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ROYAL RANGER RALPH;

—:OR:—

The Waif of the Western Prairies.

BY WELDON J. CODD.

CHAPTER XXI—Continued.

"They will soon begin a new mode of attack," said the hermit, "but what we cannot tell until they begin operations."

This the savages did an hour later. Darkness had come down over the ravine, but the hermit stood at the window, and his keen eyes were fixed on the dim scene below.

"I understand their plans now," he said at last.

"What are they?" asked the scout.

"They are trying to scale the cliff."

"It is almost perpendicular."

"Still, under the cover of the darkness they hope to reach us."

"They will not."

"No. One thing has prevented the success of the enterprise."

"And that is——"

"Their discovery," replied the old hermit, grimly.

As he spoke, Walford went to a corner of the cabin. He lowered some object by a rope from the window of the cabin a minute later.

He lighted a match and swung the object clear of the window. It proved to be an immense open lantern. Its rays suddenly cast forth, illumined the space beneath them bright as day.

It showed the savages in half a dozen places in the act of endeavoring to scale the cliff and reach the refuge of their enemies.

Cries of rage and dismay escaped them as with actions of the hermit hailed their plans. Both Walford and the scout fired a volley at them and the Modocs retreated.

The rays of the lantern soon died away, leaving the valley in darkness again.

"They seem to have abandoned the attack," suggested the scout, after a long silence.

"Not by a long, long, perhaps," replied Walford; "but we shall have more trouble with them before the night is over."

"You think so?"

"I know it. Look there!"

Both men peered curiously from the window. A flaming streak of fire pierced the darkness.

"An arrow," said the scout.

"Exactly."

"Tipped with fire."

"Yes."

"They mean to burn us out."

Walford laughed grimly. "If they can."

"Can? They are others."

Indeed, as he spoke arrows were shot upward in numberless points of the valley. Most of them fell wide of their intended mark. Some shot over the cabin. Some struck the cliff and were extinguished. Others descended in a circle and fell to the ground. Some, however, it was evident penetrated the outer surface of the explosive floor beneath their feet. These things could not see. Walford seemed undisturbed at these episodes.

"Are you not afraid?" asked the scout, finally.

"If what?"

"If the fire."

"I do not believe they can fire the cabin."

"Why not?"

"The sides and floor are damp and moss-covered."

"Ha, what about that?"

A dense, choking smoke began to pervade the place.

"The logs are certainly on fire," remarked Ranger Ralph.

"Well, when we are in danger we will retreat."

"Where?"

"To one of the rocks."

"Is there a way to leave here?"

"Yes."

"And reach the valley?"

Walford nodded assentingly. He saw as he watched from the window that a ladder was beneath the cabin.

"They've done it," he said, calmly.

"Done what?"

"Set the cabin on fire."

"Then we had better leave here."

"I suppose we had."

"Then let us do so."

"In a moment. Wait."

"Where are you going?"

"To see that the way is clear."

Walford left the hut on the side farthest from the mountain. Ranger Ralph remained at the window, looking down at the valley. Every moment the glare increased. Evidently the bottom of the cabin was on fire. The arrows of the savages had ignited the floor.

The scout could hear the flames crackling fiercely. The smoke began to fill the cabin, and he was compelled to retreat.

Still he determined to await Walford's return. Suddenly an anxious sound started and alarmed the old scout. There was a tearing, crashing noise.

The hut seemed to rock and quiver wildly. The floor appeared to drop precipitatively.

In a flash the scout realized what had occurred. The fire had weakened the posts that held the floor in place. These had been burned through, and the result promised a disaster to the scout.

He had just time to spring to one side as he saw what was about to transpire. He reached the door leading to the spot where the rude bridge had been, just as the floor gave way. With a crash it went hurtling to the valley below.

Triumphant shouts of demoniac glee arose from the savages. They expected to see the scout and the hermit dashed to pieces.

Ranger Ralph had escaped unhurt, however, and Walford was not in the cabin when the disaster came.

The scout gained the rock and hastened to get out of range and sight of the Indians.

In his precipitate haste he stumbled and fell. He dropped over the edge of the cliff and landed on a ledge about twenty feet below. The fall made him insensible.

When he awoke to consciousness it was broad daylight, and the valley was deserted. After several days of arduous endeavor to locate the outlaw Despard and to rescue Inez Tracey, the scout found himself alive in peril, and with nothing before him except complicated plots and a broken trail.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE TRAIL.

One week after the occurrence of the events narrated in the last chapter, a solitary horseman emerged from the last of a series of lonely mountain passes and struck off into a forest beyond which reached the isolated mining district of Gold Valley.

The spot was located about one hundred miles south of Miners Gulch, and although remote from any large business center, was proof of numerous little settlements and mining camps.

The horseman took a rapid but close survey of the landscape before he descended from the hills.

"Yonder are the New Era mining camps," he murmured. "It is here that I expect to find Dyke Despard. For two days I have traced him, and I have reason to believe that Danton, his accomplice, is to meet him there and divide their plunder and leave the country. He certainly will not recognize me in this disguise. He shall not escape me. He shall be punished for his many crimes. He shall tell me where I can find the woman I love—Inez Tracey."

It was Darrel Grey who spoke, but not, in propria persona, as the reader first saw him.

He was elaborately disguised and in nowise resembled the young scout who had rescued Inez Tracey the eventful night at Ten Spot, when our story opened.

His disguise and appearance in the district described may be briefly explained.

Snake at the outlaws' stronghold in Lone Canyon, he had as directed, gone at once to Miners' Gulch.

He knew that it would be dangerous and useless to attempt to find Inez in the scout with the hostile tribes around him. His return to the Gulch was not, therefore, a retreat, but a forced flight for safety.

On arriving there, he aroused the natives by relating all the exciting events of the preceding few days. The result was that a score of determined men set out the next day to rescue their imprisoned companion, Ranger Ralph.

Not a trace of the scout, Inez, the old hermit, or the Indian princess could be found.

The Modocs had returned to their usual camp, where they were so numerous that a journey thither would be useless. The bandits had been dispersed or killed, and the disappointed Darrel could learn nothing of Despard or the surviving members of the band.

All the parties to the recent plot of the desperado had mysteriously and strangely disappeared.

Utterly disliking the young scout returned to Miners Gulch.

He had no means of knowing whether Inez Tracey was a prisoner in the hands of the Modocs or was the captive of Despard. He inclined to the latter belief, however, and at last determined to act upon it.

Assuming that Despard had escaped, he resolved to gain a trace of his whereabouts if possible. It was for this reason, knowing the way in which he had to deal, that he disguised himself.

He visited Lone Canyon, found the tavern in ruins and the bandit stronghold entirely deserted. Thence he went to the, visiting all the many mining camps along the Rio River.

He pretended to be a prospector, but kept a sharp lookout for some of the escaped outlaws.

Finally, one day, he met at a tavern a man whom he recognized as a former member of Despard's band. From him he deftly learned that Despard and Danton had escaped the Modocs. They were to meet at Dead Man's Gully in a few days. Despard was in hiding and Danton had gone after some hidden treasure.

That afternoon Darrel arrived at the gulch, where a tavern that was a general center for the miners was located. Darrel announced to the landlord that he intended to remain for several days, and secured a room at the tavern.

That night and all the next day he haunted the barroom of the place, keeping a sharp lookout for Despard. He made many guarded inquiries as to the outlaw, but could learn nothing definite concerning him.

The next evening, however, an episode occurred which indicated that his efforts to locate Despard were destined to be rewarded with success at last.

It was just after dusk and he was seated in a chair near the bar, when a stranger entered the place.

The others in the room, engrossed in card playing and drinking, did not notice him, and Darrel himself only bestowed a passing glance at him. The stranger bore a small satchel in his hand and wore a heavy sombrero that effectually shadowed his bearded face.

He addressed the landlord in a low tone. The moment he spoke Darrel started violently.

"Danton!" he breathed, excitedly.

He had instantly recognized the voice. He controlled his emotions, however, and listened intently.

"Are you the landlord?" asked the disguised Danton.

"Yes."

"I was to meet a friend here."

"What is his name?"

"Fuertado."

"A Mexican?"

"Yes."

"There's no one here of that name," said the landlord.

"Then he hasn't come yet. I'll wait for him. Can you give me a room?"

"Yes."

Danton placed a coin on the counter.

"And send Fuertado to me when he comes."

"All right."

Danton was led to an apartment in the rear of the barroom by the landlord.

Darrel Grey was keenly excited. He walked out into the open air and reflected deeply. His emotions were nearly in his power.

The disguised stranger was certainly Danton. The man Fuertado he had named was undoubtedly Dyke Despard.

"What had I better do?" he mused.

Darrel formed a quick resolution. He had made the acquaintance of one of the principal men of the place the day previous, and had impressed him favorably. His name was Brown, and he was an ex-officio Sheriff of the district.

Darrel hastened at once to the cabin where he lived. Briefly and rapidly he related the true object of his visit to Dead Man's Gully. The Sheriff listened interestedly. He had heard of Despard, and evidently bore him no friendly feelings.

"You want me to help you?" he said.

"Yes," replied Darrel.

"And arrest the man?"

"At once."

"On what charge?"

"Train robbery and murder."

"Have you any witnesses?"

"Not here."

"That's it, you see. Despard has some friends among the regular miners."

"Well?"

"They would demand a speedy trial, and, as you have no witnesses, I doubt if you could convict Despard."

"But at Miners' Gulch his crimes are known."

"That is different. Now, I have a plan."

"Well?"

"Arrest him yourself."

"Alone?"

"No; I will help you. We will capture him quietly and spirit him away."

"How?"

"Will you pay the expenses for a vehicle to convey him to the gulch?"

"Yes."

"Then return to the hotel."

"And keep watch of the men?"

"Exactly."

"And you?"

"Depend upon my being on hand when the proper time comes."

"Agreed."

Darrel returned to the hotel. His first question was of the landlord.

"Has your guest's friend come yet?" he asked, with affected carelessness.

"The Mexican?"

"Yes."

"He just came."

"In the room yonder, I suppose."

"Yes."

Darrel went outside again and walked around the house. The shutters of the room occupied by Danton and his companions were closed, however.

"I must see and overhear them," he decided.

He examined the house closely. He knew that it had a large unfinished loft, used for storage. Ten minutes later he was clambering over its rafters, and located the room Danton was in. Then he began to cut a small hole through the plastering.

He had made a crack large enough to look into the apartment, when he paused.

Evidently the falling particles of plaster had attracted the attention of the occupants of the place. For a voice, unmistakably that of Despard, asked quickly:

"What is that?"

CHAPTER XXIII.

UNDER ARREST.

Darrel Grey remained perfectly silent and glanced through the hole in the ceiling. Seated at a table was Danton, and opposite sat the object of all Darrel's quest—the bandit leader, Dyke Despard.

The latter was disguised as a Mexican, but his dark, lowering eyes betrayed his true identity to the young scout.

A few grains of plaster had fallen on the table between them.

"What is that?" Despard had demanded.

"What?"

"The plaster is falling."

"The rats, probably. Go on with your story, Despard. We have no time to lose."

[illegible] the falling plaster and asked, "You have the gold dust?"

"Yes," replied Danton.

"Where is it?"

"In this satchel."

"What have you learned?"

"Nothing."

"The boys are all scattered?"

"Yes."

"And the diamonds cannot be found?"

"No. White Dawn took them."

"And cannot be traced?"

"I fear not."

"Very well, then we must content ourselves with what we have."

"We're forced to."

"And leave the country at once."

"Yes; for we are not in much favor here."

"There's that land that was left by Tracey."

"In California?"

"Exactly."

"The old hermit said it was worthless."

"It's something, and I have the papers to it. If we only had the girl."

"Inez?"

"Yes."

"She's in the hands of the Modocs."

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it."

Darrell became so excited that he made a careless move at this time. He slipped from one of the rafters, and in doing so, fell upon the frail partition.

There was a crash, and the next moment he went flying through the air. He landed directly on the table between the amazed conspirators.

"You are my prisoners!"

Darrel had regained his presence of mind instantly. Drawing a revolver he sprang to the floor. His main attention was directed to Despard.

Danton had taken the alarm quickly. Before Darrel could detain him he had reached the window. With a crash he went through it, shutters and all.

At that moment the rear door was opened. Brown, the Sheriff, stood on its threshold.

"Dyke Despard," he said, "you are under arrest."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Limited Monarchy.

The system of responsible ministries, the introduction of which into our own government has been advocated by certain theorists, would make of the President of the United States much such a functionary as is a monarch in a constitutional country of Europe, as far as influence with his own administration is concerned. An amusing anecdote is told of Louis XVIII. of France.

The incorrigible monarch took breakfast one morning. Then his ministers called upon him.

"Well," said the King, "how are the public affairs?"

"Getting along very nicely, sire," said the ministers.

"Hum! In that case," said the King, "I think I will go and take a walk."

Next morning after breakfast the ministers called again. "Well, how are the public affairs get on to-day?" asked the King.

"Very badly indeed, sire," said the ministers.

"Hum!" exclaimed the King, "in that case, I think I will—go and take a walk!"

Next day no ministers called on the King.

"What has become of my ministry?" said the King, after breakfast.

"Sire," said the palace functionary who was in attendance, "Parliament has turned out the ministry."

"Ah!" said the King. "Then it's they who have taken a walk this time, eh?"

In 1778 the heat of Bologna was so great that numbers of people were stifled. In July, 1813, the heat again became intolerable. Vegetables were burned up and fruit died on the trees. The furniture and woodwork in dwellings cracked and split, and meat went bad in an hour.

The heat in several of the French provinces during the summer of 1793 was equal to that of a glass furnace. Meat could be prepared for the table merely by exposing it to the sun. Not a soul dare venture out between noon and 4 p. m.

THE WHITE PASS TRAIL.

LIVELY SCENES ON THE ROAD TO THE KLONDIKE GOLD FIELDS.

A Valley Filled With Tents—A Rough Path for the Eager Gold Seekers—The Little Cayuse More Useful Than the Big Horse—Accidents on the Trail.

Leaving the river, the trail leads on for some two miles. Tents have been met with scattered along the way, and one is never out of sight of men coming or going. Now suddenly a sight meets the eye. The space between the tree trunks has been cleared away, and the whole place is filled with tents on both sides of the trail, side by side, only a few feet apart, and extending back the width of the valley, which is here quite narrow. The men have set up their stoves and hung out hundreds of pounds of bacon, and the air is laden with the savory smell of smoking meat and the camp fires; for it is evening, and the men are returning from the trail. Weary horses are eating hay and oats alongside tarpaulin-covered piles of goods.

There are fifty or sixty tents in all, crowded together in a small space, and the roadway between is packed smooth hundreds of feet. There are more women here, and one is baking biscuit, and selling them hot for twenty-five cents a dozen. Every one we talk with is cutting down weight. Once through the tents, the wagon road stops, and then what seems to be only a foot-trail makes a sudden turn to the left and boldly climbs up the steep mountainside. We hitch our horses here and proceed on foot. This is the Hill, and the crowds of tents and men make the town at the "foot of the Hill." It is the resting spot before the struggle. To convey an idea of the Hill one must have recourse to illustration, and I can find none more apt than that used by one who has been over the trail: "Imagine a mountain of goods-boxes, some of them bigger than the rest—the size of tents." Imagine them piled in a rough mass, cover them with moss and black loam and trees, with rills of water trickling down among them. The goods-boxes are granite bowlders; their outer surfaces protrude from the mass, hard and bare, but nature has covered the rest with rich vegetation. The path—if indeed it can be called one—twists and turns and worms its way from ledge to ledge and between the masses of bowlders. Here a tree has been cut down and we clamber over its stump. There a corduroy bridge lifts one over a brook. Men with stout alpenstocks, and with packs painfully struggle upward, stopping now and again for rest. It has been comparatively dry for a day, and the trail is said not to be so bad. Between the bowlders it has packed fairly well, and but for its steepness, would be called a good path. We ascended a distance of several hundred feet—not quite to the summit, we are told. On every ledge and bench tents are set up or piles of sack, so near the path that one can reach out one's hand and touch them. Men in from the day's work are cooking or reclining beside their goods. Their rifles are in easy reach. Pilfering has been going on here too, and the men who are lying by their goods will shoot at a sight. A string of horses and mules is returning down the hill, and we see now the difference in horses. The lank, big, clumsy horse is in danger at every step. He comes to a dead-off little his head in air, toses his fore feet ahead with a groan, and trusts to chance for his hind feet to find a footing. He strikes a sloping rock, flounders for a foothold, and down he goes sideways and rolls over. A string of several dozen went past, but none did actually fall. The little cayuse, however, or Indian pony, like the mules, looks where every foot is placed. One cayuse got out of the trail and came to a pitch-off of ten or twelve feet; we looked to see it break its neck, but it simply put its head down, slid over the face of the bowlder, and landed squarely and light as a goat. Another we just heard of went down a forty-foot bank, and was back on the trail working next day. We set out down the hill again. When we were near the bottom we met a small train coming up in charge of two men.

At the foot of the steep ascent the train stopped, and one horse went ahead. When he came up to a step-up of over two feet he got his fore feet up, gave a desperate lunge to get his hind parts up, slipped, and fell, his whole weight and that of his load square on top of a sharp stump, where he floundered and kicked pitifully, but helpless. We helped cut the load off, rolled him over on his back off the stump, and helped him to his feet, and he got up with scarcely a scratch. That was one fall, the first we had seen. We were told that fifty horses a day fell there. No one thought anything about it. The other horses were led up, one by one, the men choosing each step for them. This seems to be the only way to do with horses that are not, like goats, used to looking where a foot goes down. Most of the falls come where two smooth surfaces of rock come together in a notch, furnishing no foothold. If there is soft mud in the notch, and the sides are wet and slippery, the horse goes down with a smash, and it is lucky if a broken leg does not result.—Harper's Weekly.

One of Columbus's First Impressions.

An interesting anecdote, indicating that in spite of our advances in civilization we have not changed fundamentally, is as follows:

On his return to the court, Columbus was asked by Queen Isabella if America was interesting to the tourist.

"Quite, your highness," he replied. "The scenery of America is superb, but their public buildings aren't anything to brag of."—Harper's Bazar.

A MYSTERIOUS ISLAND.

It Appears and Disappears Regularly in a Michigan Lake.

C. Henri Leonard, a cottager at Orion lake, writes to the Detroit Journal concerning the mysterious "sinking island" in the lake there. Mr. Leonard says he has personal knowledge of the island in question, which is about an acre in extent, and has watched its disappearance and reappearance with much interest. At the opening of the season at Orion this year the island was about four feet under water. When Mr. Leonard left his cottage on September 7th the island had begun to emerge from the water, and he says it will soon be dry enough to allow one to walk over it with safety.

The island appears to be of a spongy texture, and contains several stumps of trees, a foot or more in diameter. Mr. Leonard says no one has yet fathomed the mystery of the regular disappearance and reappearance of the island, but he has a theory. It is that the tree stumps originally floated out together to the middle of the lake, taking with them some of the weeds, the vegetable growth of Orion lake being very rich and extensive. These weeds, he thinks, have been gradually added to year by year, with the addition of floating brush, until the island has approached its present size, and is firmly knit and bound together.

The specific gravity of the mass normally being a trifle heavier than water, it naturally sinks to the bottom. As the rich verdure of the weeds approaches maturity, however, and decomposition of them is aided by the fiercely warmth of the water during the summer season, the gases arising from this decomposing stage being retained in the plant cells, overcome the normal gravity of the island, and so the whole mass slowly emerges from the water. With the coming of cold weather, the vegetable growths being destroyed and decomposition checked, the mass again becomes heavier than water and gradually disappears. The water near the island is about thirty feet deep, so that the growth of vegetation cannot well be from the lake bottom, at least this is the opinion of those who have examined the island at various stages of its submersion.

Altogether it is a very interesting natural curiosity, and is well worth a trip to Orion by the curious. Just now the lake island will be at its maximum height out of the water, and can be easily seen from the shore near the station. During its submersion stage it is perfectly safe to row over the island. It can be seen below the water's surface, but the stumps are so far below the surface there is no danger of a boat striking them. At its present stage it would be possible to hold a picnic on the island providing the crowd was not too great.

An Unexpected Result.

A peculiar and touching incident in real life has just come to light through an advertisement in the Chicago Record. Early in the year a lady well known for missionary and church work in Indiana published a book intended to teach a better way of living. Several copies were distributed among friends, one to a Dr. Baldwin, whose fourteen-year-old boy, Harry, took a fancy to the book and went to bed holding it in his hands. On the day following the most diligent search failed to reveal its whereabouts, and it was never found.

A few days ago the author was in Amboy with a letter that she had received from Chicago. The writer did not reveal his name or address, but went on to explain that he was a professional housebreaker, that he had been trained to it, and had never known any other life. His manner of working was to go into small towns, locate a favorable house and at night rob it. In April last he was in Amboy as a street fakir. On entering Dr. Baldwin's house that night, he stated, that in one room he found a woman and child asleep. The child held a book in one hand, which was slipping from its grasp, and for fear it might fall and disturb the mother, he took the book and placed it in his pocket. The innocence of the child and childhood memories haunted him and he left the house, taking a midnight train to Chicago. There the book was read, and in it, he says, he received his first lesson in good morals. So impressed was he with this that he resolved to abandon his evil haunts and lead a better life, and asked the lady to apprise him of the receipt of the letter through an advertisement, which was done.

Street Oratory in New York.

When one hears some rough, shirt-sleeved laborer explaining Ricardo's law of rent to a little crowd, or comparing the French tariff unique of about a century ago to Henry George's economic theory of the single tax, one realizes that whatever other peculiar features these gatherings may have, they are not characterized by lack of brains and thought. When laughter or applause from some group indicates that a talker has scored a point attention is drawn his way. Men from nearer groups join that which surrounds him. This is his opportunity. Taking a deeper breath and expanding his chest, he raises his voice a trifle and gives it a more oratorical swing. Then he begins to use gestures, and his audience respectfully widens out to give him more room. For a while he holds its attention; then perhaps there begins a disintegration, until he ends with only the original crowd about him; sometimes with less.—Illustrated American.

Fontainebleau's great grapevine produced 7672 pounds of grapes this year, which when recently sold at auction brought $715.

HELPS FOR HOUSEWIVES.

Freesias in the Window.

An amateur recommends this method of growing freesias in the window: Plant an inch deep in rich soil. Put in the dark and in a cool place till they have sprouted, then bring to light and air. Keep the pots in deep saucers, fill them (the saucers) with hot water every morning. Warm the water used for watering them. See that the drainage is perfect. They require a great deal of water as do most bulbs grown indoors, but they cannot endure a stagnant soil.

Preparing and Cooking Ducks.

Ducks, in point of quality, rank as follows: Canvasback, redhead, mallard and teal. The canvasback probably outranks everything in the way of game in the estimation of good livers. No seasoning or spices are used in its cooking; none could add to its perfect flavor. Pluck, singe and draw the birds; wiping out the inside with a cloth wet in salt water, never washing; truss, dust lightly with salt (inside and outside), and bake twenty-five minutes in a hot oven. Baste often in melted butter and hot water—one part butter to three of water. If prefer red rare (considered the better way), cook only twenty minutes. In serving, pour over the liquor yielded in the cooking.—Woman's Home Companion.

The Odor of Food.

The odor of food is always to be dreaded in the upper rooms of a home where sometimes there seems no preventing the penetration, no matter how far removed the kitchen, of certain highly-scented dishes. In the sick room it is peculiarly to be feared, as is the lingering odor of medicines and of food carried there, which often distresses the invalid. In such cases it is well to have laid aside, for the purpose, a number of sheets of brown wrapping-paper which have been soaked in saltpetre water and allowed to dry. On one of these pieces a handful of dried flowers of lavender—to be bought of any druggist—should be placed, and then the whole, laid in a dropped utensil, as a coal-scuttle, should be set blazing. The refreshing scent will completely destroy any rival, and will not prove a remedy worse than the disease.

Flower Stall for a Bazar.

A flower stall is one of the most decorative of all booths for a bazar. The stand should be covered with a framework of rustic wood in the form of light arches. Woodbine, bittersweet and clematis should be trained over this, and in each of the arches a hanging basket, filled with ferns, should be suspended. Fruit may be so effectively arranged with the foliage that this seems the best place to sell it. Grapes and their leaves, rosy apples, peaches and pears will be very attractive, and cut flowers, bonbonnieres, growing plants, baskets, etc., should be sold. Novelties in the way of table ornamentation, filled with flowers, should sell well and help to trim up the stall. The entire decoration of a dinner table might be exhibited, as a centre of very pale marrow peduncle wreathed in Virginia creeper with candlesticks with yellow shades and little vases of yellow glass filled with the creeper. Also a blue table centre, with imitation silver vases filled with scarlet blossoms. These ideas may, of course, be so arranged that intending purchasers can, if they desire it, take only a part of the whole scheme, or buy the centre, vases and all.—New York Post.

Recipes.

Ham a la Brabançonne—Boil and mash six potatoes, adding salt, pepper and hot milk as for the table. Beat hard for five minutes, then stir into them three tablespoonfuls of finely-chopped lean ham, one tablespoonful of chopped parsley and one teaspoonful of onion juice; turn into a buttered dish, cover the top with buttered bread crumbs and bake twenty minutes in a hot oven.

Lemon Cheese Cakes—Boil a pint of rich milk. Beat the yolks of four eggs, add to the milk and let boil until a curd is formed. Drain off the whey. Put the curd into a deep dish and mix with quarter of a pound of butter. Let cool, add the beaten yolks of two eggs and half a small cup of powdered sugar. Flavor with a little nutmeg and the juice of a lemon. Make in a rich crust with which you have lined patty pans, then cool, dredge with sugar and serve.

Baked Chocolate Custard—Put three tablespoonfuls of grated chocolate in a saucepan and set over hot water until it melts. Add gradually one capful of milk, stirring until smooth and set at the side of the stove. Beat four that three tablespoonfuls of sugar and three eggs, add one capful of cold milk, then the contents of the saucepan. Pour into cups, set in a deep pudding dish and pour around them sufficient hot water to reach a little more than half-way up the sides of the cups. Place in a slow oven and cook until firm in the centre; test by putting in the point of a knife blade; if done it should come out clean.

Cream of Mushroom Soup—Peel, rinse and cut fine one pound of mushrooms; put them into a porcelain-lined soup kettle, cover with one quart of good chicken or veal stock and cook until tender. Press through a sieve and return to the kettle; add four tablespoonfuls of sago and cook fifteen minutes longer; season with lump of butter, half teaspoonful of salt and few shakes of white pepper, add a quart of milk, scalded, and simmer five minutes. Take out one cup of the soup and mix it with the beaten yolks of three eggs, pour slowly into the soup and take at once from the fire.

AWHEEL.

Dainty maid, with cheeks aglow,
By my side so blithely wheeling,
Little can your pure heart know
What the heart within me's feeling!
Tam o' Shanter all awry,
Curly hair the breeze caressing—
There's a sparkle in your eye,
With very joy your revelry confessing.

As we pedal on our way,
Swiftly, silently progressing,
How I wonder what you'd say
Should I start my love confessing!
Would you frown on me and doubt?
Would you fetch a glance benignant?
Would you shake your head and pout?
Would you cheer my heart with smiling?
—Robert T. Hardy, Jr., in Munsey.

HUMOROUS.

When the bill collector is round, it is time to get square.

"I say, Mick, what sort of potatoes are those you are planting?" "Raw ones."

"Pretty Polly!" said the lady. "Can Polly speak?" "Polly," replied the Boston parrot, "can converse."

Walker—Did you say your wife's a member of a secret society? Talker—It was secret before she joined.

After a man learns how little he knows he begins to suspect that possibly others do not know as much as they pretend.

An enterprising merchant advertised "Male or female umbrellas." Probably a female umbrella is one that won't shut up.

Priscilla—When Charley started to kiss Clara the other night she called out for help. Patrice—Couldn't she hold him alone?

"Ma," said Tommy Turner, "am I descended from the monkeys?" "Not on my side of the house," replied Mrs. Turner with much positiveness.

She—You never pump my tires for me any more, though you did before we were married." "No I don't; but I raise the wind to keep you going in other ways."

Wife—Why, Reginald, these trousers have no pockets in them! Husband—I know. I expect to save enough by not having them to pay for the whole suit.

Two deaf mutes, they sat and courted
Just as lovers in our land do,
Only that, with love transported,
Neither held the other's hand do!

A young fellow who had been reading the comic papers was surprised the other day. He proposed to a girl, and instead of her saying, "It's so sudden," she said "It's about time."

"How terribly Mrs. Wallamshaw stutters. It must be very trying to her husband." "Not at all. He likes it. He is able to get out of the house at night before she has time to ask him where he's going."

"First shirt, then collar buttons, then suspenders, then trousers, and now—and now my diamond frame!" He crouched in the bay window and through a mist of blinding tears watched his wife wheel away.

He—I was a great friend of your late husband. Have you any little thing of his you could let me have to remind me of him? Disconsolate Widow—Wha—what's the matter with me? You-you can t-take me if y-you c-care to!

"Sa lie Twitters is to be married," said Mrs. Kilduff to her bachelor, who is a crusty bachelor. "Ah!" replied he, "who is her victim?" They, seeing a baleful look in his sister's eye, he added, "I should say, who is her accomplice?"

His Wife—Well, I'm surprised that young Mr. Jenkins turned out wrong! He seemed to be a good young man, and he sang so beautifully at meeting. The Pastor—Well, you can tell much more about a man's voice from his singing than you can about his soul.

The Rev. Dr. Thirdly—And now, children, I wonder if any little boy or girl here knows who was the best man that ever lived. Ah, there's a hand up. Well, Johnny, who was the best man that ever lived? Johnny Seedcrop—Please, sir, it was mamma's first husband, sir.

Keep Snakes as Pets.

"There is a pet snake in nearly every house in Brazil," said a Chicagoan who has returned from a journey through that country. "They keep them just as we do cats or dogs, and, indeed, for much the same purpose, using them to kill the rats at night. The snakes are a species of lizard from ten to fifteen feet long, and are perfectly harmless to mankind, while they are quite affectionate and, like cats, become attached to the house where they are kept. These snakes are sold in the markets, where I bought one that died on the voyage from Rio Janeiro to New York.

"A scientist, to whom I spoke of these snakes, told me that no snakes are really dangerous to man. He said that never had a snake attacked a man unless the man had first attacked it. The reptile is defensive, but not offensive, and has no desire to pick a quarrel. But if you tread on a snake the thing cannot know that your intentions are not inimical to your welfare. So I always avoid snakes."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Kien Long and His Physicians.

There used to be related a curious anecdote of old Kien Long, emperor of China. He was inquiring of Sir George Staunton the manner in which physicians were paid in England. When, after some difficulty, his majesty was made to comprehend the system, he exclaimed:

"Is any man well in England that can afford to be ill? Now I will inform you," said he, "how I manage my physicians. I have four, to whom the care of my health is committed. A certain weekly salary is allowed them, but the moment I am ill the salary stops till I am well again. I need not inform you that my illnesses are usually short."—Harper's Round Table.