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AN IMPROBABLE YARN.

A Chicago Man Too Bashful to Talk to a Pretty Widow.

"I know it's the general supposition and the rock-bound belief on the part of the most women that really bashful men don't exist anywhere off the farm," said a South side man to a Chicago Herald reporter, "but I know one woman who is convinced that bashfulness can flourish and become confirmed right here in the city, with the board of trade as a stamping ground."

"The lady I speak of is a charming young widow who lives with her parents in an elegant residence away out south. The bashful gentleman has been acquainted with this pretty little widow for a good while, and a short time ago asked her to go to the theater. I don't know how he ever nerved himself up enough to make the request, but he did, and the young woman's father, who is quite friendly with the bashful man, suggested that they use the family carriage. So he rode down to the mansion on the Illinois Central, and the elegant carriage of the widow's father rolled up to the front door to take them to the play-house. The widow was handed in and settled herself in the back seat. Then the bashful man, to her surprise, took a seat directly opposite her, and the carriage rolled out on the boulevard and toward the city.

"The pretty little widow exhausted all the arts of which she was possessed—and, being a widow, you may believe they were numerous—to apprise the bashful man of the fact that it would be proper for him to take a seat by her side, but he was more afraid of her than he ever was of a panicky wheat market. The widow wanted to laugh, and yet she felt silly, sitting over there alone, with carriages passing, whose occupants could see her isolation. All her hints, however, were of no avail, and she finally said:

"Mr. —, if you are quite convinced that I will not bite, please sit over here. It looks much better. You can snuggle into your own corner if you want to and go to sleep. I will not bother you."

"He complied, stammeringly, and crouched into his corner all the way to the theater, responding with hesitating monosyllables to her efforts at conversation. The home trip was just as bad.

"And this man is one of the brassiest brokers on the floor of the Board of Trade."

RED-HEADS ARE RISKY

Insurance Men Said to Boycott People with Scarlet Topknots.

"I should like to insure my life, but I would be considered a bad risk. I doubt if any of the first-class companies would accept me."

These, says the Philadelphia Record, were the words of a big, freckle-faced, red-haired individual whose usually merry countenance and abundant avoirdupois made him the very picture of health.

"What in the world should make you a bad risk?" chorused the group of bystanders.

The first speaker blushed till his cheeks were as fiery red as his matted locks, and then answered softly: "My scarlet topknot is my bane. It is quite bad enough to invite the sobriquets 'bricktop,' 'pink,' and the like, but when the insurance companies take a hand in the persecution it is enough to make a strong man weep."

The aggrieved individual resembled a consumptive as little as possible, but his suspicious tendency to pulmonary affections was the only ground for the insurance men's boycott. The medical examiner of a leading life insurance company, who was questioned as to the alleged disparagement of red heads, said it was largely imaginary and exaggerated. "It is a fact, however," he continued, "that red-headed persons have generally very thin skins, and are as a rule of a delicate constitution. A pale, thin face and a covering, consumptive form are often allied to a reddish complexion. Light hair, and especially red hair, often seems to betoken scrofulous disorders, and its presence may prejudice special examiners against the subject. It is a fact that red-headed persons who show not the smallest trace of pulmonary trouble will sometimes develop consumption in an almost incredible time."

BLEACHING THE HAIR.

The Vile Compounds That Are Used in the Senseless Practice.

According to Medical Classics recent analyses have shown that the preparations for bleaching the hair "to the delicate golden shade so much admired by the court circles of Europe and the best society of the United States," to quote from a label on one of the bottles, all depend upon the discoloring and corrosive influence of nascent oxygen or nascent chlorine. The basis used in the various nostrums for this purpose are peroxide of hydrogen, aqua regia and bromizers' acid. Peroxide of hydrogen is the mildest and most innocuous of the trio named. It is a colorless liquid which destroys the natural color of the hair, and which, if used long enough, turns it an unnatural grayish white. It is rather expensive, and it is therefore used much less than the two other acids. It produces sores upon the scalp and gives rise to skin complaints that resemble tetter, salt-rheum and scald-head. The two acids are equally vile. They attack and eat the hair and skin alike. The former they partly bleach and partly burn to a handsome gold color; the latter they stain to about the same hue as does a light application of iodine. Besides the dermatologic troubles named, they cause maladies hardly distinguishable from eczema and erythema. One curious disease that they cause is an inflammation of the cells of the hair follicles. The cellular walls break down, and lymph, and often blood, is extravasated in appreciable quantities. All three bases produce falling out of the hair and premature baldness.

How Some Men Get Rich.

That wasn't a bad investment which Erwin Davis made a couple of years ago, says the New York World. Erwin Davis is the capitalist who so successfully tried to sell his gallery of paintings some months ago at fancy upset prices. He is a smarter financier than picture seller. About two years ago he happened to learn that the second mortgage bonds of the Richmond & Alleghany Railroad Company could be purchased at a very low figure. Davis has a yearning for a low-priced railroad bond. He looked into the matter and found that the company had defaulted on the interest, and was apparently going to wreck and ruin. He bought the entire issue, \$2,000,000, from the disgusted holders at 10 cents on the dollar. That was an investment of \$200,000. Being interested in the road he now insinuated himself into the management and very soon he controlled the board of directors. He so worked things that an entire reconstruction of the road seemed imperatively necessary. Erwin

invited the attention of Mr. Huntington to the fact that his Chesapeake & Ohio system would not be complete without the Richmond & Alleghany. Huntington and Davis put their heads together and the result was a ninety-nine-year lease of the Davis road to the Huntington system, the second mortgage bonds being guaranteed 4 per cent. interest, which makes their market value 80 cents on the dollar. Profits to Erwin Davis in one year, \$1,400,000.

FAT BILL'S TROUSERS.

A Good Old Story Revamped for the Benefit of the Rising Generation.

Everybody, that is, nearly everybody, knows Bill M—, the printer, and his geniality and good nature have won for him a host of admiring friends, says the St. Louis Republic. A man of ponderous girth, but of medium height, he finds it rather difficult to procure trousers of the right dimensions when not made to order. This fact has given rise to no little annoyance in his life, and it has often caused him days of hesitation before venturing forth in quest of a new pair to replace the old ones. Recently, however, his trousers, which had seen long and constant service, began to display the effects of the relentless tooth of time, and his good wife chided him upon his appearance. Stung by her remarks Bill sought a store devoted to the sale of clothing and purchased for himself a pair of trousers. After assiduous search a pair was found of sufficient expanse of waistband to accommodate his vast rotundity, but, unfortunately, the length was a good six inches greater than desired. It was the best that he could do, however, and, thinking to have his wife remedy the defect, as only a woman can, he bore them proudly home. The wrapper was removed and the purchase displayed—Bill explaining the trouble, and asking his wife to alter them in time for him to wear them on the following day. To this proposition the wife for some reason demurred and flatly refused to comply with his request. Sore at heart, Bill went quietly to bed, leaving the trousers hanging by the head of his bed. He fell asleep and dreamed of the ridiculous figure he would present when arrayed in a pair of pantaloons of such extravagant length, but in the midst of his slumbers his mother-in-law—a generous, kindly soul—took compassion upon him, and, slipping into the room, removed the garment. In a few moments, with the aid of a pair of scissors and a needle and thread, the surplus cloth had been removed. Quietly she restored them to their place, thinking to surprise him when he awoke. Scarcely had she gone when her sister-in-law, who had heard the wife's refusal, and who knew nothing of her mother's action, went quietly to the room, secured the trousers, and removed the requisite six inches. Bill's wife, on going to bed, noticed the trousers hanging in the room, and, feeling that she had perhaps been a little arbitrary, took them quietly down, and in another moment another six inches had been taken from their length. The work accomplished she restored them to the hook and went to bed.

Bill awoke betimes and donned his new trousers. He arose, glanced at his nether limbs, and a look of horror and despair crept over his face. Instead of being too long, as he had anticipated, they scarcely fell below the knee. Excitedly he called his wife and called her attention to the strange transformation. Inquiries were instituted in the household, and mutual explanations followed.

AUNT SHAFFER'S WHIM.

An Old Lady Who Is Put to Sleep by the Beating of a Drum.

Among the queer people in this part of the world, says a letter from Findlay, O., is Mrs. Ann Shaffer, familiarly known as "Aunt Ann." She lives on a farm with her husband about ten miles from this city, is over seventy-nine years old, and in full possession of all her faculties. Her chief peculiarity—for she has a number—is that she can not sleep unless her husband beats a drum in front of the house for at least an hour; and summer and winter, night after night, the roll of old Jacob Shaffer's drum can be heard by the neighbors for miles around as he leads the charge which his wife is making into dreamland. He has a snare drum which he made for himself during the early years of the war, and, as he was incapacitated from going into the army by reason of physical disabilities, he did what he could for the country by acting as the drummer for a company of "home guards" which drilled in his neighborhood.

It was during this period that his wife first developed her strange mania. Being of a highly nervous temperament, and much wrought up over the war, she could not sleep at night unless her husband was awake. As he was not permitted to sleep until his wife had first journeyed into the realms of slumber, he put in the time practicing upon his drum. In this way "Aunt Ann" grew into the habit of falling asleep to the systematic music of the drum, and soon it became a necessity. She could not sleep without its soothing sound, and thus the years have gone on, every night the same. About eight o'clock Uncle Jacob gets out his drum and goes to work as if he were leading a charge on a battery, and then gradually drops into slower and more soothing music until at the end of an hour's steady beating he feels convinced that his wife is sound asleep. Then he puts aside his sleep producer and joins the partner of his joys and sorrows on her excursion into slumberland.

The Shaffers have a nice farm and are in good circumstances, and barring this drum peculiarity, are quiet people and good neighbors. Both husband and wife belong to the Methodist Church.

SAVED BY A BATH.

The Efficacy of Cold Water in Cases of Typhoid Fever.

The efficacy of the cold bath in typhoid fever is now admitted, and the doctors are claiming it as a discovery of science. Fever patients would have discovered it long ago if they had been permitted to treat themselves. A dear friend of a Washington Capital correspondent discovered it for himself when a prisoner of war in East Tennessee. He had been captured and was on his way further South when taken with typhoid fever. His guard found him delirious when waking him to continue his march. They consigned him to the care of a farmer's wife who looked kindly upon the suffering prisoner. She gave him a spare room and religiously shut the windows lest he should have a draft of Heaven's air and die; she denied him the cool water of the well, because the country doctor said so. The patient lay still in the midnight hours and the kind watcher by his bed slept the sleep of the righteous. Awakening suddenly the nurse found the sick bed empty. The patient had gone. Running out to the front yard

she heard a spluttering noise, which she traced to the deep, cold mountain well. Getting a candle she lowered it by a string to the water's brink, and there stood the Yankee soldier, up to his chin in the cold water. He had escaped while she slept and had sought for coolness and general factotum. After an hour or more the soldier was rescued. He was hoisted up, and, for the first time in many hours, he was conscious. He was wrapped in blankets amid many forebodings of death. Sweet sleep ensued, and the next morning appetite returned. A few days and strength returned. The man was cured by Nature's remedy. He never saw a Confederate prison, for the kind woman piloted him over the mountains to the Union lines. He remembers that well to this day with the deepest gratitude, and no summer passes that he does not send to the East Tennessee farm some remembrance of the kindness he had there.

PRANKS OF A MONKEY.

Some of the Antics in Which He Delights to Indulge.

The Diplomacy Necessary to Keep Him in Good Humor—His Remarkable Attempts at Jugglery—How He Gave Vent to His Jealousy.

My office, in the last port where I was stationed, looked over the sea and had a veranda outside it, which, of course, was kept sacred, remarks a writer in Chambers' Journal. I was sitting one day in my office chair, looking out over the bay beyond, to collect my thoughts for a dispatch then in hand, when I espied a Celestial coming along the veranda with some dark object showing its appreciation of the attention it was receiving by placing two arms of inordinate length round the man's neck. I naturally rose up to see what this phenomenon was, and having been told that it was a rare animal I at once made overtures for his purchase.

As soon as negotiations were concluded I fastened my purchase—a black gibbon—to my copying-press, instead of sending him up to my house, being anxious to introduce him myself to my two dogs and to Joseph the cat. I could not intrust a rare animal to my servants lest the introduction through their agency to Joseph and the rest might result in some disaster. When I fastened the gibbon to the press I took no account of the length of the animal's arms, and I was therefore not a little surprised when a black hand took possession of a red and blue pencil and a black mouth began to eat it. Nature is said, in her beneficence, to instruct the lower animals what to eat and what to avoid. That, no doubt, applies to an animal in the wild state, such animal being directed by instinct where to find an antidote to any thing deleterious which it may have eaten. An animal in captivity must, however, be treated differently, and must not be allowed to do as it likes. So I reasoned, and as I had no herb ready to correct the evil which I knew would result from eating a pencil, I proceeded to recover the stolen article. Though my new pet did not mind being touched, though he would jump into your lap and make himself at home, he strongly objected to part with any thing which he had once got hold of, and a good deal of diplomacy had to be used before I possessed myself of the pencil.

Scarcely was this fun at an end before some black fingers were dipped into the ink; and when the ink was removed out of reach the gum bottle was next turned over, the gum being particularly appreciated. Thinking that the animal might be thirsty, I put a saucer of water before him, but though easy to put the saucer down it was impossible to pick it up again, even though there was not a drop of water left in it. It seemed to me, on reflection, that I had made a bad purchase. I did not clearly see how I was to feed an animal that was so intractable, and I had serious misgivings that my new pet would give me a lot of trouble and quite likely would die in three months. Monkeys are generally supposed to be troubled either with heart disease or with consumption, and to endure captivity for a short time only. Thus, I had given my gibbon three months to live, and I fully expected that before four months had passed he would be under a glass case in my drawing-room. I am extremely pleased to say that at the time I write—more than two years since I purchased him—he is still alive, though I must confess it has not been easy to rescue him from the jaws of death on several occasions.

At first the name of "Sambo" was given to the gibbon, on account of its jet black color, then this was changed in course of time to "Samuel," the little fellow becoming too respectable to be called Sambo. At the last port at which I was stationed the lower windows of my dwelling house were provided with iron bars—about five inches apart—as a protection against thieves. These bars were a great convenience to me, as I could attach Sam to them at meal times, thus keeping him out of mischief while giving him plenty of freedom. The question of feeding Sam was not an easy one to tackle. If we sat down and began eating before he was served the most noisy protests were made, and when the saucer of rice was put down there was no one courageous enough to recover the empty saucer. The point was often settled by Sam himself, who, having finished his rice, would throw the saucer into the air a few times, catching it very cleverly, and then hurl it away from him. A wooden bowl was found to answer better, but this also received much rough usage, and had to be repeatedly renewed.

One very noticeable feature about Sam was his extreme jealousy. If I stroked the cat in his presence he used to get into a paroxysm of rage and make great efforts to bite me. He would be almost as much vexed if I patted the dogs. When a guest came to luncheon he was so angry at the intrusion that he often had to be removed. He would absorb all the conversation until removal, it being quite impossible to keep him quiet. He had a singular objection—he has it now in a mild way—to any thing being removed by the servants; and had he been fastened to my chair instead of the window no plate once put on the table could have been removed. When in the drawing room with me—and he was often there—he would even fly at my wife if she attempted to touch the tea things. At this date he has sobered down a good deal; but even now, though a servant may bring me a letter, he must not take away a reply if Sam is with me. He objects to any one coming near me; and if my wife shakes my coat, or even touches my shoulder, he catches hold of her, though now perhaps more in play than in anger.

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