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And now Italy has a great National scandal on its hands, large enough to distract Italian attention from Franco and its Panama troubles.

A small colony of Italians planted in New South Wales a few years ago has thriven so well that it is now one of the most prosperous in the land.

The School-Management Committee of the Chicago Board of Education has decided to recommend to the Board that, after the present school year, clay-modelling studies be discontinued, and that unmarried women take precedence of those who are married when appointments as teachers are made.

The salaries paid to persons in the Civil Service of the United States amount to \$90,000,000 annually. This seems like a tremendous amount, says the Chicago Herald, but when it is borne in mind that this sum pays the wages of 180,000 persons it need not appal anyone. The average is only \$500 a year.

The late cholera epidemic at Havre and Rouen, in France, has turned the attention of the local authorities to the investigation of electrical methods of disinfection. The method at present most in favor is the process of M. Hermite of treating sea water electrically, and it may possibly be adopted by the commission of Havre and Toulon and other ports open to infection.

Labor papers in Italy have recently copied articles appearing in New York papers describing the miserable condition of Italian laborers living in the hovels of Mulberry street and vicinity. The Italian editors appear to be horrified at the spectacle presented by the American press, and they beseech their fellow-countrymen not to emigrate to this country, as they are better off at home than they would ever be in this city.

It is said that the United States Treasury has redeemed more \$500 legal tender notes than it ever issued. This does not look to the New Orleans Picayune as though many such notes had been stowed away in the toes of old stockings against a rainy day, and it does look to the keen observer as though some very nice counterfeiting had been done, when Government officials themselves have not been able to detect them.

A noteworthy example of the vast agricultural resources of our country is found in the official report of the cereal harvest for the year 1892. The yield of three cereals—wheat, corn and oats—reached the enormous aggregate of 2,341,450,000 bushels. Assuming that the population of the United States is 65,000,000, those three crops would give an average of over thirty-six bushels to every man, woman and child in the whole country.

By a series of calculations it has been demonstrated that it costs a railroad company ten cents to stop a locomotive and four cents for each stop of a passenger car. It often happens that a passenger does not discover that he or she (and it is generally a woman) makes no move to leave a train until the order is given to go ahead, and a train must be brought to a stop again to let the slow-going passenger off. This little incident costs the railroad company sixteen or twenty cents, sometimes as much as the tardy passenger has paid. This is one of the little leaks that a railroad company undertakes to guard against, and the number of coaches to a train is limited as well to lessen the number of pounds of coal consumed and wear and tear of its running gear.

You cannot tell how a boy will turn out. Professor Beatty, who for many years has been at the head of the Danville (Ky.) College, says there were at one time two boys under him whose school life he remembers well—one, John C. Breckinridge, a very ordinary scholar, who did not promise much; the other, a boy whom he thought a marvel, and who, he expected, would reach the highest position in the land. Speaking with Governor Crittenden, of Missouri, about those two boys recently, Professor Beatty said the marvel was now teaching in a deaf and dumb asylum, while the other became Senator and Vice-President and once was a candidate for the Presidency. Of Governor Crittenden's class of twenty-five boys, the professor did not think much, yet fifteen of them occupy prominent positions to-day.

SAINT VALENTINE'S

The first spring blue is in the sky
And on the brightening sea
A breath of sweetest prophecy
Steals soft along the sea.
The heart of every living thing
Is touched to love and mirth—
Oh, joy and hope, oh, youth and spring
How glad ye make the earth!
The snow-drops shiver with delight
And shake their bells to call
The lazy tulips up, to light
Their torches by the wall;
The brave, bright crocuses arise
In gold and purple lines,
And smile to greet the smiling skies—
It is St. Valentine's!
Thick with brown buds, the elm-boughs
Sway
And beckon to the sun;
A redbreast on the topmost spray
His love-song has begun—
On wood and wave a tender flood
Of vital radiance shines,
And every bird and every bud
Welcomes St. Valentine's!
Upon the roof two pigeons coo,
And circle round and round,
Two bluebirds in the rosiest wood,
Two sparrows on the ground;
And cooing, singing, chirping still
This selfsame thing they say:
"Farewell to snow and blast and chill
'Tis pairing-day to-day!"
—Elizabeth A. Allen, in Youth's Companion.

Grandma's Prophecy.

BY HELEN FORREST GRAVES.



AND was nothing said about me?" Elizabeth Elton stood in the middle of the room, with the tea-canister in her hand. The lamp was not yet lighted, for the soft yellow glow of the February twilight still lingered in the west, turning the snow mantled fields to fairy plains of rose and gold. The fire crackled cheerfully in the stove; a smell of fresh-baked Graham gems pervaded the air, and Grandma Elton had just taken a saucer of stewed apples off the fire. Leah and Naomi, two fresh human rosebuds of sixteen and eighteen, were untying their hoods and removing their wraps by the door. "N—no," reluctantly answered Naomi; "I don't remember that there was." "You see, Aunt Elizabeth," awkwardly explained Leah, "it's a young folks' party." Elizabeth laughed a short, disdainful laugh. "Oh, I understand," said she. "People over thirty have no business thinking about St. Valentine parties." "But," cried Leah, eager to heal the wound she had so unconsciously inflicted, "if I were to explain to Ellen Vincent that you would like an invitation, I am quite sure—" "You will do nothing of the sort," said Elizabeth, with what Naomi was wont to call her "kazoozy queen" air. "Of all persons, I am the last to go begging for invitations. Will you light the lamp, grandma, please? Tea is ready." Naomi looked at Leah. Leah shook her head at Naomi. Grandma motioned them to keep silence, and the Graham gems and apple sauce were eaten in mute gravity. Elizabeth went to her room early that night. Naomi came and leaned against the big, carved wooden mantle. "I am so sorry," sighed she. "So am I," said Leah. "I think Aunt Elizabeth would have liked to go to the party; for all she is so old," murmured Naomi. "Thirty-three isn't such a venerable old age," observed grandma, scratching her cheek with her knitting-needles, "though, to be sure, Naomi, it's twice as old as you are. All the same, it would have been more thoughtful of Carrie Smith to invite her, too." "Carrie said she didn't want all the old maids in creation!" giggled Leah. "Nonsense, child!" said grandma, knitting away very fast. "I shouldn't wonder if Elizabeth were married before you, after all." Leah and Naomi exchanged laughing glances as they ran away to dress for the St. Valentine's Eve party. In their eyes Aunt Elizabeth belonged to a past age—a race which had no business with love or marriage. "And besides," said Leah, as she

buttoned the pearl buttons of her sister's white serge gown, "we all know that Aunt Elizabeth has been disappointed in love."

"Yes, to be sure," assented Naomi. "Do you think, Leah, that white chrysanthemums would be prettiest to wear, or Roman pearl beads, in one's hair?"

So the merry young things went to the St. Valentine's Eve party.

Elizabeth heard the jingle of the sleigh-bells as they drove away.

Grandma turned the heel of her stocking and went quietly to bed, and Elizabeth was all alone in the great silent, echoing house.

"I suppose I must get used to this sort of thing!" she said, bitterly, to herself. "It's the first time that I have ever been left out of these neighborhood festivities, and it hurts—yes, it does hurt a little! Am I really growing so old? How shall I look when I get to be grandma's age? Will they call me 'Old Miss Elton'? Shall I carry an ear-trumpet?"

She smiled—not a mirthful smile. "It's worth trying," thought she. "Come, if I can't go to the Valentine's party, I can at least have a little private masquerade all by myself. Dear old grandma is sound asleep. She will never know."

A strange mood had taken possession of Elizabeth Elton. She had slipped off her gray merino gown and dressed herself in grandma's Quakerish black dress, with the white net folded crossways on the bosom.

She combed back the luxuriant gold of her thick tresses under grandma's cap rille, and adjusted the old lady's spectacles across the bridge of her nose.

What a metamorphosis was there! She laughed aloud, scarcely believing her own eyes.

"Old Miss Elton!" she said. "Now I know exactly how she will look. But can get a better sight of myself in the looking glass down stairs."

She took up the candle, and tripped lightly down the wooden stairway to the sitting room.

As she reached the threshold, there came a sudden tap to the old brass knocker on the front door. She started at first, then turned resolutely to the door.

"Naomi has forgotten her fan," she thought. "Or Leah has sent back for something she wants. Their evening has only just begun—dear little girls!"

But it was no messenger from the house of rejoicing that met Elizabeth's eyes as she opened the door.

A tall man, closely muffled to the eyes to keep out the piercing February cold, stood there. She retreated a pace or two, still holding the candle in her hand.

"Who are you?" she said, her heart giving a sudden jump. "What do you want at this time of night?"

"Don't be frightened, Grandma Elton," said a low, pleasant voice; and then Elizabeth remembered the quaint disguise she had assumed. "May I come in, just a minute? You are the very person I wanted to see."

Elizabeth began to tremble. Had the flickering flame of the tallow-dip been a little more powerful the visitor might have observed the color come and go fitfully in her cheek.

"It—it is late!" she hesitated.

"Yes, I know," urged the young man.

"But I won't keep you long. I suppose she—Elizabeth—has gone to the party at Colonel Smith's?"

"The young people are gone—yes."

"And I want just one word with you, Mrs. Elton. Please let me come in. I want to ask you a question or two about Elizabeth."

What could she say? Her heart was beating so fiercely she could scarcely breathe.

Ten years ago, Archer Vail had quarreled with her, or she with Archer Vail—she scarcely knew which—and he had sailed with his cousin, the famous scientific professor, on the expedition to Japan which was intended to clear up half a score of unsettled points as to climate, flora and fauna.

The professor had died at Tokio, and from that time nothing had been heard of Archer. And here, on St. Valentine's Eve, he had risen like a spirit out of the snow and the starlight, on the very threshold of her house.

She opened the sitting room door. He sat down by the fire, with a sigh of relief.

even straighter than you used to. And Elizabeth—has she changed? Tell me truly—does she ever speak of me?"

Elizabeth was silent. She set the candle on the old cherry wood chest of drawers in the corner, and stood nervously picking the leaves of the monster fish-geranium in the window.

"Because," said the young man, "I've come to the conclusion that I can't live without Elizabeth, I've thought of her every day and hour, of late. I have done well in business on the other side of the world, and I can put my jewel in a proper setting, if I can but gain it. Do you suppose, grandma, she would forgive me? Do you think I could hope to win her heart?"

Outside the snowy branches crackled in the wind and the starlight. Inside the hour and minute-hand of the old clock had joined together at the hour of midnight, and Elizabeth still stood silent in the shadow as the clock struck twelve.

"Look!" said Archer. "It is St. Valentine's Day! Do you think there is any luck in omens, grandma? For I love her dearly, and I believe I could make her happy if she would but give me the chance. I've watched the windows for a long time. I shouldn't have ventured to come in if I had not seen the light gleaming through the cracks in the shutter. For the sake of the dear old days, Grandma Elton, give me a shred of hope to cling to! For the sake of old St. Valentine, tell me that I have a chance!"

Elizabeth took the candle and set it on the mantle, where it caught a reflection from the mirror and shone cheerily out with double lustre. Then she took off the muslin-ruled cap, letting her golden hair stream like a cascade of brightness down over her shoulders, and flung the spectacles on the table.

"Yes, Archer Vail!" she said, half laughing and half crying, while the roses blossomed on her cheeks and the dimples came out around her lips; "yes, I think—perhaps—"

"Elizabeth!"—he started up, and had her in his arms in a second—"Elizabeth, what does this masquerading mean? My darling, my own sweetheart, look at the clock! It is St. Valentine's morning, and you, precious one, are my life-long Valentine!"

"Grandma, grandma, do wake up!"

Old Mrs. Elton roused herself from dreams of long ago, to see Naomi and Leah in her room, their white gowns glimmering, their eyes shining like stars.

"Is it you?" she said, rubbing her eyes. "Home already? Why, it can't be much after ten!"

"But it is, grandma," declared Leah.

"It's past one," said Naomi.

"St. Valentine's Day," said Leah. "And we've had such a lovely time," chirped Naomi.

"And, oh, gracious!" panted Leah, "it's come true!"

"What has come true?" said Mrs. Elton, smiling drowsily at her granddaughters.

"Why, your prophecy."

"Ia, child!" cooed the old woman, "I ain't a prophet."

"Yes, you are," said Naomi.

"Of course you are," asserted Leah.

"We found Aunt Elizabeth and Mr. Archer Vail down in the sitting-room when we came home," said Naomi.

"Nonsense," interrupted grandma. "Archer Vail is in Japan."

"No, he isn't," gleefully laughed Naomi. "He is just now by the old church wall, I should think; or perhaps he has got as far as Mrs. Hopper's cottage, if he walks very fast. At all events he has been spending the evening here—and he and Aunt Elizabeth have made up their old quarrel, whatever it was—"

"And," interrupted Leah, "here's where the prophecy comes in, and you are a sphinx, you darling grandma! Aunt Elizabeth will be married before Naomi and me, after all. She has got a Valentine, and we haven't."

"We know," added Naomi, "because she blushed so charmingly when she introduced Mr. Vail to us. And I never knew before how pretty Aunt Elizabeth really was."

"Well, I declare," said grandma, "there's luck in St. Valentine's Day, after all!"

The Press of France.

There are 2161 journals published in Paris, and 5439 in the provinces. This makes a total of 7600 for France, and of these 1738 are political newspapers, 533 of the number being conservative, that is to say, opposed to the French Republic.

ANTHROPOPHAGI.

AUSTRALIA'S ABORIGINES ARE LOW IN HUMANITY'S SCALE.

How a White Man Lived Among Them and Escaped Being Eaten—Manners and Customs of a Strange People.

AS to what race of mankind is lowest in the human scale, declares a Washington Star contributor, there has been some dispute. Yet, on the whole, it would seem that not even the Tierra del Fuegians nor the Hottentots approach so nearly to the brute as do the aborigines of Australia, commonly known as "black fellows." In the country to which they are native they have been customarily hunted like wild beasts by the highly civilized invaders and present occupants of the soil. Not long ago a scientific Norwegian, Professor Carl Lumholtz, made an expedition into the interior of the island continent for the purpose of collecting mammals, birds and insects of new species. Penetrating into wilds which had never been traversed by any white man previously he was obliged to rely for assistance in procuring food and specimens upon such of the savages as he could hire. All of them are professed cannibals, and, inasmuch as they are hopelessly treacherous, his escape from death and subsequent cooking at their hands was little short of a miracle. In fact, on more than one occasion they plotted to kill him, and his life was only saved by accident. They imagined that he possessed supernatural power, having a great dread also of the revolver which he carried, and it was supposed by them that he never slept.

For many months he saw no other human beings than these black fellows, who wear no clothing whatever and live in nearly every respect as monkeys do. They are wanderers, having no permanent dwelling and subsisting from day to day on what they can pick up or kill. They are inveterate beggars, being never satisfied with what is given them. Gratitude is unknown to them, and they will betray their benefactor for the smallest inducement. It is always dangerous for the traveler to permit one of these savages to walk behind him. A fallen foe, be it man, woman or child, is eaten as the choicest delicacy. They know such luxury as the flesh of a black man, esteeming that of a white person as very inferior in flavor. As is the rule with all savages, the women do pretty nearly all the work, being regarded as slaves. They have no domestic animal except the wild dog, or "dingo."

Money has no value with the natives. Knowing no stimulants they are extravagantly fond of tobacco for smoking. Professor Lumholtz used tobacco when among them as money, also carrying with him a stock of clay pipes. These primitive people were very much afraid of his gun and pistol, not even understanding the use of bows and arrows. But the professor found it desirable never to miss hitting a mark in their presence, because a failure diminished their respect for him. They had a great veneration for the baby of the gun, as they called the revolver, believing that it never ceased shooting. They looked upon the scientific explorer as a mysterious being, who could travel from land to land without being eaten, and whose chief interest lay in utterly useless things, such as the skins and bones of slain animals.

One of the first natives whom he employed was named Mangoraa. He looked "more like a brute than a human being. His mouth extended almost from one ear to the other. When he talked," says the Professor, "he rubbed his body with complacency, as if the sight of me made his mouth water, and he gave me an impression that he would like to devour me on the spot. He always wore a smiling face, a mask behind which all these savages conceal their treacherous nature." Though a poor hunter, this man was regarded with much respect by his fellows because of his success in procuring human flesh to eat. "To be liberal with the savages was extremely dangerous, the traveler found, for they assume that gifts are bestowed out of fear, so long as they understand that they can have advantages from a white man they let him live. They think no more of killing a person than of breaking a stick, and the only thing which will keep them from murder is dread of evil consequences to themselves." The demands of Professor Lum-

holt's servants increased day by day, until finally they insisted that he should give them his weapons and even the trousers which he wore.

The black fellows are fond of decorating their bodies with gashes cut in parallel lines across the breast or the stomach with a sharp stone or a clam shell. To keep the wounds from healing they put charcoal or ashes in them for a month or two, until they swell up into rough ridges. Sometimes they accomplish the same result by letting ants walk about in the wounds. Certain ornaments of this kind are only adopted by a youth after he has come of age, after which time he is permitted to cut whatever he pleases, though previously he has been obliged to abstain from certain things, such as eels and large lizards. The women are often badly marked and scarred from blows inflicted by their spouses. As they do all the work, they are considered valuable property, and the savage is rich in proportion to the number of wives he possesses.

The natives employed by Professor Lumholtz never made any secret of their cannibalism and in the evenings about the campfire it was the leading topic of their conversation. Their greatest delight is eating human flesh and the very thought of it makes their eyes sparkle. These aborigines not only regard the fat of a dead foe as a delicacy, but often carry a small piece of it as an amulet, hung around the neck in a little basket. They say that the white man's flesh is salt and occasions nausea, which may be due to diet. They consider a Chinaman as good for eating as a black man, his food being chiefly vegetable.

It has been ascertained within recent years that cannibalism is a much more common practice in the world than had hitherto been realized. Millions of natives of Africa are anthropophagi. Probably the most peculiar exhibition of this habit exists in certain mountainous districts of northeast Burma, where there are tribes which follow a life as savage as that of the Australian blacks, eating the congealed blood of their enemies. The blood is poured into bamboo reeds, corked up, and in course of time hardens. The filled reeds are hung under the roofs of the huts and when a person desires to treat his friends very hospitably the reeds are broken and the contents are devoured with the greatest relish.—Washington Star.

FUN.

The military prisoner makes his escape in an unguarded moment.

Binx calls his doctor his biographer for the reason that he is at work upon his life.

You never can judge a man from his appearance in a wedding suit.—Hartford Journal.

Samson was the first man on record to bring down the house.—Union County Standard.

Out in Chicago they refer to the new Columbian coins as their "better halves."—Statesman.

The man who aspires to make a successful pickpocket should study free-hand drawing.

Whenever there is any doubt about a dog's sanity an ounce of lead is worth a pound of cure.—Mercury.

Men most liberal in their views give away their opinions freely before they are asked.—Detroit Free Press.

George—"Why do you frown upon my suit?" Maisie—"Because it's ready made."—New York Telegram.

An upright judge needn't be ashamed of his sentences even in the presence of the strictest grammarians.—Troy Press.

It is fortunate for woman that she has a better aim in life than the one she takes when throwing a stone at a tramp hen.—New York Telegram.

Ethel—"They say the Rev. Dr. Bishop rehearses all his sermons beforehand." Clara—"That is quite right; he practices what he preaches."—The Club.

"That will do for the present," as the young man remarked as he paid for a box of cheap candy for his sweetheart's birthday gift.—Philadelphia Record.

He (proudly)—"My love has no end." She (quickly)—"Hasn't it? Well, you want to make a limit mighty quick. Let it end with me and go no further."—Vogue.

The first Russian newspaper was published in 1703. Peter the Great took a personal part in its editorial composition and in circulating news.