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The Widows of Tear-Drop Lodge.

How the Five Mrs. Smiths Found Consolation.

By FLORENCE FINCH KELLY.

No, Mr. Van Patter was not in, the office boy said. But wouldn't the lady wait? He would surely be back in a few minutes. The lady sighed and sat down near an open window, threw back her mourning veil, dabbed her eyes with a black-bordered handkerchief, and fanned herself with a small black fan. Then she saw that the room already had an occupant, a woman, who, like herself, was dressed in the deepest mourning. They cast a surreptitious glance or two at each other before their attention was drawn to another arrival, a woman, young and comely, and clad in mourning as deep as their own. They heard the office boy assure her that Mr. Van Patter would be back in five minutes, and that he had many cottages to rent that were exactly what she wanted.

The first comer took in the appearance of the last with a furtive glance. "It must have been her husband, too," she thought, "for she looks so sad."

A moment later they heard the office boy again explaining Mr. Van Patter's absence. A sad voice replied, "Well, I can wait, if it isn't too long," and the three women saw another woman, dressed in black with a long crape veil floating from her widow's bonnet, enter the room. She was tall and stately, and wore her mourning robes well. The four ladies fanned themselves assiduously with their black fans, their eyes on their laps, but lifted frequently in furtive glances at one another. Presently one of them uttered a half-suppressed exclamation, and four fans dropped into as many laps as four pairs of eyes were turned toward the door. There stood a little roly-poly lady, in a trailing black gown, a longer and heavier crape veil than any of the others, and not a speck of anything but black about her, except her face, which was all pink and white, and looked as if a very deep sorrow indeed would be necessary to prevent it from rippling with smiles. She was asking for Mr. Van Patter, and saying she wanted to rent a pretty cottage in a quiet street. The women already there rustled with excitement, and exchanged glances. For the space of two minutes there was entire silence in the room. Then the tall and stately one took them all in with a sweeping glance and said "Ahem!" The others looked up and sighed and dabbed their eyes with their black-bordered handkerchiefs.

"Ladies," she began, "I cannot help thinking that there must be some strange providence in the accidental meeting here of so many women, all suffering from the same great sorrow. For I suppose, ladies, You have all lost your husbands."

A chorus of sobs made reply. Five faces were buried in as many dainty bits of black and white linen, from which came muffled exclamations:

"Only three months ago!"

"Oh, he was such a dear!"

"I shall never see his like again!"

"Oh, I can never endure it!"

There was a sound of rapid footsteps in the hall, and Mr. Van Patter entered the door with a little skip, and took off his white duck yachting cap with a flourish, while his face irradiated itself with a genial smile of welcome. But when he saw his office filled with an assemblage of black-gowned and black-veiled ladies, sobbing and exclaiming, with bowed heads and faces buried in their handkerchiefs, his smile went out like a candle in a gust of wind as he jumped quickly back into the corridor. He caught the office boy by the collar, and demanded:

"Who are they and what are they crying about? Do they think this is an undertaker's shop or a public weeping station? You done anything to hurt their feelings?"

"They're cryin' about their husbands, Mr. Van, 'cause they're all dead and there ain't any more like 'em. They're all widders, Mr. Van, and they all want to rent nice cottages in quiet streets."

The sound of the tall widow's voice again came from the room:

"Ladies, nothing but the hand of Providence could have guided into this office this morning so many women with breaking hearts, and each one seeking a quiet place in which to hide and endure her sorrow. Ladies, it means, I feel sure, that we've been guided to this place so that we can become friends and console one another in our affliction."

There was a sobbing chorus of assent, and Mr. Van Patter's face brightened with the inspiration of an idea. With a little skip and a profound bow he was in the room and saying:

"Ladies, command me! Can I be of service to you?"

"Ah, Mr. Van Patter!" said the tall lady. "I am sure, Mr. Van Patter, that you will agree with us that there is some deep significance in our meeting here this morning, total strangers to one another until we stepped into your office."

"Assuredly, madam! It is very evident!"

"We do not even know one another's names," she went on. "Mine, ladies, is Mrs. Mary A. Smith."

The others looked up with sudden increase of interest "How extraordinary!" exclaimed one "Mine is Mrs. Mary J. Smith!"

"And mine is Mrs. Mamie Smith," exclaimed another. "I was christened Mary, but I've always been called Mamie, and that is the way I always sign my name now that I can no longer through the rest of the sentence—"now er"—her voice broke and sobbed can no longer sign myself Mrs. Joseph Smith."

"Joseph Smith!"

"Did you say Joseph Smith?"

"Was that your husband's name?"

"Joseph Smith?"

Mrs. Mamie sobbed, "Oh, my dear Jody!"

"But it was my husband's name too!"

"And mine!"

"And mine, too!"

"And so was mine named Joseph Smith!"

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" exclaimed Mr. Van Patter, waving both arms and beaming upon the widows as he skipped from one foot to the other. It's the most wonderful thing that ever happened!"

"It is a most wonderful coincidence," said Mrs. Mary A., solemnly; "and it proves the truth of what I have been saying all the time, that Providence guided us to this room. But we do not yet know your name, madame," she went on addressing the widow who sat farthest back, "except that you have told us your husband's name was Joseph Smith. Is your first name also Mary?"

"It was, orignally, Mrs. Smith, but my dear husband always liked to call me Molly, and I've no heart, since I lost him, to call myself enything else."

Mrs. Mary A. Smith looked inquiringly at the little roly-poly widow.

"Polly," she ancwered promptly.

Mr. Van Patter sprang forward with a little skip and waved his arms.

"Ladies, this is certainly the most wonderful coincidence that ever happened. But I begin to understand its secret significance! In fact, I am sure that I understand exactly what it means!"

The ladies looked up with eager exclamations of "What is it?" and "Do tell us!"

"It means," he went on, "that you are not to shut yourselves up in separat cottages where you would have to pine away in solitary sorrow and loneliness. It evidently means that you are to make yourselves one sorrowful family, united under a common roof, there to comfort one another in your affliction and share with one another your burdens of sorrow!"

Spring and summer passed, and the warm golden days of autumn were at hand. Teardrop Lodge looked even more dilapidated that it did when the widows were moved to make their home within its walls because of its resemblance to their own emotional condition. But at least one of the widows, as she walked down the path toward the gate, seemed not at all in harmony with the forlorn aspect of the house and grounds. It was Mrs. Polly, clad all in white, and looking as bright as a May morning. She went to the gate, gazed up and down the street, and then walked slowly back towards the weeping willow. Mrs. Mamie and Mrs. Mary J., sitting in its shade, noted her movements with interest. They were both dressed in white, but had kept some touches of black in their attire.

"She's been acting very queer the last few days," said Mrs. J. "She has seemed as gay and happy as if she had never had a husband and didn't know what it meant to lose him."

"She has had two letters lately that were addressed in a man's handwriting," said Mrs. Mamie, "and the same writing on both."

"And she seemed so devoted to her Mr. Smith! You would have thought she'd never look at another man!"

"Wouldn't it be curious," commented Mrs. Mamie, "if it should turn out that Polly Smith's husband isn't dead at all?"

Mrs. Mary J. flushed and exclaimed, without looking up, "Mamie Smith! You don't suppose she's only a grass widow, do you?"

"I didn't say so, and even if she were I shouldn't consider it anything against her."

There was a shriek from a thicket sound of tearing drapery and running footsteps, and Mrs. Molly dashed out of the bushes and came dashing toward them, her face pale and frightened and her white gown in tatters.

"A man! "A man!" she gasped.

"Where?"

"He came creeping into the hawthorn bushes as I sat there reading. Oh, he frightened me almost to death!"

"Are you sure it was a live man?" exclaimed Mrs. Mary A. "Polly! Do you think it was the ghost of Mr. Smith? Do go and see! Oh, why doesn't Mr. Van Patter come!"

Mrs Mamie was moving towards the house, but stopped suddenly, screamed, and ran back.

"Girls!" she cried breathlessly, "there's another man down by the gate! I saw him come in and hide behind the big bunch of lilacs!"

"It's a gang!" exclaimed Mrs. Mary J.

"And they're hidden all over the grounds!" added Mrs. Polly.

"And they'll rob and murder us!" moaned Mrs. Molly.

"Why doesn't Mr. Van Patter come!" sobbed Mrs. Mary A. "If he doesn't come soon I shall refuse him!" But so great was their alarm that no one noticed the spontaneous admission of her expectations. They huddled together, looking longingly towards the house.

"Oh, girls!" said Mrs. Polly, "I want to go a few steps down the path and see if those men are coming this way. I'll be very careful, and you'll all keep your eyes on me every minute, won't you?"

The others protested, but she picked up her skirts and tiptoed cautiously down the walk, craning her neck and staring at the shubbery. Then there was a succession of little squeals and she came scurrying back like a frightened quail "It's another man!" she gasped. "A horrid, big, red-bearded man, over there on the other side of the grounds!"

Hardly had she finished speaking when Mrs. Mary J. screamed and fell, trembling, into Mrs. Molly's arms. "There's another man," she cried. "I saw him peeking from behind the syringa bush, beside the back gate."

"Why doesn't Mr. Van Patter come?" Moaned Mrs. Mary A., beginning to weep.

"They're going to murder us!" sobbed Mrs. Molly.

"Oh, if my dear Jody was only here cried Mrs. Mamie wringing her hands.

There was a sound of some one tearing through the bushes where Mrs. Molly had seen the first disturber of their peace, and a big, bewhiskered man rushed out, extending his arms and crying joyously: "Here's your Jody, my darling Mamie!"

There was a chorus of shrieks as the women fell upon one another and threw their arms about Mrs. Mamie. She drew away from them and with cheeks very red spoke severely to the man:

"Joseph Smith, how can you explain your conduct?"

"I wrote to you, Mamie dear, explaining everything, except that I didn't tell you how successful I've been in the Klondike, and I've been hunting for you ever since I got back and couldn't find you."

"You didn't suppose I'd stay at home, did you, and be just a common grass widow? No, indeed! I came here where nobody knew me and put on mourning and held my head up like a real widow whose husband hasn't disgraced her by reserting her instead of dying."

"I'm very sorry, Mamie dear, that I've caused ou so much pain and thouble. I thought my letter would explain everything. Aren't you going to forgive me and tell me you are

"Of course I am, Jody Smith. I've glad to see me?"

meant to all the time, but I hadn't explained anything to the other ladies yet, and you've frightened us all dreadfully, and, anyway, Jody Smith, I think you ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

Half laughing half crying she sank into his arms. As the others turned away with pleased exclamations they saw Mrs. Polly running to meet a short, stout gentleman who was hurrying from the back gate. They embraced ardently and came back with their arms about each other.

"Girls, here is my Mr. Smith, and he's never been dead at all!" Polly said to them, her face beaming with happiness. "He had to go to South America for a long trip, and I was so lonely and bored without him that I just had to do something new. So I put on mourning and came to see how it would seem to be a widow for a while, but I didn't expect him for a few days, and I really meant to tell you all about it in a day or two."

"I suppose I ought to tell you, ladies," said Mrs. Mary J., "that my husband isn't dead either. We had a dreadful quarrel, and I said hateful, angry things, and he said he would go away and stay away until I was sorry for my words, and asked him to come back. I've repented bitterly, and I'd be glad enough to beg him to come back, but I don't know where he is." And she dropped her face in her hands and began to weep.

"Maybe he is the red-headed man I saw," Mrs. Polly whispered to Mrs. Mary A. They looked across the grounds and saw him coming towards them. Mrs. Polly gently lifted Mrs. Mary J.'s head, facing it towards the man. She screamed and rushed to meet him.

"Well, ladies," said Mrs. Molly, "I've truly supposed my husband to be dead. As you know word was sent to me that he had been killed in China. But now everything seems possible, and I begin to hope that he will reappear, too."

Mrs. Mary A. grabbed her arm. "Molly! There's another man to be accounted for—the one that Mamie saw!"

Just then a man emerged from an overgrown arbor near by. "It is he!" cried Mrs. Molly, and ran to meet him.

"And there's Mr. Van Patter coming," exclaimed Mrs. Mary A. joyously. How delighted the dear man will be, and how lovely of him to come now when everybody is so happy."

"It's all right, Mr. Van Patter," explained Mrs. Mary A. "It happened that their husbands weren't dead at all, and they've all come back and found their wives here this morning. It's just their Mr. Smiths."

Mr. Van Patter sprang backward with a look of sudden concern. "Their Mr Smiths!" he exclaimed. "And your—"

"You needn't be alarmed about him," she interrupted. "because—because there isn't any! I didn't have any!"

"You didn't have any? What do you mean?"

She flushed deeply and hesitated in deep embarrassment. "You see—I intended to explain to you this morning—you see, I had been plain Miss Smith for so long that I got tired of it—and a widow is so much more interesting— and it would be so amusing—and so I—I just bought some mourning things and came away here where nobody knew me— and just called myself Mrs. instead of Miss."

"And now that you've tired of being Mrs. this long, my dear Mary A., are you willing to—to—to—"

"To be a real one after this? Yes, quite."

He made another skip and seized her hand. "Then we'll be married today! And now I suppose I'll have Tear-Drop Lodge on my hands again." —New York Post.

Diamond Romance.

Brazil has been called the "land of diamonds," and her mines are among the richest in the world. Negro laborers working in the gold mines of Serro de Frio in the early part of the eighteenth century collected the "shining pebbles," which they used as counters in their crude card games. Struck by their brightness and geometrical forms, a Portuguese officer forwarded specimens to Lisbon, where the Dutch consul pronounced them diamonds.

The Draganza, one of the largest stones in the world, was found by three criminals who had been sent into exile among cannibal tribes and wild beasts. They took the stone to the priest, who turned it over to the Governor. The gem became the glory of the crown jewels of Portugal, and the King, in gratitude, pardoned the exiles.—Exchange.

Nickels Are Scarce.

Since the Nevada Legislature legalized slot machines there have not been enough nickels in circulation outside of the slot machine bazars, to buy 5 cents' worth of gum for a six-year-old school girl. A keg containing $1,500 in nickels was recently received hot from the factory by a Reno bank.

Build a Silo.

With the general use of the silo the productiveness of our farms would be so increased, both in quantity and quality of our grain crops, in the cash income, in the quality of stock kept, and in almost every other way that the problem of keeping our boys on the farm would be solved. Convince them that they can make more money on the farm than in the city and you can't get them away. Build a silo.

Spray For Berries.

1. In fall or winter remove all canes infested with cane borers, orange rust and crown gall and burn.

2. In spring, before the buds swell, cut off and burn all canes badly spotted with disease and spray the rest with Bordeaux mixture, repeating the spraying when the young shoots are about six inches high, and again in ten to fourteen days. Aim to cover the young shoots with spray. This treatment is for anthrac nose, cane blight and leaf spot diseases.

Artichokes.

Artichokes are regarded as a fine health preserving and appetizing food for hogs. They are comparatively little trouble to raise and are quite productive. Every hog feeder should have an artichoke patch, if not more than half an acre. Plant just as you would potatoes, and as soon as the ground is warm. In the late summer and fall you will find you have made a good investment. They serve as a kind of tonic for the hogs, keeping them healthy and sharpening their appetite for corn.

Cutworms.

Hardly any pest tries the patience of the gardener more than cut worms. They were Celia Thaxter's bete noir; they drove her from the bed at midnight and in the small hours of the morning to see if her sweet peas were still safe. One effective remedy is handpicking, with the aid of lantern by night or digging them out from around the roots of infested plants by day. But this treatment requires considerable zeal and devotion. The best method for dealing with cutworms is to prepare poison bait for them. Bunches of clover or pigweed, pepper grass and mullein, even when thoroughly poisoned, are attractive to cut worms. Such bait should be applied two or three days before any plants have come up or before the garden is set out. At this time, if the ground has been well prepared, the worms will have been hungry for several days and will seize the first morsel without examination. This is their undoing.

The Gape Worm.

The dreaded gape worm has been conspicuous by its absence this season, to judge by the letters received. The absence of damp and rainy weather has had much to do with this unwelcome parasite in chicken culture. The festive gape worm revels in a foul, damp atmosphere, and is seldom in evidence where dry sanitary conditions prevail. It is true we hear of chicken raisers who speak of "gaps" whenever a chicken opens its jaws and breathes a trifle suspiciously, but on close examination no trace of the gape-worm is found. Where doubt exists, hold the chicken's throat exposed to the sunlight and open the mouth and look down the wind-pipe. If a small, thin reddish looking string of about an inch in length is attached to the membrane, "his gapeship" is busy and must be removed. A twisted horsehair or silver wire will extract the appendage. A small primary feather stripped to the quill, except a small end of about a quarter of an inch wide and half an inch long dipped in coal oil will answer the same purpose. Some use turpentine, but it needs very careful handling when applied internally. A local application of turpentine to the outside of the throat is often effective in destroying the gape-worm in the early stages. Placing the afflicted chickens in a barrel or box and dusting with air-slaked lime is another remedy that is fairly successful. Plowing the foul ground in the fall and dressing with fresh lime is the best preventative of gapes.—American Fancier.

High Grade Fertilizers.

The annual report of the Connecticut Experiment station at New Haven gives some interesting facts about fertilizers sold in that state. There are at present legally sold more than 227 brands of fertilizers, costing from $25 to $43 per ton, for which farmers pay annually not far from a million dollars. The question of their value is therefore a live one. The report gives one or more analyses of every brand in market, with some discussion of the relative value of these brands. Most of them agree well in composition with the manufacturers' guarantees. Occasionally, however, an article is condemned as very inferior, if not fraudulent, by its chemical analysis or the results of microscopic examination. The prices charged for low-grade brands of goods are shown to be out of all proportion to the actual quantities of plant food in them, and as is usually the case, the high-priced goods are more economical to buy than the low-priced "cheap" goods. For instance, on the average, there can be bought for a given amount of money nearly twice as much actual plant food in fertilizers costing $7 per ton less. "It is amazing that any one can find anybody to buy fertilizers having for composition such as is guaranteed for some of those who analyses are here given," says the report. "There is no fraud in the matter. The composition of the low-grade fertilizers corresponds fairly well with the guarantees, and if purchasers can be found who will pay for a ton of plant food as much as would suffice to purchase three or four tons, the seller is not breaking the law in taking advantage of their obtuseness."—Albany Country Gentleman.

To Break and Train a Colt.

The breaking and training of a colt should begin at an early age. Three things are to be accomplished: First, we desire to teach the colt to submit to man's control, and in doing this we must first overcome its fear. This can most easily be accomplished when our pupil is quite young, not over one or two months old (the younger the better), by handling and petting it when in the stable with its dam. At this time a strong man can catch and hold it securely until it gives in and ases to show fear. At this age also it should be broke to the halter and taught to stand tied and also to be led. Colts should always be left in the stable when the mother is taken out to work, then when weaning time comes you will have but little trouble to manage them. During the summer season I prefer to have it run with its dam in a good pasture during the night, as this will develop its muscle as well as a good frame and constitution to fit it for future usefulness.

The second year of the colt's life is usually spent in the pasture, and the training is usually neglected, but it would be better if they were occasionally led to the stable to keep them under control. During the third year we should try and accomplish our second object in its training, that of teaching it to perform the various kinds of labor, which we expect to fit it for, whether for draft or lighter employment. If we have properly handled our pupil during its first two years there will be no breaking to do now, simply training. For his first lesson I prefer to hitch it with a good, trusty horse to a stout wagon, and if time is not too precious I would drive it each day, for two or three days, without a load, and then if it has learned to walk up straight you can begin to load lightly at first, and gradually increase. Do not be in a hurry at this stage of the game, as haste may spoil the job. After a few days' training I hitch to a plow, harrow, corn plow, or whatever work is on hand at the time, and give my pupil a lesson in the different kinds of work that it will be expected to perform in the future, always being careful not to overdo or discourage it, but aiming to give continuous training from day to day. There is so much required of a good farm horse nowadays, that it will take some time to teach it all about the running of the various farm machines, and great care is necessary until it becomes accustomed to this kind of work. But a well-trained horse is a valuable thing on the farm, and will well repay us for the time spent and the patience and care exercised in bringing his collship to this desired attainment. Our third object is to avoid the acquiring of any bad habits by our pupil during this time of training. We should be sure to have good, substantial harness and other accoutrements, when working with colts, so that we may not be placed at a disadvantage by the breaking of the same at some critical period. The great object is to teach the colt that man is its master, and to prevent it from acquiring that nervous habit of becoming frightened at every strange noise or object that it encounters. Never whip a colt when it is frightened, but keep cool, and it will soon learn to overcome this spirit of fear. A great help in teaching a colt this desirable trait of fearlessness is a quiet, fearless mate to work it with during this training period. This is especially desirable in this age of the world, when we are likely to meet trolley cars, automobiles and other frightful things at any time.

There is such a difference in the disposition of colts that the stage of its training at which I would teach it to work single would vary with different subjects. Some are much easier taught than others. We will, by the time our pupil has become used to team work, have learned its disposition so that we will know how to manage this part of its training.—Indiana Farmer.

A Great Lumber Country.

The lumber interests of northern Maine are enormous, notwithstanding the ravages of fire and the lumber concerns. In the district of the St. John system alone the forest commissioner estimates nearly seven billion feet of spruce, besides hundreds of million of pine and nearly two billion of cedar. The fertility of the soil makes it a very rapidly producing lumber country. The spruce accessible to transportation having been somewhat reduced, the poplar is being drawn upon largely. The poplar land quickly replaces itself by sprouts and grows very fast. Along the line of the railroad may be seen many poplar lands, which are replacing these. Spruce, when cut or burned over, also reseeds itself fairly well, and burned areas, if not burned too deep, are soon covered with young growth.

The Story of a Turner.

A London woman had a painting which she believed to be by Turner and offered it to several dealers, who said it was nothing like Turner's work and refused to buy it. Later she found documents which proved it to be a genuine Turner and within a week she sold it for $12,250.

TOOK A BEAR BACK RIDE

DEACON WARNER ASTRADDLE BRUIN ADDED VASTLY TO MERRIMENT.

Joke Was Put Up By The Terrible Twombley Twins—Got Even with Old Enemy and the Whole Village Had a Good Laugh.

The Chittenden, (Vt.) correspondent of the New York World writes:

"Goodness gracious, bub, what on airth be ye a-tryin' to do!" exclaimed Uncle Ben Morse when a giant firecracker, exploding beneath his chair on the stoop of the general store woke him from an afternoon nap with nerve-wracking suddeness just as three small culprits giggled their way to cover behind Sim Jones's oxcart. "Thunderation! ye might's well kill a man' to sheer him t' death—an' 'just as I was dreamin' of lookin' right into the berril o' the enemy's cannern to the second battle o' Bull Run."

"Sho, uncle, what in time d'ye expect if ye go to roost on the glor'ous Fourth, jest like an owl, when ye'd orter be out with the boys, bangin' away with your blunderbuss," laughed Sim, who had been drawn to the door by the explosion.

"Wal, wal, so 'tis the Fourth, now I come to think on't" admitted Uncle Ben somewhat mollified. "An' I dunno but what I should ha' done the same thing when I was a young 'un. They do it that I was a reg'lar cut-up, but I had stikes an' all, I wa'n't half so bad's them Twombley Twins. Say, Sim, did ye ever hear your father tell how them twins come it over Deacon Eph Warner back in '23?"

Sim hadn't heard, or if he had he pretended he hadn't, and when Uncle Ben made sure that no more disturbing crackers lurked in his vicinity he kicked back in his chair and let go of the yarn while the aggregation camped about in easy positions.

"In those days we didn't have no such things as hifalutin firecrackers to set ye on aidge an' burn holes in your pants," began the veteran, "but the young fry made jest as much noise as they don ow, and I dunno but more. We uster make cannern out o' hick'ry laws and bind them with wire and hoops from hawgsheads, and when one on 'em busted some one most allus lost a laig or an arm or leastwise a finger.

"At the time I'm tellin' about the Twombley twins had rigged up an ol' buster and all the boys and some 't the folks had chipped in and bought enough powder to blow a hole clean through ol' Fort Ticonderouge. They was a goin' to set her off on the village common, but Deacon Warner, who hated them twins like he hated pizen because they was allus playin' tricks on him, set his foot down. 'You'll hafter gwup the mountain if ye wan' to do any shooting,' says he, 'for I'm constable [illegible] won't have it round the village.'

"The deacon [illegible] trary cuss ye ever [illegible] mind made up to [illegible] some o' the neighbor[illegible] the twins Eph stuck by his [illegible] got real het up over the [illegible] 'You're a mess 't doduks, the whole b'ilin o' ye,' says he, 'an I guess I'll go along myself an' see that ye don't break no laws ner ord'nances. Ye never can tell what them pesky twins'll do next, consarn 'em.'

"Wal, when the twins heard that the deacon was a-goin' along the begun to snicker an' laugh 'emselves inside out. Bud Twombley allowed that if the ol' man was goin' to set in Judgment on the firin' of the cannon er show 'em how to celebrate the Glorious Fourth an' sofuth, he'd give him a mighty interestin' time. So he sot out up the mountain and never come back till dark. When he did get home he and his brother Hank laughed most all night and next mornin' got terrible busy luggin' the cannern to Thompson's Gorge, three miles above the village.

"It seemed a strange place to celebrate, but the twins owned the gun and there wa'n't no other way out of it. So when it come along 10 o'clock the night b'fore the Fourth, about thutty of 'em, includin' the deacon, took up the trail. They found the cannern sot with its muzzle p'intin' into the mouth of an ol' cave, jest below which was a pond of the meanest stickiest muck ye ever saw. All along the cliff, which formed one side 't the gorge, were other caves, and the twins allowed that as the canneren was dangerous every man hed better get in a hole when she went off.

"Most o' the holes were s' small ye had to lie down in 'em, but one was big enough t' stand in, and the deacon spoke up for it. Sim's father ruther wanted it, but the twins shoved him away, and the deacon was soon standin' right in the mouth with his laigs spread wide apart and his mouth open. 'This 'ere's th' way t' fix yerself so't ye won't git deef,' says he. 'That's the way they do to June trainin'.

"They looked turrible queer in the moonlight with their mouths open an' their fingers stuck in their ears, and I thought that was what the twins was gigglin' at when they lit a piece of paper over the britch hole in the cannern. But it wa'n't. It was at what they was hopin' was goin' to happen, and what did happin.

"I never heard such a turrible roar, not even to Bull Run, as when the charge went off into the mouth o' that cave, but it wa'n't a tuppence to the noise that followed. It was the deacon yellin'; for out of the cavern behind him had come an ol' she bear, and scudded right between his laigs. The smoke, it seems, had come in to her through an openin' or a passageway, and she was lightin' out about as fast as she knew how. The vent bein' narrer, she knocked Eph's underpinnin' gally west, and down he come a-straddle her back.

"Of course he hung on, because he dassn't leggo and when we got an eye on him the varment was snashayin' for the muck hole, roarin' as she run and now and then bucking' like Bill Peter se's colt when young Peters tries to ride him to water. About every second the deacon would screech out for some one to help him, but all the folks was laughin' too hard to be of any use if they'd ha' wanted to. And I guess they wa'n't hankerin' over hard to be of assistance. Twice the bear would have shied around the pond, but one twin was on one side and the other on 'tother and in she went with Eph clingin' clus to her back.

knowed what was ahead of him and he just shut his eyes and slid through till he got acrost, he dropped off. I've seen a lot of turribly r'iled men, but he was the maddest as he stood up lookin' like a drippin' mound 't slippery mud.

"You knowed that bear was in there, he yelled, shakin' his fist at the twins. 'Confound ye; if your pa don't cowhide ye for this, I will.'

" 'We knowed there was a bear in there yisteddy, but we didn't know whether she'd stay,' says Bud. But I guess they was middlin' sarting, for we found the bones of a lamb in the cave, and the critter had never been killed by a bear."

"I remember that Abe Porter yelled to the deacon not to let up or h'd drown, for a bear could swim in the sticky stuff and he couldn't. He needn't have hollered, for the deacon

FIRST MONTANA LAWSUIT.

Picturesque Quality of the Open Air Trial and Its Tragic Side Play.

The first case ever tried in Montana was a mining suit. Both parties to the suit claimed a certain piece of mining ground. The community had elected a president, Dr. William L. Steele, afterwards Mayor of Helena, and now a resident of that city. The regularly-elected judge of the community was a witness in the case and, according to the unwritten law, the case had to be tried before the president.

It was winter time, but the case was tried in the open air on the footslopes of the mountains. The occasional balmy winters of that portion of Montana were a revelation to the gold-seekers then, as they are to the visitor today. During the trial, the plaintiff moved among the jury and the spectators with a box of cheap cigars, treating the crowd, while the defendant, not to be outdone in hospitality, went around with a bottle of what was known as "Valley Tan" whisky, a product of the Mormon settlements to the south, in the region of Salt Lake.

Dr. Steele had appointed Charles Forbes clerk of the court. While the case was going on, two men—Hayes Yyons and "Buck" Stinson—stepped up and whispered something to Forbes. Forbes replied in an audible tone; "We'll kill him."

He rose, and the three walked out to the edge of the crowd. They called to a man named Dillingham to step out from among the spectators. Dillingham stepped out to where Forbes and his companion stood, and was instantly shot dead. Forbes had fired the shot.—C. P. Connolly in McClure's.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

[illegible] bonnets and blue [illegible] follow. [illegible] the streets [illegible] weather.

[illegible] disastrous effects of hurricanes [illegible] the cane crops of the West Indies has led to the frequent discussion of insurance to cover this risk.

Sir Patrick Keith Murray has presented to the British nation an old cushion on which the crown of Scotland rested, and it has been placed in the jewel room in Edinburgh castle.

Birds are scarce in Southern Italy because they are hunted pitilessly. Along the highways hunters are always lurking to kill off the few reckless swallows who now and then flit from the crags above the sea.

Having supported himself as a peddler for seventy-five years, James O'Dwyer, of Kilmihil, Ireland, who is now 102 years old, has for the first time in his life been compelled to ask for relief from the Kilrush board of guardians.

In Austria a "man" and a "woman" are considered to be capable of conducting a home of their own from the age of fourteen—a fact which accounts in no small degree for the spirit of "child fatherhood of the man" so prevalent in Austria.

By a somewhat primitive system, the town of Thompson Falls, Mont., manages, in the hottest weather, to keep rooms at a temperature of 55 degrees. Wells are covered at the top, and large pipes tap the current of cold air a few feet below the surface of the ground, conveying it to different rooms in nearby buildings.

The donkey is man's best friend in Italy. He is a little cuss, but carries loads incomprehensibly too big for him. Out of compliment, the comic paper of Rome, with its 60,000 circulation, calls itself "L'Asino: E il Populo, Utile, Paziente e Bastonato"; meaning: "The Ass: He's the People, Useful, Patient and Beaten" (with a stick).

Ice is regarded with superstitious reverence in Italy, France and England. Common waiters are not allowed to touch the precious product. Instead, the head waiter hands it out in infinitesimal fragments with a pair of sugar tongs. Recently the London newspapers have been clamoring for the advent of some enterprising American with an ice plant. Most of the London editors are Americans or have been in America, and their palates yearn for long, cold things with straws in them.

Two cents is the standard price for an ordinary trolley fare in Italy, France or Germany, and four cents is the London standard. The distances on the Continent are not so great, but the average ride is no shorter than that on the New York trolleys. The cars are not so large, but they are clean, and people are not allowed to stand up in the aisles or between seats. Each car has a huge vestibule for any overflow of passengers, and the standee must stand there or get off the car. Milan has the best line, and it is operated by the Societa Elettrica Edisono, which sounds like home with a few trimmings.

THE GLAD YOUNG CHAMOIS.

How lightly leaps the youthful chamois
From rock to rock and never misses!
I always get all cold and clamois
When near the edge of precipises.

Confronted by some yawning chasm
He bleats not for his sire or mamois
(That is, supposing that he has'm).
But yawns himself,—the bold young lamois.

He is a thing of beauty always;
And when he dies, a gray old ramois
Leaves us his horns to deck our hallways,
His skin cleans teaspoons, soiled or jamois.

I shouldn't like to be a chamois,
However much I am his debtor.
I hate to run and jump; why, Damois,
Most any job would suit me bebtor!

—Burges Johnson, in Harper's Magazine.

Author—This magazine has no reason for existence. Critic—That is the reason it exists.—Puck.

"They are having an engagement dinner at the Browns' tonight." "Who is engaged?" "A new cook."—Judge.

"Do you treat your cook as one of the family?" "Good gracious, no! She wouldn't permit such familiarity."—Baltimore American.

"And you've been waiting all this time for a husband, Jane?" "No, for a single man. This isn't Newport."—Cleveland Plain-Dealer.

A camping out party is always a success, if there is only one man who is perfectly contented to do all the work.—Somerville Journal.

"They say the theosophists out in California worship a dog." "Oh, well, that isn't so surprising; a great many women who aren't theosophists do that."—Detroit Free Press.

"You admit you were at fault in that investigation?" "Greatly at fault," answered the trust magnate. "I see now where I could have taken far better precautions for concealment."—Washington Star.

Dead Men Tell No Tales.—Old Gentleman—Are you certain that these life-belts are cork, and not half sawdust? Storeman—They are the best quality. We have sold hundreds, and never had a complaint!—Punch.

Mr. Spongely (slightly related)—Splendid! Magnificent! Do you know, Uncle Eli, I believe I shall never get tired o fseeing the sun set behind that hill! Uncle Eli—That's what me an' mother's beginning to think.—Puck.

News Editor—Here's a cable from Constantinople saying the Sultan's principal amusement is scaring his wives into fits. Managing Editor—Well, head it 'A Harem-Scarem Fellow,' and run it in the joke column.—Philadelphia Record.

"You say you wouldn't like to get out?" exclaimed the prison visitor. "Why, I thought you were in for life." "Oh, worse than that, ma'am," replied the convict. "I'm in for a double life. I've got two wives waiting outside."—Philadelphia Ledger.

"I wonder why Miss Sweet is always asked to sing. Her voice isn't nearly so well trained as Miss Stickler's is." "No, but her manners are. Miss Sweet is always willing to try her luck without being urged for half an hour."—Detroit Free Press.

"A number of statesmen refuse to depend on the judgment of the common people." "Well," answered Farmer Corntassel, "after the poor judgment shown by us common people in putting 'em up for office, I don't know as I blame 'em."—Washington Star.

"I wish," said Mrs. Oldcastle, "that I had Mrs. Waddington's savoir-faire." "Yes, replied her hostess, carelessly tossing her $60,000 dog-collar on the dressing-table, "I like it, too. I was lookin' at some down town at Sellum & Sendum's the other day, but they didn't have any left that was anything like hers."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Bridges and Beauty.

If the two hideous structures which span the Thames at Charing Cross and Cannon street for the use of the South Eastern Railway were removed London would now have a succession of bridges from Putney to the Pool that might suffer a comparison with the bridges of Paris, Rome and Venice. The new bridge at Vauxhall, which was opened last Saturday, is not so handsome as its neighbor at Westminster, nor so gauntly picturesque as the "auld brig" immortalized by Whistler, which it supplants. It has, however, a strong and solid beauty of its own, and lies slenderly and gracefully across the water like a gigantic twig bent over it. It is the first bridge which has been built by the County Council, and will, therefore, be the first bridge over which the despised tramway will have free access. It will restore to this part of London some of its old prestige as a pleasure resort, and we may see a revival of the Vauxhall Gardens of the Resoration time in a fine park and pleasaunce. The bridge almost lies at the door of Lambeth Palace, the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with this hoary old pile as a centrepiece there are unique opportunities for an improvement of the district.—Washington Star.

The Captain Became Singular.

Captain Rossi loves to use the pronoun "we" in speaking of himself, but discontinued the practice after the following episode, says Il Mondo Umoristico. One day he said to his servant:

"John, how much wine have we in the house?"

"Two bottles, sir."

"What? Impossible. Two weeks ago there were fifty at least!"

"Yes, sir; but you said, we have excellent wine, John; we will enjoy it, and so—"

"Well, what?"

"Well, we have enjoyed it."

The Belgian Sanatorium for Consumptives at Borgoumont claims nearly 25 percent of successful results.