

The Queenstown News.

JOHN M. AKER, Editor.

"INDEPENDENT BUT NOT NEUTRAL."

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In the public schools in Japan the English language is required by law to be taught.

In the United States 9,000,000 farm lands raise half as much grain as 5,000,000 in Europe.

The Nashville Banner says there is a child three months old in that city who can talk distinctly. Girl, of course.

"Every new cravasse in the Southern river banks is a new appeal for preservation of the forests," maintains the New York Tribune.

The total building in Atlanta, Ga., will greatly exceed that of any previous year. Hard times do not seem to be having much effect in this progressive city.

A Chicago man has invented a kind of cloth which is absolutely bullet-proof. Why not test that invention on the cheerful imbecile who persists in rocking the rowboat about this time of year?

Professor Taylor, of the Louisiana State and M. College, hits the nail on the head when he says, there is no situation in which the American workman makes so unsatisfactory an appearance as when he is endeavoring to do the least possible amount of labor which is to account as a day's work on a highway of his district.

Terpillars are doing great damage to shrubs in some parts of New York. The entomologist of Cornell University says that the hatched from eggs that were laid on the trees last July, and the eggs were covered with a sort of fish to protect them from the rain. They are called "tent pillars," and after hatching they leave for themselves a kind of cocoon, and about the first develop into moths.

His address at the unveiling of the monument to Sir Walter Scott in Westchester Abbey John Hay, the United States Ambassador to Great Britain, told how he had heard from his father, a Kentucky pioneer, that, in the early days of the century, men would saddle their horses and ride from all the neighboring counties to the principal post-town of that region when a new novel by the author of "Waverley" was expected. Through the important days of the Republic, he said, Scott was the favorite author of Americans.

"Days ago," says the Railroad, "a man walked into the office of the Canadian Pacific Ticket Agent C. L. Williams. He said that he had a stretch of the Canadian Pacific a few years ago without paying a cent, and his conscience had been troubling him. He refused to give his name or address, but told Mr. Williams that \$5 would cover his indebtedness to the railroad. The man in whose heart of hearts there dwells an upraising conscience and the memory of a ride that was never paid for is said to be an intermittent and familiar correspondent of all railroads."

The American Agriculturist says: "The German farmers are prosecuting their energy their fight against the grain exchange which deal in 'futures.' Obliged to abandon former open trading of this character, a coalition of grain merchants has been meeting in the capacity of a club, pursuing their old methods. The law has followed them, however, and the matter will now be appealed to the highest court in the empire. The final decision will prove interesting in view of the strong sentiment not only among the agricultural classes of Germany, but in England and United States as well, against this form of speculative trading."

A Louisville gentleman, who has attained the ripe age of eighty-nine years, and is still hale as a hearty, attributes his longevity to exercise at quiet pitching for two hours every day. The game of quoits is an ancient and honorable one, and the gentle exertion it requires is unquestionably beneficial to health, but this recipe for attaining long life is no better than thousands of others. Exercise, prudence in diet and regular habits unquestionably do much to prolong life, but instances of extreme and vigorous old age cannot be attributed to any of these. Men live long and retain their faculties to exceptional years mainly because they have been favored by nature with extraordinary constitutions. Physical powers can be conserved, but the lack of inherent vitality can no more be made up for than the loss of ordinary muscular development can become a shadow.



Fiction.

COMMON SENSE.

Of all the gifts this side of heaven that ever were to mortals given, The best to have, the worst to miss, The truest, sweetest source of bliss, — The one real left of Eden's fence, — Stands the pure charm of common sense.

To earn our right to "daily bread," To not regret when time is fled, To wisely speak and act and think, To keep life's boat from rain's brink, To balance every hour's expense, We need the aid of common sense.

Sometimes, no doubt, we need to view, The lightning bolts some genius throw; But now we need, well mixed and stirred, With wit that blazes from the word, — A sort of human fool's defense, The wholesome aid of common sense.

Some things, perhaps, must still be taught, Where mightily minds their power in thought; But how to guard the priceless wealth Of peace and love, of youthful health, And how to keep our own far hence, Is taught alone by common sense.

We pray for faith, and light, and peace, — For wisdom, love, and love's increase, For strength to meet the tempter's power, For dying race, for dying hour, — For now, right in the present tense, Give us, O Lord! good common sense.

A LITTLE COMEDY.

OGEE Tinsley, Helen, his daughter, Herbert Torrance and Mary, who is only suggested.

The gray haired man at the desk looks up from the mass of papers before him and turns toward the door. His quick ear has detected the swish of skirts in the passageway. There is but one visitor who is permitted to thus invade his private room unannounced. The door swings in and a young woman enters.

"Ah, Helen," says the gray haired man, "this is an early visit!"

The young woman runs her hand caressingly across his scattered locks and stooping, kisses him lightly on the forehead.

"How glad to see me, aren't you, papa?" she cries.

She is a very beautiful young woman and most bewitchingly gowned and booted and hatted, but there is an expression of discontent on her well bred face that is not pleasant to see.

"And what is the price of this quantity?" inquires the gray haired man as he leans back in his chair and looks quizzically at his visitor.

She grows grave in a moment and regards him with a troubled gaze.

"There, there," he says, "don't worry yourself over it. Speak up. What shall it be? A bracelet, a couple, a necklace?"

"You've been much too good to me. You've spoiled me," she says.

"Dear me, child," he slowly murmurs, "how much you are like your dear mother." He turns his head a little away and puts his hand over his eyes.

"There, there, papa," cries the young woman, and her soft cheek rests against the gray hair. "I didn't mean to distress you. There, there! I am going to make you pay for this visit, oh, such a price! But not now. No, not just now. Cousin Mary is waiting for me in the carriage, and—ah, and while I will come back and tell you what I see. You are good natured now, aren't you, dear? Say that you are good natured."

He smiles and nods like a nodding mandarin, and she kisses him again and darts to the door.

"There!" she breathlessly cries as she pauses on the threshold. "Just hold that expression, sir, if you please. I'll be back in such a little while, dear daddy." And the door closes and she whisks through.

The gray haired man sighs.

"She grows more like her dear mother every day," he says. "But, heavens, how thoroughly she is spoiled—twenty-three years old, a finished exquisite, a creature of the wildest and most extravagant whims. And yet she has a heart and a warm place in it, too, for her dotting old father. I wonder what came over her this morning. I never saw her quite so hysterical. If she would marry—but no, she appears to despise every man she meets. She flirts with them and throws them aside like cast-off gloves. What a load it would be off my mind if she would find some honest, ambitious young fellow who suited her wayward fancy. But, no. She turns from them all, and hanged if I blame her. They are a precious poor lot."

He paces as the door swings open and a boy enters with a card.

"In five minutes send the gentleman in," the gray haired father says, and the boy withdraws.

"Herbert Torrance," reads the gray haired man. "A fine young fellow, straightforward, honest, true. I half wish he was in society. No, I don't; it would spoil him. Wonder what he wants with me."

He busies himself with his papers for a moment or two, and then the door swings open and a well knit young fellow with keen gray eyes enters.

"Ah, Torrance," says the gray haired man, "have a chair. What can I do for you?"

"Thank you, Mr. Tinsley," says the young man, and he draws a chair close to the desk. "Why this time, sir, I have a rather awkward business, I hope?" says the old man, kindly.

"No, sir. The business exceeds my expectations," replies the young man. "And yet I could wish it were fifty times its present proportions."

"That's a rather ambitious wish, my sir," says the older man. "Why this display of grasping greed?"

"Because, sir, it might win me a more favorable consideration at your hands."

"And why are you so anxious to win my favorable consideration?"

The young man hesitates.

"On any other man, sir," he slowly answers, "whose good will and value above all others, if I had wealth and position I might approach you in a far different spirit; but, as I have neither, I—"

"Tut, tut, my boy," says the older man. "Never mind what you haven't. What do you want? By Jove, you are the second person who has hinted at some mysterious favor within the past half hour." And he smiles at the recollection.

"What I want," says the young man hurriedly, "is an inestimable treasure. It is yours to give or refuse. I feel my own unworthiness, sir, yet I boldly ask this gift at your hands. I—I hope you understand me, sir?"

"I think I do," says the older man, kindly. "I didn't know that you were so bold."

"It is not my fault, sir," says the young man, hurriedly. "I met her first at the seashore quite by accident—there was a little accident, in fact, but she said she wouldn't distress you about it. And our acquaintance rapidly ripened. When she came back to town, I met her at various places, something quite by accident, and she came on by—by appointment. It wasn't right, sir, but I—I was very despatching love."

"The little mix," cries the older man. "Why, she never breathed a word of this."

"She told me, sir, and that—and that makes my present task all the harder."

"Well, never mind that. You are not her dearest friend—and yet I suppose you think you are. Come, are you sure she loves you?"

"I have her word for it, sir. She seems to me to be—"

"Well, well, and so quiet and demure."

"Wh-what did you say, sir?"

"I say, why didn't you tell me?"

"Because she wanted to keep it a secret."

"And she was in it too?"

"Well, well, she is a good girl and you must make her happy."

The two men shake hands solemnly, the younger man's face beaming with delight. Then Mr. Tinsley rises and goes to the safe that stands in a corner. From it he takes a large envelope.

"She'll not come to you exactly empty-handed, Torrance," he says as he looks the contents of the envelope over. "I've put aside from time to time certain scribbles for her, and I see that they now amount to something like \$20,000. Of course when I leave there'll be more."

He puts the envelope in the safe and comes back to his desk.

Helen has to do with this middle?"

"You mean Mary?"

"No, Helen."

The young man rises and takes his hat.

"Mr. Tinsley," he says. "I came here to ask the hand of your daughter, and you tell me she is your niece. You even insist that her name is some thing else. I—I don't know what to think, sir. I have fear I've—his voice trembles, and he stops.

"Hark," murmurs the older man. A voice comes to them from the passageway—a sweet and timid voice.

"Oh, is he engaged. Then I'll wait."

"That—that's her voice," cries Herbert.

"Not—not Mary's voice," gasps the older man.

No, no, Helen's voice."

The gray haired head drops back against the cushion.

"Helen!" he cries. "Good Lord!" He stares at the young man as if fascinated.

"And Helen loves you?" he gasps.

"She says so," replies Herbert.

"But she threw over an ear!"

"But she didn't love him," says Herbert.

"And I thought all the time it was Mary," murmurs the old man.

"I don't know any Mary," says Herbert.

"On any other man, sir," he slowly answers, "whose good will and value above all others, if I had wealth and position I might approach you in a far different spirit; but, as I have neither, I—"

"Tut, tut, my boy," says the older man. "Never mind what you haven't. What do you want? By Jove, you are the second person who has hinted at some mysterious favor within the past half hour." And he smiles at the recollection.

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THE MERRY SIDE OF LIFE.

STORIES THAT ARE TOLD BY THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Appreciation—Of Course—Putting Him in His Place—The Uncertain Future—A Natural Question—An Exceptional Case—Vernal Vegetations, Etc., Etc.

Around this wondrous world of ours Go where you may or can, You'll find they welcome everywhere The well-dressed man.

You, even in the South Sea Isles You'll find one in the van, Or in the pot, served nice and hot, A well-dressed man.

"Pop, what's the best kind of paper for a kite?"

"The best paper, my son."—New York Journal.

Putting Him in His Place.

Stiffness—"I don't believe I cat enough to feed a bird."

His Landlady—"Do you mean an ostrich?"—Puck.

Vernal Vegetations.

"How that woman did glare at you!"

"Yes; and I gazed back at her. The hateful thing!—she had on a shirt-waist just like mine."

Naturally.

"Why in the world don't you put any faith in a man who stutters?"

"Why, it is the most natural thing in the world for him to break his word."

And He Had It, of Course.

"What did you say when Dick expressed a desire to kiss you?"

"Dora—"I told him that I supposed he was just mean enough to have his own way."—New York Journal.

An Exceptional Case.

Anna—"That was a peculiar love affair of Fanny's."

Rosa—"In what respect?"

Anna—"She was her usual self."

The Uncertain Future.

He—"My darling, I always feel like taking off my shoes when I enter your sacred presence."

"Well, I would rather you did it now than after we are married."—Life.

A Natural Question.

Miss Yellow—"Yes, I have had my picture taken once a year every year of my life."

Miss Youngblood—"How did you manage before photography was invented?"—Puck.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

A new speaking tube for steamers has the pipe insulated by a waterproof textile covering which makes it easy to hear speech in the engine room from a distance of 300 ft.

One of the most curious results of the investigations made by doctors in the Russian jails is the statement that each group of criminals has its own peculiar color of the eye.

Anthropologists have ascertained that the Andaman Islanders, the smallest race of people in the world, average less than four feet in height, while few of them weigh more than seventy-five pounds.

Evidence of the complexity of cathode rays is found by M. H. Desormes in the fact that when a ray is turned aside by a neighboring body it is divided into several unequally deviated rays.

"Growing pains" are a myth, says Dr. Irving S. Haines. The pains are not the disease of the spine, and the ignorant or busy doctor does not find it out until the lump or the lump on the back appears.

Paris and Marseilles are now connected by telegraph lines entirely underground. They are placed in iron pipes, and buried four feet beneath the surface with manholes 3000 feet apart. It cost \$7,000,000 to bury the wires.

Chelsea district in London utilizes its street refuse by separating the rags and paper, which are converted into brown wrapping paper, while the rest of the refuse is burned in the furnaces of the reducing works and the residuum is used in brickmaking.

The Illinois Central Railroad is about to experiment with electricity as a motive power, with a view to its adoption on all the suburban lines of Chicago. It is said that both the third rail and overhead trolley systems will be tried exhaustively.

From records extending back to 1683, M. Camille Flammarion finds that the rainfall of Paris has gradually increased about three inches, being now a little more than three inches a year. The amount of difference seems to indicate that the increase is real and not due to greater accuracy of observation.

The director of the gas works at Aix-les-Bains, France, has perfected a simple system of automatically lighting and extinguishing gas jets from any distance. The burner is closed by a steel plate, which is magnetized and drawn aside while an electric current is passing through it, the escaping gas being ignited either by a spark from the plate or the incandescence of a suitable material. The plate falls back over the burner on being demagnetized.

Motive Power of the Future.

Electricity as a motive power on long distance roads is likely to be introduced, according to the reports, much sooner than has been anticipated.

The successful experiments of the New York, New Haven and Hartford road, recently referred to, have demonstrated the practicability of the third rail system. The adoption of this system by the Manhattan Elevated system in New York City gave a fresh impetus to the movement, and now it is reported that the managers of several other important railroads running into New York City, among them the Erie, the Pennsylvania and the Long Island railroads, are all preparing to introduce the new system upon their roads.

The Long Island directors, it is said, are enthusiastic over the subject, believing that in a very short time the public would see the introduction of the third rail system, or something equally as good, over the entire western half of the island. The Pennsylvania, it is well known, has been experimenting with electricity on one or more of its branch roads for some time past, and the Erie proposes to equip some of its branch roads with electricity as soon as possible. There seems to be no end to the possibilities of electricity, and the prediction that it would be the great motive power of the future seems to be near its realization.

—Trenton (N. J.) American.

Key to the Mediterranean.

The fortress Gibraltar is in many ways the most remarkable place of its kind in the world. The height of the rock is over 1400 feet and this stupendous precipice is pierced by miles of galleries in the solid strata, port-holes for cannon placed at frequent intervals. The rock is absolutely impregnable to the shot of the enemy, and, by means of the great elevation, a plunging fire can be directed from an enormous height on a hostile fleet.

A garrison of from 5000 to 10,000 men is constantly maintained, with provisions and ammunition for a six-months' siege. In 1779 the celebrated siege lasted three years, the fortress being successfully defended by 7000 English, while being attacked by an army of over 40,000 men; 1000 pieces of artillery, forty-seven sail, ten great floating batteries and a large number of small boats composed the attacking force. For months over 6000 shells were thrown into the tower every day.

A Long Probationary Term.

A civil engineer, mechanical engineer or architect, in the case of the German railways, must, on an average, wait till he is thirty-eight or forty years old before his position is permanent. The average time they are employed on temporary work before they are permanently appointed is twelve years.

A New Military Bicycle.

A military bicycle recently patented is fitted with an extension arm projecting in the rear, with a piece of canvas rolled over the handlebars, which can be unrolled and strung from the handles to the end of the arm for use as a stretcher.

THE PESSIMIST.

He climbed a peak all wrapped in snow, And looked not at the view below.

To seek his treasure did he roam, And left it all the while at home.

Before the swain his pearls he strewed, Then cursed their base ingratitude.

He carefully shut out the light, Then cried: "The world is dark as night!"

"And all," he said, when this was done, "Is vainly beneath the sun!"

—NORLEY, CHURCH, in the LONDON Literary World.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

The Tramp's Motto—"Vot are yer givin' us?"—Puck.

The European concert has given a very expensive performance.—Puck.

Ethel—"Do you believe in palmistry?" Mabel—"Oh, it's all right for a starter, if the fellow's shy."—Harp.

"Has the unpardonable sin ever been discovered?" "Yes, it is the act of sprinkling faeces on a bicycle path."—Philadelphia North American.

"An allowance is something like a bicycle." "How so?" "A man can put his wife on it but he cannot make her stay on it."—Chicago Record.

Cholly (speaking about in the briny)—"Oh, girls, I love the ocean! It does me good." Miss Pert—"Yes, and the saller the better."—Truth.

His wife—cleverest of dearest! She's held on to her couch for years; For well she knows at health's best; He'll take her east or south or west. —Chicago Record.

"It looks fresh." "Are you talking about me, sir?" "Certainly not. I am talking about the paint on the wall you are sitting on."—Harp.

Do-some-at last has got his wife to buy a wheel. "How did he manage it?" "Had somebody start a report that he didn't want her to ride."—Chicago Record.

Snooper—"I noticed you took no part in the debate as to the best make of bicycle." "My physician has warned me to avoid all excitement."—Life.

Counsel (investigating client's story)—"Now, you must keep nothing from me." Client—"I haven't. I paid you every cent I had in the world for your retainer."—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Jennie—"How did you enjoy your trip across the ocean?" Clara—"Inmunsely. Of course, there was nothing to see but sky and water, and the landscape was gullible."—Judge.

War News—"Goodness, Jimmy, what's the matter with your check—where did you get that black eye?" "Mo an' Sammy Dix has bin havin' a pound party!"—Detroit Free Press.

"There was a strange man here to see you to-day, papa," said little Ethel, as she ran to meet her father in the hall. "Did he have a bill?" "No, papa. He had just a plain nose."—Household Words.

"Yes," said the young man just out of college, "I am willing to do anything to make a living—that is, of course," he added, "in any position that brings in at least \$2500 salary."—Somerville Journal.

"First Villager—"There is no telling how a boy will turn out." Second Villager—"No; but since we got the curfew law we have the satisfaction of knowing when he will turn in."—Indianapolis Journal.

Darwins—"If you had all the money, Bill, you could possibly ever desire, what would you do with it?" Kilsan—"Do with it? Why I'd invest it somewhere where it would double itself."—Boston Transcript.

"How did the manager get all those women out of the burning building so quickly?" "He went on the stage and announced that he was down at the entrance was giving away samples of baking powder."—Puck.

The World's Blind.

It is stated that there are 1,000,000 blind people in the world, or one to every 1500 inhabitants. Latest reports show 21,000 blind persons in England, or 870 for each million inhabitants. Blind infants of less than five years, 165 for each million; between five and fifteen, 288; between twenty and twenty-five, 422; between forty-five and sixty, 1925, and above sixty-five years, 7000 for each million. Russia and Egypt are the countries where the blind constitute the largest proportion of the number of the total population, in Russia on account of the lack of experienced medical attention, and in Egypt because of ophthalmia due to irritation caused by movement of the sand by the wind. There are nearly 200,000 blind persons in European Russia, the larger number being in Finland and the northern provinces. This is ascribed to the flat country and imperfect ventilation in huts of the peasantry. Though more than half of the blind population of Europe is found in Russia, there are only twenty-five asylums for the blind in the empire, one-tenth of the total number in Europe.—London Mail.

A New Musical Instrument.

A newly devised musical instrument is formed of a sounding board with strings across the top and a bow set in a sliding frame over the strings, which are depressed at different points by the fingers to produce the proper notes when the bow is drawn over them.

Writing for Over Sixty Years.

Dr. James Martineau, who the other day celebrated his ninety-second birthday, is one of the very few remaining authors whose literary activity dates from the beginning of the Victorian reign. Dr. Martineau published his first book, "The Rationale of Religious Inquiry," in 1837.