or a too continuous diet of stewed yellow-eyed beans and pork, we are unable to determine, but for some mysterious reason Napoleon's wives refused to thrive on his hands, and drooped and pined away, one after another, until he was almost convinced that in his case marriage was a failure.

That he had been his own housekeeper for a period of seven months, every room and closet in the dreary old farmhouse bore evidence, and the numerous scars on his hands and arms, testified to the burns and scalds he had received during his cooking operations.

For Napoleon was peculiarly unfortunate in his culinary experiments. If after serious reflection, he decided that he could afford a small roast for the Sunday dinner, to which he invariably invited his old crony, Jotham Sparks, that roast—so tenderly watched and jealously guarded for hours—was in the end temporarily forgotten, while Napoleon was grappling with the biscuit problem, and burned to a blackened crisp.

He baked beans without pork, forgot to put the meat in his soups, or the salt and pepper in his vegetable hash; left out the sweetening from his apple pies, the salt from his butter, the eggs from his custards, and wondered why he had no appetite.

After a multitude of disastrous failures similar to the ones we have recorded, Napoleon resolved he would, from motives of economy and otherwise, confine himself exclusively to a diet of flour biscuits, hot from the oven, alternating with such relishes as molasses, fried pork fat, and the unsavory production which once in four weeks he churned, and spanked and patted with his big, hairy hands, and designated as "butter."

Three times a day regularly, Napoleon produced a small wooden dough dish, and after mixing together sour milk, saleratus and flour, toiled and sweated over the sticky mass until it went into the oven huge, unsightly lumps of spotted dough, and came out the same.

It might have been the legitimate result of eating his own hot biscuit, but within a few weeks he had developed into a gloomy pessimist. He neglected the poultry and stock, allowed the weeds to flourish in the garden, and seemed to have lost all interest in life.

Everything went wrong with Napoleon. The old cow ran dry three months earlier than usual, and the two-year-old heifer choked to death in her stall. As a natural sequence, his groans and sighs became louder and more frequent.

Thirty hens and two roosters cackled shrilly from morn till night, and though he crawled under the barn on his hands and knees, and climbed ladders to the highest scaffolds at the risk of breaking his neck, not a solitary egg gladdened his anxious eyes.

One morning his friend and sympathizer, Uncle Jotham Sparks, called before breakfast to borrow a rake.

"Just havin' a bite, hey?" observed Uncle Jotham, his eyes wandering to the bare pine table adorned by a tin of steaming yellow biscuits.

"Ya-a-s," answered Napoleon in a dissatisfied tone, "I'm tryin' to heat a drop o' water to make a cup o' tea to go with them ere biscuits. Won't you hev a biscuit, Jotham?"

"N-no-oo," responded Jotham with

alacrity. "Thanky, I've been to breakfast an hour ago."

"I know it's late," sighed Napoleon, "but I've had a regular tussle to heat this dipper o' water. I broke my teakettle by pourin' cold water in it when it was red hot, and I hain't had any teakettle to use all summer. It's terrible hard for a man that hain't never been used to putterin' round the house to do their own cookin' and housework."

"It must be, I vum," said Jotham, and he edged away to an open window to avoid an offensive odor that arose from a bean pot on the stove hearth.

"Jotham," said he solemnly, "Jotham, ain't you seen, can't you see that I'm fallin' from the crust?"

Jotham shook his head mournfully as he stooped to light his pipe.

"Yes, Napoleon, I've seen all summer that you've been fallin'; you've grown old, and thin, and gray, and bent over, and don't look much like the man you was a year ago."

"Do you think I'm pined for the grave, Jotham?" he groaned.

"No," said he bluntly, "but you won't live six months unless you git some woman here to cook your vittles, and do your washin', and keep the house wholesome. Why don't you hire a woman, and pay her so much a week?"

"I couldn't afford it; all the income I git from the farm wouldn't pay her wages. I think myself, not relishin' my vittles, I'm something to do with my on-happy feelin'."

"You might git married," suggested Jotham.

"Ya-a-s, I've thought o' that. I know of a smart, likely woman that's wuth some pruperty that I think would jump at the chance to git me to-day. She's a widdar that I courted some when I was young, and lives on a farm somewhere in Stoughton. I'd slick up a little, and go up and see if she would like to change her condition, if 'twasn't for the neighbors talkin'. You know I hain't been a widdar since this last time only about seven months."

"I know, but circumstances alters cases and if you can't afford to hire a housekeeper, you had better hunt up a wife lively. Let the folks talk if they want to. You hev a smart woman come here, and scrub and scour, and brighten up things, and cook you three good temptin' meals every day, and you'd soon begin to fat up, and be as strong and ambitious to work as ever you was in your life. Now, I do hope Napoleon, you realize jest how slim and peaked you are lookin', and if you don't want to slip your wind afore the snow flies, take my advice, and marry that 'ere widdar just as soon as she'll hev you," and taking her rake, Jotham departed, leaving Napoleon to his thoughts which were not pleasant by any means.

For several days after, Napoleon wandered around in a discontented, absent-minded way, as though he was uncertain whether to take Jotham's advice or not.

At length, on this hot July evening when we introduce him to our readers, having nearly caused a conflagration by upsetting a kerosene lamp which exploded in the flour barrel, Napoleon gnashed his teeth, as he tore around the room in his efforts to extinguish the flames, and vowed he would have a wife to cook his suppers before the week was out.

"Ain't this a pooty way for a man o' my years to be livin'?" he muttered savagely, as he vainly tried to make the lantern wick burn. "There the danged thing has gone out, and I might as well give up—I've got to set here in the dark, or else crawl to bed without a solitary nibble o' nothin' in my poor stomach, and I'm ready to faint."

'Spose I'll put up with this any longer! not by a jugful! If the sun rises to-morrow mornin', it'll see me streakin' for the Widdar Spooner's! Let the neighbors talk if they want to, what they say don't put slap-jacks into my mouth, or mend the big holes in my stockin's. Yes-sir-ee, and he snapped his fingers defiantly. "Let 'em talk; I don't give a dang. If Eunice Spooner will hev me, we'll be married short-off; that's flat."

The Widdar Spooner was in her strawberry patch pulling up the weeds, and she was about to throw them over the fence as little Kittie Henderson came rushing around the corner.

"O. Aunt Eunice!" she exclaimed breathlessly. "Mamma sent me over to borrow some cream of tartar, and don't you think the awful looking old tramp has followed me way through the woods, and he's sitting down on the big rock in the lane now! Oh, dear! I daren't go home, what shall I do?" and Kittie began to cry.

"Tramp, hey!" said the widow, coolly, "hat's nothin' new. I've been jest pestered to death with tramps this summer. There was two called here last night, and they was jest as sassy as a lord, and wanted me to give 'em some supper, but they didn't git any, jest the same. You wait a minute till I can look after my bakin', and I'll go home through the woods with you, Kittie. I never see the tramp yet I was afraid of."

With Kittie following close at her heels, Mrs. Spooner proceeded to the kitchen, where, throwing open the oven doors, she displayed a pair of beautifully browned chickens which sent forth a most appetizing odor.

"There, Kittie, jest look at my fowls, ain't they doin' lovely? I've been doin' lots of cookin' to-day, and I do wish some interacin' company would wisp along. I've had signs of a stranger all

the afternoon; two chair backs got together, and I bumped my elbow ag'in the pump handle—"

At that moment there came a loud knocking at the door. Kittie gave a little shriek.

"It's—it's—him, auntie!" she gasped. "It's the old tramp."

"Is it?" said the widow, brusquely. "Jest let me git my weapons ready, and I'll soon start him goin'."

With a saucpan of boiling hot water in one hand, and a fire shovel in the other, Mrs. Spooner advanced boldly to the door.

In the semi-twilight stood a seedy-looking individual, wearing a slouch hat and covered with dust.

"Could—you—ahem—give—me—" he began in a hesitating manner, then hastily retreated a few steps as he caught a glimpse of the war-like implements in the hands of the widow.

"Yes, I'll give you," cried the widow, "a good whackin' with my shovel, and a scaldin' to boot, if you ain't off my premises before I can count ten. You great, lazy loafer. Ain't you ashamed round trampin' and beggin' your livin'? Why ain't you workin' on some railroad, diggin' ditches, you shiftless hulks?"

"I—I—hain't round beggin' no livin'," stammered the man, his eyes firmly riveted on the widow's weapons. "I—I—ain't no tramp neither I'll have you to know—I—"

"Oh, no, you're no tramp, none of 'em is, you're a bank president most likely. Come, git; put yourself!"

"I won't stir a blasted peg," he spluttered. "Yu can't drive me till I've had a chance to tell you who—"

"I can't, can I? We'll see about that, you wretch. Follow me with the teakettle, Kittie, I'll scald him to death."

Mrs. Spooner's appearance as she screamed out these words was more that of a modern Amazon than a staid elderly widow, and with a smothered shriek the man fled precipitately before her, never pausing until he ignominiously tumbled over a rock heap by the roadside.

"There, Kittie," exclaimed Mrs. Spooner, as she came into the kitchen flushed and triumphant. "I've sent him about his business. I've learned by experience that soft words don't count with the tramp gentry, and I guess this pertickler one won't visit me ag'in."

"Why, auntie," said Kittie, staring hard out of the window, "he ain't gone; he's sitting down by the barn now."

"Why, how you talk. Has he had impudence to come back here? Well, now you jest wait; I'll start him out of my door-yard, or I'll know the reason why!"

With hurried and determined steps she took her way down to the spot where a forlorn-looking figure was seated on a huge bowlder, sorrowfully rubbing his knee-joints.

"Come," said she, "what in the world do you mean by hangin' round here? Why don't—bless my soul—this ain't—it can't be—Napoleon Crowe?"

"Yes, it's me," said Napoleon plaintively.

"Took to trampin' round the country, and scarin' little girls? You!"

"It's a danged mistake," said he. "I hain't trampin' round no country, nor scarin' no little girls either. I wasn't never in this place before. I didn't know fur certain which house you lived in, and so I was goin' to inquire if you could give me any idee of where the Widdar Spooner lived, and you come at me with a fire shovel and a bucket o' bilion water."

"Why didn't you tell your name?"

"You didn't give me no chance, did you? I tried to tell you my name, but I couldn't get a word in edgewise. I expected a different welcome from you. Eunice, bein' we was allus such good friends, and I'd walked fifteen miles to ask you to marry me."

A warm flush rose to the widow's sun-burned cheeks. If it was a person on earth who had always held a warm corner in her heart, it was Napoleon Crowe.

"Napoleon," hazarded she, "it was a dreadful misunderstanding."

"I should hope it was, I swan," sighed Napoleon, still rubbing his bruised knees.

"It was all Kittie's fault; she told me there was a tramp at the door, and I was that mad and excited I never took a good look. You've no idee how I've been pestered with thiev'in', sassy tramps, Napoleon."

"I don't doubt it, Eunice. You hadn't ought to be livin' here all alone."

"You hain't goin', Napoleon. Do stop and have some supper—"

"Do you really want me too, Eunice?"

"Of course I do, Napoleon, and we'll have roast chicken and cream biscuits."

"And you'll hev me, Eunice?"

"I will, Napoleon."—Yankee Blade.

Bees Guided by Colors of Flowers.

Because some one cut the petals from a blue lobelia, and then found that the bees did not visit it afterwards, though there were honeyed secretions in the base of the flower, the opinion has been advanced that bees are guided to flowers solely by color in cases where flowers have no fragrance. But most American observers know that bees visit flowers that have neither color nor fragrance. In the lobelia case the bee probably took the flower for a dead flower, which it knew from experience it was useless to visit. Bees are sensible creatures.—New Orleans Picayune.

It is customary in Sweden to hang the doorknob up outside the house to show that the family is not at home.

WARFAREON THE BORDER.

HOW THE RANGERS PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF TEXAS.

Hardy, Courageous and Thoroughly Able to Handle Predatory Indians and Frontier Ruffians.

REFERRING to the noted Texas Rangers, the New York Tribune says: "The present battalion dates its history back to 1874, when Richard Coke was Governor of the State. Texas was then overrun by Indian marauders, desperate border ruffians, and cunning Mexican bandits. These law-defying people were numerically strong, and life and property were not secure in any part of the State. Ranches within half a mile of large towns and cities were lawlessly attacked and robbed. The regular State troops were too cumbersome a body to prevent such raids, for long before they could move upon the enemy they had fled to other parts of the land. There seemed to be only one way to solve the difficulty, and that was to organize the companies of Rangers. This was done immediately, and the Legislature of the State appropriated \$600,000 for the purpose, upon the recommendation of the Governor.

With the organization of the Rangers a new era of prosperity and peace opened for Texas, and the "Frontier Battalion" performed work that has not been forgotten to-day. The remnants of that battalion are now stationed on the border, ready to intercept any filibustering party at a moment's notice. The battalion consisted of 375 men, divided into five equal companies. They were to act as special protectors of the State, and they performed their work so well that in a few years the Indians were entirely suppressed, desperadoes killed off or quieted down, and the Mexican bandits driven back over the border line. As the result of their work the Rangers were publicly thanked by the Legislature, and many private marks of esteem shown to them.

Although their numbers have steadily decreased since then, the Rangers have become a permanent fixture in the State, and their services will be needed so long as the vast stretches of the country are unsettled and the home of many law-defying persons. Each company now contains about twenty men, but there are many auxiliary bands which can rapidly be impressed into the service when needed. When on duty the Rangers are always busy, and consequently happy. The dangers and privations of their hard duty are always preferred to the quietness and inactivity of the camp. Often they are compelled to make forced marches of many miles, and they show their endurance in the saddle by riding for twenty-four hours or more at a stretch. They follow the trail of the enemy through rough, mountainous passes, across llano and mesa, and over patchy plains with tireless energy, until the Indians or desperadoes are caught. Then with equal disregard for their own personal safety, they rush into the battle with the determination to conquer, and generally they succeed in this. Superior forces, often outnumbering their own five to one, are attacked with the same amount of self-confidence, and so effectively do they use their weapons that all fall before them. They have won a name throughout the State which sends the cold shivers down the backs of those on whose trail the Rangers are placed.

The Rangers furnish their own weapons and horses, and each one is compelled to have a good Winchester, a Colt's revolver and a hunting knife. The State furnishes them, when in active duty, sixty rounds of ammunition for the rifle and thirty rounds for the revolver. Tents and food supply are also given to the Rangers at the expense of the State. They are not hampered by the heavy equipments, and at a moment's notice they can leave their camp and start in pursuit of the enemy. A small mule pack slung over the sides of the saddle contain about all the necessary equipments that they need, and with this they start out over as dreary and wearisome a trip as was ever devised by man.

When in camp the Rangers are never entirely satisfied, and they long for some exciting revolution which will give them active service. The State continues to pay and feed them, but as the men enlist only for one year it is an easy matter to decrease or increase the force at will. If continually in camp, many of the Rangers drop out at the end of a year or two and enlist again as soon as trouble is brewing. Every man is eligible again unless he has been discharged dishonorably. Frequently Rangers are discharged for the infraction of some rule while in camp, but they can join other companies, except for a few grave offences, such as cowardice and theft. The Government pays the Rangers at the rate of \$30 a month for privates, \$35 for corporals, \$50 for first sergeants, \$75 for lieutenants, and \$100 for captains.

The discipline of the Ranger companies is sui generis, and unlike anything that prevails in the regular State or Government troop camps. In fact, no discipline or rules exist, it might be said, and yet every man knows his duty, and they act together as a unit in battle. The reason of this lack of discipline is due to the fact that every Ranger is an experienced hunter, scout, fighter and soldier before he enlists, and, being well acquainted with the life in the rough country, they know instinctively what to do in every emergency. There are no drills or parades, and one inspection a year suffices. There are certain divisions

among them, and a few rules about acting as scouts, guards and similar work. They depend upon each other, and they are more like a company of old trappers banded together for mutual protection. When fighting the Indians they conceal themselves behind rocks and trees, each man for himself, and every one for the whole company. They cling together, and yet fight after their own fashion. The lack of any cast-iron discipline probably makes them more effective in quick and sudden raids.

When in camp the horses find their own feed by roving over the rich grassy lands, but they are so well trained that they never stray to any great distance from the camp. As soon as the call to arms is announced the Rangers are up and dressed in an instant and in an incredibly short time they have caught their horses and are ready for the march. The shooting of a gun is always the signal for every Ranger to get his arms ready for work. Trials when the Rangers have not been expecting any call show that they can jump from their bunks, get dressed, and have their rifles loaded and in position for defending their camp inside of two minutes after the alarm is sounded.—New York Tribune.

SELECT SIFTINGS.

Florida waters afford fine fishing. A hunter in Maine claims to have a cat that will stalk grouse.

In China slips of mulberry bark serve as money in the interior towns.

A whale, thirty-three feet in length, was towed to the port of Santa Barbara, Cal., recently.

The Mosquito Indians of Central America inter their dead beneath the floors of their huts.

Civil engineers report that Lake Nicaragua, Central America, is full of sharks, and it is a mystery how they have gotten there.

Birmingham, Ala., has passed a resolution taxing and licensing almost every trade, occupation and profession in that city for municipal revenue.

Squire Johnson, a Justice of the Peace at Grayson, Ky., has enrolled himself as a scholar in a country school near his home. He is forty years old.

Leprosy is increasing to an alarming extent in Spain. In one village there are said to be eight families, every member of which has the dread disease.

A hotel-keeper on the upper shore of Lake Michigan proposes to transport his big hotel over the lake on a raft if Chicago in time to open in the spring of 1893.

A descendant of General James Oglethorpe, the founder of Georgia, is suing for a large portion of Savannah real estate, to which he believes himself entitled.

Birds have horns sometimes. The horned screamer (which is related to the duck) has a single horn attached to its skull, springing from a cartilaginous base and curving upward.

Peasants first came in to England during the Roman period; they did not make their appearance in Scotland much before the seventeenth century, or in Ireland before the fifteenth.

Wood cut down in winter is considered more durable than felled in summer. In many countries the forest laws enjoin the felling of trees only between November 15th and February 15th.

Among the weavers employed in a Biddeford (Me.) cotton-mill is a woman who stands six feet and three inches, and is large and strong in proportion. She is more than a match for any man about the mill.

The Persians are of opinion that a lion will never hurt a person of their religion, which is somewhat different from that of the Turks. They firmly believe that their lions would devour a Turk, but that they themselves are perfectly safe if they take care to let the lion know by some exclamation of what religion they are.

A Missouri man contracted with a hotel keeper to furnish a wagon load of frogs a week. He appeared on the appointed day with three little frogs. "Where are the rest of them?" inquired the landlord. "That's all there were in the pond," the man meekly said. "But they made so much noise that I thought there was a million of 'em."

The Origin of "Gotham."

Washington Irving in "Salmagundi," a humorous work, applied the name of New York to signify that the inhabitants were given to undue pretensions to wisdom. This definition of the word is taken from a story regarding the inhabitants of Gotham, a parish in Nottinghamshire, England, who were as remarkable for their stupidity as their conceit. The story relates that when King John was about to pass through Gotham toward Nottingham he was prevented by the inhabitants, who thought the ground over which a king passed became forever a public road. When the king sent to punish them they resorted to an expedient to avert their sovereign's wrath. According to this, when they arrived they found the people each engaged in some foolish occupation, so they returned to court and reported that Gotham was a village of fools. In time a book appeared entitled "Certain Merry Tales of the Mad Men of Gotham." Among these tales is the story of "The Three Wise Men of Gotham," who went to see in a bowl.—New York Press.