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THE MOCKINGBIRD.

List to that bird! His song—what poet
poets it?
Brigand of birds, he's stolen every note!
Prince, though, of thieves—hark! how the
rascal spends it!
Pours the whole forest from one tiny
throat!
—Ednah Proctor Hayes, in Home and
Flowers.

Margery Danvers: Fireman.

By CARROLL WATSON RANKIN.

Beyond a doubt the property had been a marvelous bargain. The land alone was worth more than the price asked for the house and lot together, with carpets and fixtures thrown in.

The former owner had had greater business interests in another part of the world, and having found himself unable to live in two places at once, had wisely concluded to convert the superfluous house into cash. Mr. Danvers had bought it for a ridiculously small sum, and felt that he ought to be congratulated.

But although good Mr. Danvers was jubilant over the purchase, Mrs. Danvers, on her first inspection of the new house, sat down upon the thrown-in carpet and burst into tears.

The moment she beheld the parlor wall paper she forgot all else and gave herself up to grief.

It was really enough to make one oblivious of other things. Mrs. Danvers, who loved pink-and-white rooms. The late occupant of the house had been a big red-and-yellow man, who liked red-and-yellow rooms, and his taste in wall paper was certainly deplorable. There was only one thing in the house worse than the paper, and that was the carpet.

"What, don't you like the paper?" exclaimed astonished Mr. Danvers, who was not artistic. "Why, that's splendid paper! It must have cost \$3 a roll. Patterns a trifle large, perhaps; but just think how it'll wear! It will last a lifetime!"

But, strange to say, this consoling information only made Mrs. Danvers weep the more.

"There's great stuff in that carpet, too," said Mr. Danvers, eyeing it approvingly. "It'll wear like iron, in spite of the children running over it. Those big magenta roses stand out well, don't they?"

Mrs. Danvers shuddered. The carpet was a calamity.

Reasonable as the price had been it had taken all Mr. Danvers could spare to make the purchase, so there was no money to be foolishly wasted in replacing the perfectly good paper and carpet. Poor Mrs. Danvers, covering as much of the ugliness as she could with her pictures and furniture, wisely made the best of it, but all her day dreams for the next ten years centered about the repapering of the disfigured parlor.

Her daughter Margery understood and sympathized with her mother, and together they would deplore the durability of the obnoxious paper and carpet.

"It would be such a pretty room," Mrs. Danvers would mourn, "if only something would happen to that outrageous carpet and that horrible paper!"

"Wouldn't it be glorious," Margery would say, "if our chimney should get struck by lightning as the Browns' did? The paper was torn off the dining room wall, and soot from the chimney ruined the rugs. The Browns seem to have all the good luck."

The Browns selfishly retained their monopoly of the lightning, and the hated paper continued to bear a charmed life. No warning voice was ever raised when the little Danverses approached the parlor wall with sticky fingers; and although Mrs. Danvers and Margery fairly courted disaster, none ever came.

At last, when Margery was 17, both paper and carpet showed unmistakable signs of wear.

"Do anything you like about it. It's your house," said Mr. Danvers, generously, when Mrs. Danvers pointed out the defects. "Yes, get anything you like; all paper looks alike to me. Hardwood floors? Yes, I don't mind. Still I am a little disappointed in that carpet. I thought it would last forever."

"So did I," said Mrs. Danvers; but

if she felt any disappointment it was well concealed.

Then came delightful weeks. The house was all torn up and turned over to the carpenters and paper-hangers. Mrs. Danvers and Margery spent all their days and part of their nights studying samples of wall paper. Mr. Danvers spent all his in trying to dodge the pails of paste and varnish that lurked in every corner.

At last, however, it was all finished, to the complete satisfaction of Mrs. Danvers and Margery, who ceased to covet the Browns' share of devastating lightning. Indeed, the renovated parlor became the object of Mrs. Danvers' tenderest solicitude, and the little Danverses began to see imaginary "Keep off the grass" signs on every side. And then, when it was no longer wanted, the disaster came.

Just a week after the departure of the last workman Mrs. Danvers went with her husband to a concert, leaving the house and sleeping children in Margery's care.

Margery spent the first hour in the kitchen, making peanut taffy. When at last she returned to the front of the house she was greeted by an odd pungent odor.

"I wonder," said she, "if I could have scorched my candy? No; the smell seems to come from the front hall. Perhaps something is burning upstairs."

She stopped appalled when she had reached the top step. Something certainly was burning. The upper hall was full of thick, gray smoke.

"The children!" gasped Margery, darting through the smoke and into the nursery.

Here the smoke was dense, and through it, at the far end of the room, where a closet door was standing open, Margery could see a dull red glow.

"Quick! Quick!" she sobbed, dragging the heavy, half-stupefied children out of their beds, out of the suffocating room, through the hall and down the stairs. "Oh, do hurry! The house is all on fire!"

"There!" said she, snatching a vase of flowers from a table in the lower hall, and dashing flowers, water and all into the faces of the poor, astonished children, thereby producing two indignant howls.

"There, your lungs are all right if you can cry like that! Now go sit on the carriage block, and don't you dare to come into this house again until I call you, and don't you tell a soul that this house is afire. I'm going to put it out myself."

"Oh, I must—I must do it!" cried Margery, seizing the two heavy pails of water which Mrs. Danvers kept ready in her little conservatory for the purpose of watering her plants. "The fire is all in that one room. If I let the firemen in they'll ruin the new floors with their muddy boots, and they'll flood the whole house with water. Oh, I can't let them spoil that lovely pale-green paper and those lovely floors!"

So, never thinking that her mother would rather lose a thousand beautiful parlors than one little loving daughter, Margery rushed into the dense smoke and buried the contents of her pails straight at the scarlet glow.

The smoke stung her throat and almost blinded her, but she groped her way from the room, felt her way across the hall, ran down the stairs, and refilled her pails at the kitchen sink. The bath room was nearer, but Margery remembered that the faucets there were small, and knew she would save time by going to the kitchen.

She drank a little cold water, filled her lungs with fresh air at the open door and tucked up her skirts. Then up she went with her heavy burden, not spilling a drop on the precious floors. After the third journey Margery noticed that the scarlet spot had diminished in size, although the smoke was quite as dense.

"I must be careful not to put on a scrap more water than I need," said this model fireman, as she toiled upward with her heavy pails. "I mustn't spoil the dining room ceiling. I believe the fire is in the pillows and bedding stored in that closet. I'll open the window and throw them all out, if I can."

And she did, but it was not a pleasant task. The smoldering quilts burst into flames as she pulled them apart, and the sparks burned her wrists and hands. But with the window open it was possible to breathe, and when the reeking pillows had been added to the blazing heap on the lawn

below, the atmosphere was decidedly improved, although still by no means clear.

As they discovered afterwards, the fire started from a few oiled rags used in polishing the hardwood floors, and tucked into the closet by a careless maid. It had burned almost through the base-board, and would in a few moments have eaten its way into the partitions, where it would have been beyond control.

Margery had undoubtedly saved the day and a great many dollars although she had, without realizing it, risked something far more precious.

She had bathed her face and hands, had opened all the windows to let out the disagreeable odor of burned feathers, and was going down-stairs, well satisfied with her evening's work, when her father and mother appeared at the front door. Perched on the newel post in the front hall, she told them all about the catastrophe.

"Where are the children?" was Mrs. Danvers's first question.

"Goodness!" said Margery. "They must be outdoors on the stepping-stone yet. I told them to stay there until I called them, and I never gave them a second thought!"

And there Mrs. Danvers found them, sound asleep in their little white night-dresses, but none the worse for their unusual experience, for the night was warm.

Mr. Danvers opened his mouth and closed it several times before he managed to find words to fit the occasion. When he finally succeeded all he said was:

Margery, you smell just like a little dried herring."

But there was something besides smoke in his eyes, and Margery knew she was being thanked.—Youths' Companion.

America is Europe's Foe.

The European regards America as a dangerous and relentless foe, and the fact that Europe has forced on America these measures as a means of self-defense signifies nothing, says Brooks Adams in the Atlantic. The European sees in America a competitor who, while refusing to buy, throws her wares on every market, and who, while she drives the peasant from his land, reduces the profits of industry which support the wage earners of the town. Most ominous of all, he marks a rapidly growing power, which, while it undersells his mines, closes to him every region of the wide earth where he might find minerals adapted to his needs. Lying like a colossus across the western continent, with her ports on either ocean, with China opposite and South America at her feet, the United States bars European expansion. South America and China are held to be the only accessible regions which certainly contain the iron, coal and copper which Europe seeks, and the United States is determined that, if she can prevent it, South America and China shall not be used as bases for hostile competition. Regarding South America her declarations are explicit, and during the last 12 months her actions in Asia have spoken more emphatically than words.

He Got His Receipt.

It is not often that the carelessness of an unbusinesslike man can be brought home to him so cleverly as was done by a bright young Irishman, whose experience is described by the Detroit News-Tribune:

He had run up a small bill at the village store, and went in to pay it, first asking for a receipt. The proprietor grumbled and said it was too much trouble to give receipts for such small amounts. It was just as well to cross the account off, and he drew a diagonal pencil-line across the book.

"Does that settle it?" asked the customer.

"Certainly."

"An' ye'll never be asking for it again?"

"Certainly not."

"Faith, thin," said the Irishman, coolly, "an' I'll kape me money in me pocket, for I haven't paid it yet."

"Well," was the retort, "I can rub that out."

"I thought so," said the persistent customer, dryly. "Maybe you'll give me a receipt now. Here's the money."

The practice of nicknaming a legislative body has many examples in early English parliamentary history. The list includes the "lack-learning" parliament, the "long," which became the "rump," and was followed by "bare-bone's" parliament among others.

MADAM AT THE BANK.

Family History Which She Confided to the Receiving Teller.

The business man who was in a hurry was standing in line at the savings bank, waiting his turn to deposit. There was only one person ahead of him, and he was congratulating himself upon this good luck. The person ahead was a woman, and when the business man arrived she was just opening negotiations with the receiving teller.

"Now, I want to open accounts," she began, "for some little nieces and nephews of mine. It's for a Christmas present, you know—confidently—and I'm only going to put \$5 in each book. Of course that isn't much, but—"

Here the teller endeavored to get down to the business details, but in vain. "If they're real saving, as I want them to be, they'll soon make it more. Lots of rich men started with—"

"Yes, yes, madam," interrupted the teller, in desperation; "of course they did. Now, what are these children's names and ages?"

"Why, there's Fannie, my namesake; she's 9—no, maybe it was 8, her last birthday—what? Oh, her full name? Frances Jane, of course; how stupid of me! And then Johnnie—do John William, named after an uncle that died—he's 6, and just as 'cute as he can be. You wouldn't believe what that child—"

"Yes, I would, madam. But please be as brief as possible, and omit everything but business. Are there any more children?"

"Oh, yes; there's the baby, Mildred. She's ten months old, and I thought she seemed pretty young to have a bank book all to herself, so I'd like to take one for her and her mother together—her mother's only my brother's sister-in-law, but she's just like an own sister to me. What, I can't do that. Well, that's funny. But you fix it according to the rules of course."

The business man, who had at first glared savagely at the loquacious depositor, now shifted wearily from one leg to the other, and began to show signs of collapse.

The teller succeeded in extracting the necessary information as to the birthplace of the children, and then inquired in whose names the books were to be held in trust for them.

"Will you have it in their mother's name or their father's or whose?" he asked shortly.

"Their father's! Mercy sakes!" exclaimed the depositor, energetically. "Why, he's a perfect good-for-nothing scamp, if there ever was one. You couldn't trust him—"

"No, I suppose not," hastened the teller, repenting that unfortunate suggestion. "The mother's then, I suppose. Her name, age and birthplace, please. Be as quick as you can, madam."

As he finished the entries he turned with a sigh of relief and a look of pity for the business man, who had been waiting so long. But the latter had given up. He was already half a block away from the bank, walking dejectedly and wiping his brow, like a man who had done a hard day's work.—Chicago Tribune.

Kitchen Outfits of Sovereigns.

There is, figuratively speaking, a great scouring of pots and pans in the kitchen of the palace at St. Petersburg, in preparation for the festivities incidental to the christening of the latest addition to the family of the Czar. The imperial kitchen is fitted up with great sumptuousness. The walls and ceiling are of black marble, richly decorated. The state cooking utensils are of solid gold. They date back to the time of the Empress Catherine, and are estimated to be worth \$50,000. Several of the small saucepans are valued at \$300. No fewer than 267 cooks and scullions are employed. The chef's salary is \$40,000 a year; 10 other cooks receive from \$5,000 to \$6,000 annually. After the Czar's the most luxurious court in Europe is that of Spain. The "batterie de cuisine," which is very ancient, is valued at no less than \$60,000.

But all this sinks into insignificance in comparison with the kitchen of the Shah of Persia, at Teheran. There the very caldrons are of gold, and the dishes on which the viands are borne to the royal table are of gold, set with precious stones. The outfit of the kitchen is said to be worth \$4,000,000.

How It Happened.

George—Next Sunday evening I propose—

Clara—They say delays are dangerous, dear.—Cheese (Mass.) Gazette.

WHEN A STY COMES,

Gentle Bathing of the Lids With Antiseptics a Remedy.

The unsightly appearance, not less than the pain and discomfort of a sty, gives it its bad repute.

Two conditions, or perhaps more properly two phases of the same condition, of the eyelid are referred to as sty. The swelling due to an exudation of serum into the lid is perhaps more common than that in which the swelling progresses until pus is formed.

Swelling due to exudation readily occurs in the eyelid, both because of its loose, non-resistant texture and also since its position is one much exposed to irritating atmospheric conditions.

Exposure to damp winds or cold not infrequently results in a swelling of the eyelid. This kind of sty often disappears of itself after a few hours of discomfort. Extract of witch hazel is a household remedy well suited to sty, especially at this stage. Its efficacy is heightened by binding a compress of linen, or better, of absorbent cotton, wet with the liquid, over the eye on going to bed and allowing it to remain.

Prolonged use of the eyes, or for example, reading many hours consecutively, or a like time devoted to fine needlework, may determine an attack of sty. It is necessary in the light of our present knowledge of pus formation to attribute its occurrence here, as elsewhere, to an infection of germs from without. It is logical to suppose that the necessary infection may be conveyed by rubbing the lids with the fingers or with the doubled fist or knuckles. The causes of sty which have been mentioned, overuse, for example, are apt to produce itching, while the delicate skin covering the lid is ill fitted to receive rude handling. A slight abrasion of the tender cuticle covering the lid is doubtless the source of infection of many cases of sty in which an abscess is formed, although the pitted surface which dips inward to receive the eyelashes likewise forms a convenient point of entrance for the pus-producing germs.

Gentle bathing of the lids once or twice a day with a mildly astringent and antiseptic fluid, like witch hazel, plain or diluted, is an excellent measure for the prevention of sty in those whose occupations demand long-continued use of the eye, and who are prone to experience smarting, stinging and irritation of the lids. In some, properly fitted glasses constitute an effectual preventive of sty.

When once the swelling has gone on to pus formation, as evidenced by pointing or a yellowed surface, warm water compresses hasten the rupture of the boil with consequent relief of pain. More quickly effective is lancing of the boil by the physician.

It is not to be forgotten that underlying systemic causes are frequently predisposing factors in the production of sty. Such require appropriate tonics or the righting of sluggish conditions.—Youths' Companion.

Unchanging England.

There is another comparison, suggested by certain incidents of the war, which a correspondent brings to our notice. It is slightly more "odious," but not, therefore, the less interesting. The question was being discussed in a club smoking room as to whether the "unmounted men preferred" dispatch had ever been equalled in English history, for—well, for the peculiar qualities that made it so famous. One of those present declared that it had not only been equalled but surpassed, and by the Admiralty. In proof of it he stated that during the war of 1812 with America, the admiralty sent out to Kingston, on the northeastern side of Lake Ontario, where our fleet was stationed, quantities of water casks, in the belief that Lake Ontario was a salt water lake. Our correspondent, who has looked the matter up, assures us that this is the historical fact, and opines that "it beats hollow" anything we have done during the present war. But that is a very nice point.—London Chronicle.

Careless Parents.

"Why don't you make a name for yourself?" asked the serious person. "I only wish I had the chance," said the pale young man. "But my parents thought they knew it all, and they made up one of their own, and that's why I am compelled to struggle against fate under the handicap of 'Reginald Claud De Vere Smithers.'"—Washington Star.

Enough timber is destroyed by fire in this country every year to supply all the pulp mills.