

American Fire Fighters Are the Best in the World

By Philip G. Hubert, Jr.



HEREOVER the American goes in Europe with a feeling of satisfaction that he finds, in the more important cities, the adaptation of our ideas for fighting fire. Our steam fire-engines, our brass poles that bring men down from the upper stories of their station-houses, our hinged collars that snap around the horses' necks at a touch, are everywhere. At every important international exhibition of recent years, beginning even with that of Paris in 1867, American fire-engines and ladder-trucks have taken prizes. At the Paris Exposition of two years ago an American fire-team from Kansas City, fourteen men under Chief George C. Hale, carried off all the most important honors at the International Fire Congress, at which were represented America, France, Portugal, Holland, Norway, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Italy, Germany, Turkey, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, New Zealand, India, Austria, Mexico and Peru. Nearly 8000 firemen took part in the competitions. The first contest was made with steam fire-engines, on the banks of the Seine. About 100 engines competed. The test was made from cold water in the boiler. The average time for foreign engines in getting a stream from the hose was from eight to twelve minutes. Their streams reached about half way across the river. In five minutes and thirty seconds the American engine threw a stream that wet people on the opposite bank a distance of 310 feet. The size of the stream was nearly double that thrown by the other engines.—From "Fire-Fighting To-day and To-morrow," in Scribner's.

Tell Women the Truth.

By Helen Oldfield.



PRINCIPALLY the cause of what is called woman's unreasonableness is the direct result of her not being told the truth. Half the time a woman does not know how she stands to face a problem, because she cannot get a man to tell her the simple facts in the case. He will say all sorts of soothing things to her and mislead her with rosy hopes, and he will try to make up by the fervor of his compliments for the lies he is telling her, and so she goes blundering along, making all sorts of mistakes; that she might have been saved from if anybody had had the courage to tell her the truth.

A curious example of this once came under my own observation. A man died, leaving his widow without any means of support. His friends, in the most delicate way in the world, provided for her, and began exerting themselves to get some occupation for her by which she could support herself. Place after place was offered, but she scornfully rejected every one.

"Did you ever hear of anything so unreasonable in your life," cried the men to each other, "not a penny in the world, actually living on charity, and won't do a thing!" Finally in a gust of passion one of the men blurted out to the woman the naked truth—that her husband had died absolutely bankrupt, and that his friends had been providing for her. The woman was aghast. She had never an idea of the real state of affairs, and the minute she knew the truth she accepted the situation with a courage, a philosophy and a determination to make the best of it that fairly astonished every one.

So far as business women are concerned, the chief enemy to their progress is man's fear of telling them the truth. A man who has a clerk who falls into careless ways, or has some annoying fault, will talk to him plainly and give him a chance to correct it before he dismisses him; but he will not give a girl the same chance. He won't tell her the truth about her faults. He will make an excuse about business being bad, and then turn her off rather than speak the truth to her. How many times has that happened in our big cities! Girls know.

Another thing—and I don't know a more pathetic thing—is that the whole world seems banded together to deceive women about the real facts of working life.

Now there's plenty of work in the world for every industrious and intelligent girl, but it's nothing short of a crime to make her believe that there is any get-rich-quick way to fortune; and I never read any of these romances about picturesque modes of getting a living that fails to arouse in me a righteous contempt for the authors of such stories.

Mysticism is Increasing in This Practical Age

By Ralph M. McKenzie.



THE hunger displayed by all classes of people for literature of a mystical or esoteric character is beyond the belief of any one not connected with the sale of books or periodicals, or not in touch with the work of public libraries throughout the country. This includes fortune-telling by cards, palmistry, astrology, the phenomena of hypnotism, suggestive therapeutics, spiritism, mind reading, faith cure, theosophy and everything connected with the divining of the future or the mystical or occult in mind, matter or religion.

Many periodicals treating of these various subjects are published now in many languages, and the circulations of some of them have increased wonderfully. A curious phase of the subject is the fact that particular articles in these periodicals attract wide attention, and are often quoted and discussed in coteries which are not usually supposed to be interested in matters beyond the domain of the five senses. Some of these magazines in the Library of Congress are kept under lock and key, and only given out for reading to known persons upon card, because the temptation to cut or mutilate certain select portions of the text seems to be too great for those of less than ordinary will power.

Of course, there is much of this literature of distinct value, especially such as relates to psychology in any direct or indirect way. A great deal of it is ethical, and is of no value as moral instruction or teaching. A great deal of it is obscure, and some of it is almost as unsatisfactory to the intelligent reader as a chapter of Paracelsus or any of the old alchemists or searchers after the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone. Even the many volumes devoted to palmistry may be said to have a raison d'être outside of their more or less fabled value as a means of divining the future. They serve, perhaps, to draw the attention of people to their hands and to secure for them better care and more cleanliness.

The cause which more than all else has led to a great revival of interest in this class of literature is, of course, the wonderful spread in the belief in spiritism and the consequent deduction that the spirits must needs know something of the future of mortals and can be depended upon in some vague way to communicate this knowledge to the material world. Some look to the clairvoyant as the most reliable source of this supposed spirit knowledge of the individual's future; others depend upon the reader of cards, the reader of palms, or the reader of the stars. But it can all be reduced to the one cause—the yearning of man for immortality and for knowledge of the future years of his present state.—New York News.

Recruiting Men For the Navy.

In order to assist in the recruiting of men for the navy, the Navy Department has prepared large lithograph posters for display in all the principal cities and towns in the country. The navy is in great need of able-bodied seamen and is using extra exertions to secure them without delay. These posters are the most elaborate bids for men the navy has ever made. They are highly decorated and picture life on a man-of-war in the most alluring colors. The centerpiece is a picture

of the battleship Kearsarge, with a happy, contented-looking jackie of heroic dimensions as a companion piece. These pictures are highly colored and can scarcely fail to attract attention. The text gives practical information regarding ratings and pay, and shows the advantage of naval service. To make the words more impressive, they are printed in red with a profusion of capital letters. Over 150,000 of these posters, which are of immense size, have been distributed among recruiting centers.—Washington Star.

THE CHILDREN'S HOME

How's Slumber Song.
Hushaby, my babies, how the day is closing.
All the tired little birds are browsing in the nest.
Glad upon the bank the lilies are reposing.
And as you, my little ones, upon your mother's breast, sleep,
Sleep, sleep, sink, sink, to sleep—
Charibel and Muriel, Polly and Bo-peep.

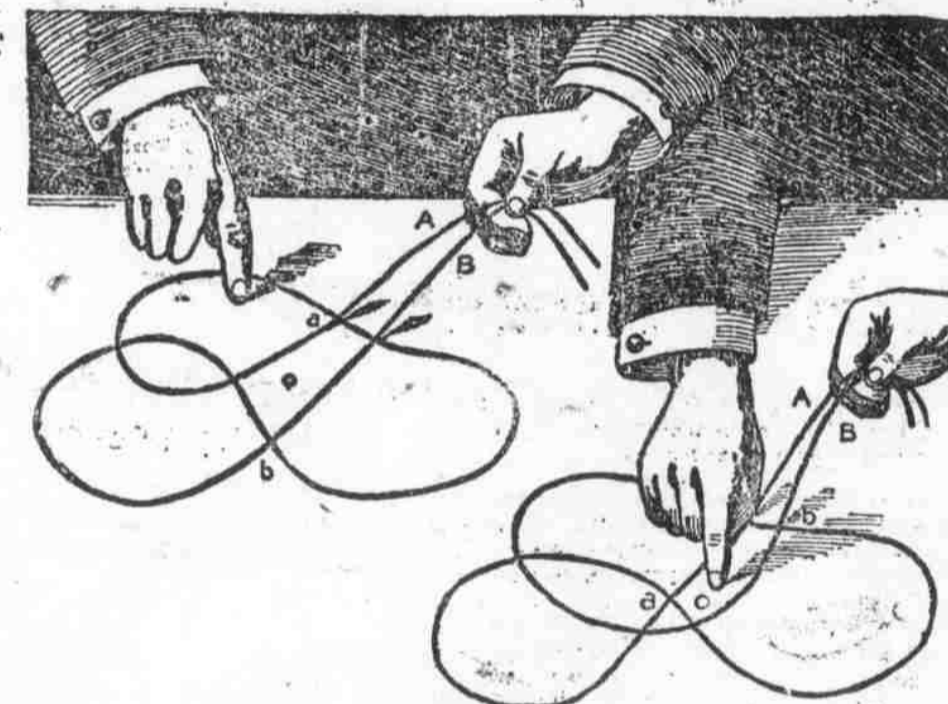
Hushaby, my dearies, now the dew is falling.
Over on the meadow evening shadows creep.
On the edge of slumberland hear your mamma calling.
"Come, my little family, it's time to go to sleep."
Sleep, sleep, sink, sink to sleep—
Charibel and Muriel, Polly and Bo-peep.
—Youth's Companion.

How to Make Fire Balloons.

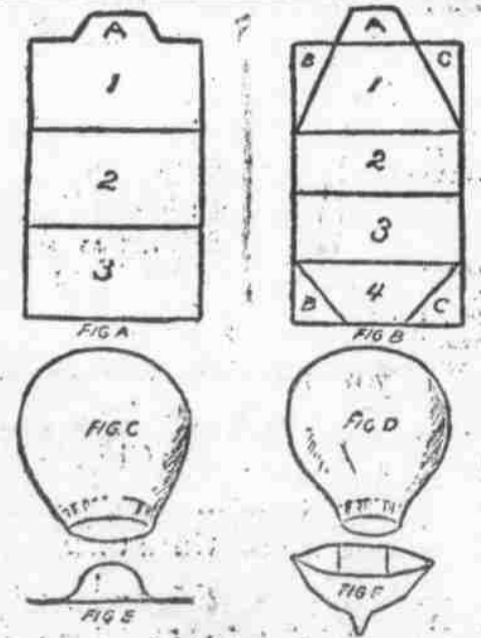
Have you ever studied the resemblance of soap bubbles to balloons? Do you know that if anything be placed in the atmosphere which is lighter than the atmosphere, it will ascend? In this we have the whole theory of balloons and ballooning. The air has weight, and being a fluid permits objects to move about in it, so it follows that if we can find anything lighter than the air it will ascend in it. Several gases exist which are lighter than air. These may be used for balloons by confining them in a bag.

The simplest form of a balloon is a soap bubble. Why does it ascend? Not because the air from the lungs is lighter than the atmosphere, it is really heavier, but because it is warmer—and for that reason it is practically lighter. As soon as the air inside cools the soap bubble descends, and you will find the warm bubble is larger than the cool bubble. Therefore, if you can get hot air in a bag you can make a balloon that will ascend. Balloons may be made of any size, but small ones are the most satisfactory. Three sheets of manila or tissue paper pasted end to end, then cut into shape and joined, make a balloon quite large enough to manage.

A peeled orange or lemon will give you a good idea of the general shape of the gussets of a balloon. The narrower you cut the gussets the neater will be the balloon, but wide gussets



answer very well and save labor. The more nearly globular you can get the balloon the more perfectly it will work. Paste the three sheets of paper thus (Fig. A) and add a small piece (a) to one end. Use thin paste or gum water, applying it with a camel's hair brush; and lapping the paper half an inch; dry the work as you go along with a warm flat iron, using a thickness of flannel between the paper and iron. Divide Fig. A into four sections, with pencil marks, and cut off b and c. (Fig. B). Fold the paper double, when cutting out gussets, to insure symmetry. The mouth of the balloon must be broad (Fig. C) so the flame

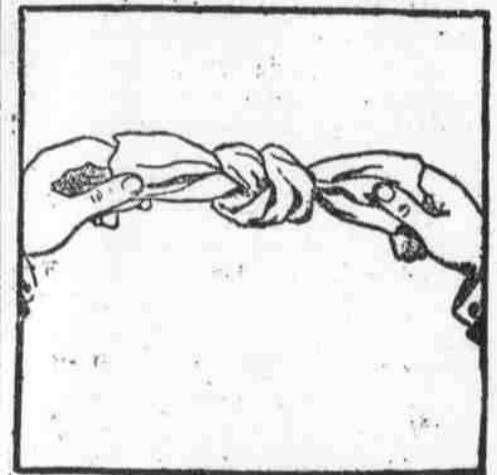


will not strike against the paper, as it would if the neck were narrower. (Fig. D.) Paste together the sides and gussets near neck and crown first; then cover the crown with a piece of soft white paper a foot in diameter—pasting in the centre a loop of muslin, thus (Fig. E), to be used to lift and hold the bal-

loon while filling it. Stiffen the mouth of the balloon with a circle of stiff wire, strengthening it for a depth of three inches with muslin gashed and pasted on the paper and fastened to the wire ring. Make the mouth eighteen inches in diameter (about 3 1/7 times of a diameter makes a circle). Make a car of wire or cardboard of any shape desired. Fig. F is a sample of one. Place in it a tin pan to hold the heating apparatus. Heat the air by soaking a sponge with alcohol and setting it on fire, or by using a tallow and lamp wick, which gives the most brilliant flame. The hot air generated will cause the balloon to fill and rise.—Washington Star.

The Knot in the Handkerchief.

The task is to fold a handkerchief lengthwise; to take hold of both ends with two hands and to make a knot in the handkerchief without letting go



the ends. This is done with the knowledge of a trick.

We place the handkerchief before us, fold our arms a la Napoleon and take one end of the handkerchief with the left hand, which is now to the right, and the other end with the right hand, now to the left. By unfolding the arms we make a knot in the handkerchief and the trick is done.—New York Tribune.

A Trick With a Piece of Cord.

Take a piece of cord about two yards long, hold the two ends with the thumb and index finger of the right hand and form the figure shown on the left side of the illustration on the table. The task is to pull the cord off the table while another person is trying to prevent it by placing the index finger on any spot inside the figure formed by the cord. You may be cer-

HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS



How to Drink Milk.

When the needs of reviving strength after exhaustion, nothing equal to the effects of hot milk sipped slowly. Some people say they cannot digest milk, and these are the people who drink it down quickly, so that the digestive acids, in playing round it, form large curds, which give trouble before they can be absorbed. The right way is to sip the milk in small amounts, so that each mouthful, as it descends into the stomach, is surrounded by the gastric fluid, and when the whole glassful is down the effect is that of a spongy mass of curds, in and out of which the keen gastric juices course, speedily doing their work of turning the curd into peptones that the tissues can take up.

The Uses of Lemon.

If more people realized the many uses to which lemons may be put this fruit would always be found in the well regulated household. Here are some of its good qualities: Lemon juice removes stains from one's hands. Lemon juice and water make a mouth wash, useful for preventing tartar and sweetening the breath, but the mixture must not be too strong, or the enamel of the teeth will in time suffer. Lemon juice will often, when everything else fails, allay the irritation caused by the bites of gnats or flies, and a teaspoonful of it, in a cup of cafe noir, will usually relieve a bilious headache. The juice of a lemon, taken in hot water on awakening in the morning, is a liver corrector and a flesh reducer. Lemon juice and salt will remove rust stains from linen without injury to the fabric if you wet the stains with the mixture several times while it is bleaching in sunshine. Two or three applications may be necessary if the stain is an old one.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Buckwheat Cakes.

To make buckwheat griddle cakes, mix together four cupfuls of buckwheat flour with one scant cupful of cornmeal and an even tablespoonful of salt. Sift these ingredients together. To moisten them use five cupfuls of lukewarm water and two cupfuls of milk. The milk is used to give the rich brown color preferred by most people. To accomplish this many housewives use all water and add two tablespoonfuls of molasses. The milk, however, makes the cakes more delicate. Dissolve a compressed yeast cake in a half cupful of lukewarm water; add it to the other liquid. Then add the liquid gradually to the dry ingredients, beating hard meanwhile. Pour the batter into a pan that comes for the purpose, and let it rise overnight. In the morning, just before baking the cakes, stir a level teaspoonful of soda into a quarter of a cupful of lukewarm water and beat it into the batter until it foams. Then fry a test cake on a hot griddle, and if it is too thick, add more water or milk to the batter. At least a pint of the batter should be left for the next baking, to use in place of the yeast. To renew the batter, add the ingredients in the same proportion as the first time.

NOTES FOR HOUSEWIVES

A hot solution of salt and vinegar will brighten copper and tin ware. When color in a fabric has been accidentally destroyed by acid, ammonia may be applied to restore it. A pleasant household deodorizer is made by pouring sprigs of lavender over lumps of bicarbonate of ammonia.

Mildews on linen may be removed with soft soap and chalk rubbed over the discolored place before it goes into the wash tub.

String beans, covered with French dressing sprinkled with chives and seasoned with salt and pepper, make an excellent salad.

A pinch of salt will make the white of an egg beat quicker, and a pinch of borax in cooked starch will make the clothes stiffer and whiter.

When a bathtub becomes shabby sandpaper it and give it a coat of ordinary white paint, to be followed by one or two coats of bath enamel.

Stains on brass will soon disappear if rubbed with a cut paper dipped in salt. When clean, wash in hot water, dry with a cloth and polish with a wash leather.

Aluminum pans are excellent in every way and no trouble to keep clean if rinsed out directly they are done with. They should not be washed with soda, as it is destructive to the brilliant polish.

Jewelry can be cleaned by washing in soapsuds in which a few drops of spirits of ammonia are stirred; shaking off the water and laying in a box of dry sawdust. This method leaves no marks or scratches.

Lots of men are honest because they are afraid to take a chance.