

THE ALBERT STAR.

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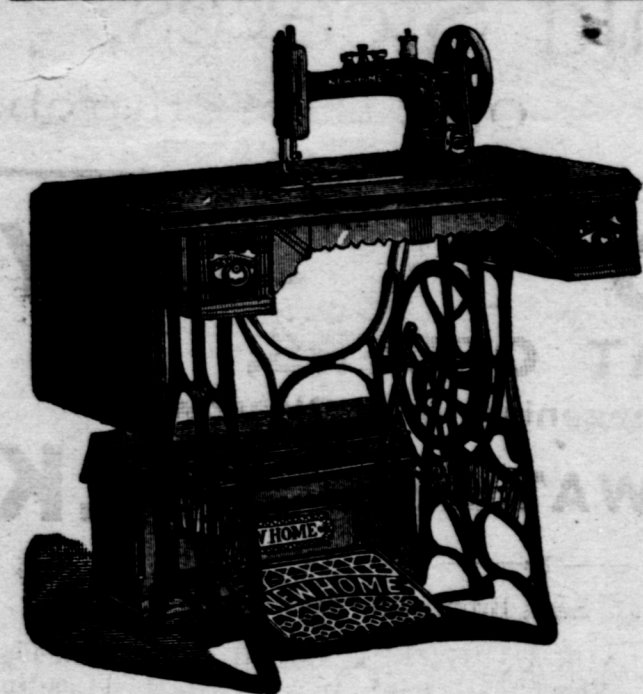
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THE ALBERT STAR.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 12.

Distant Things.

Oh, white is the sail in the Far Away
And dirty the sails at the dock,
And fair are the cliffs across the bay,
And black is the nearby rock,
Though glistens the snow in the peaks afar
At our feet it is only white,
And there is the gleam of the distant star,
Though a lamp was twice as bright!

The rose that nods beyond our reach
Is redder than rose of ours.
Of thought that turned our tongue to speech
Our fellow: have the greatest powers.
The waters that flow from the hidden springs
Are sweeter than those by our side.
So we strive through life for these distant
things
And never are satisfied.

So we strive through life for these distant
things
But ever they hold their place
Till beats life's drum and death doth come
And we look in his mocking face.
And the distant things crowd near and close,
And faith! they are dingy and grey!
For the charm is lost when the line is crossed
'Twixt Here and Far Away.

For the charm is lost when the line is crossed,
And we see all things as they are
And know that as clean is the sail at the dock
As the sail on the sea afar,
As bright as the rays of the nearby lamp
As the gleam of the distant star.

Did He Do Right?

Jerry and Pete were two industrious
mechanics. They lived in a fourth
ward tenement, and each had a couple
of children to support besides their
wives, who, albeit, were not unac-
quainted with a noble art frequently
practised by charwomen.

Jerry and Pete were hard workers;
they worked far into the night, and
occasionally the thin mists of dawn
had begun to break on the narrow city
pavements before their labors would
cease. Nobody would say that theirs
was not a hard-earned pillow. Some-
times they did not toil in vain. It de-
pended largely upon the police.

It was a chilly night, in November
that this horny-handed pair planned
the burglary of a certain safe in the
establishment of a furniture concern
on the West Side. On the evening in
question the bookkeeper had had a
wangle with his accounts.

"I can't make head or tail of this,"
he said to the senior member of the
firm, "but I know everything is all
right." An error of several hundred
dollars has been carried over each
daily footing, but where the error he-
gins or ends I haven't found out."

The fact was the monthly sales had
been extraordinarily large, and a page
of the balance had been mislaid. The
head bookkeeper spent an hour in again
casting upon both entries of himself
and subordinates after the establish-
ment closed its doors for the day.

Then he went home for his supper
determined to locate the deficit if he
didn't get a wink of sleep that night.
Bookkeepers, it must be remembered,
have singularly sensitive organisms,
susceptible to the slightest atom of
anything which reflects upon their
probity or skill.

At half-past eight he returned and
commenced anew his critical calcula-
tions. He worked precisely two hours,
at the end of which time he suddenly
slapped his forehead and exclaimed:
"Great Scott! Why haven't I looked
through the safe for a missing sheet?
Ten to one Weeks forgot to number them!"

He turned over the pages of the bal-
ance in his hand, and sure enough, the
usual numerical mark of designation
in the upper left hand corner was mis-
sing. In all likelihood one page, per-
haps two, had slipped in some remote
corner of the safe.

The safe was a large one, partially
receding into the wall, and containing
all the papers and documents and
several days' receipts in cash and
drafts of the firm.

The bookkeeper, in his efforts to un-
earth the lost sheet, was obliged to
intrude his entire body into the safe.
Fearing lest the candle he held should
attract attention from the street, show-
ing out as it did in glaring relief
against the black recesses of the safe,
before entering he drew the door
slightly ajar.

As he stepped in the tail of his coat
probably caught on an angle of the
huge riveted hinges of the lock. The
massive gate swung as if it weighed no
more than a single pound and the book-
keeper was a prisoner.

He heard a resonant click, that was
all, and his candle went out.
There is nothing especially remark-
able about the incident—tragic as it
certainly must have been to the un-
fortunate wretch inside. Many men
have been imprisoned in safes before.
But this reflection would hardly soothe
the agony of that horrible moment.

The bookkeeper at the outset lost
his presence of mind. He fought like
a caged demon, after first exerting
almost super-human strength against
the four sides of the iron tomb. Then
his body gave out, and without for an
instant losing consciousness he found
himself sitting in a partially upright
posture unable to move hand or foot.

At that instant, when hours seemed
to have elapsed, the drum of his ear,
now abnormally sensitive, was almost
split into fragments. A frightful
monotonous clangor rent the interior
of the safe.

The bookkeeper used to say after-
ward that a second's deviation of
characteristic thought and he would
have gone mad.
Stronger minds in parallel situation
would have collapsed. But a weaker
personality clings more strongly to
hope. Only weak individuals while

in the act of drowning catch at straws.
As the bookkeeper felt himself
gradually growing faint from want of
air his revived hope led him to de-
liberately crash his fists into the wood-
work with which the interior of the
safe was fitted, in secretary fashion,
one drawer being built above another.

As may be conjectured, the noise
which smote the bookkeeper's ear was
that of a drill. Although keenly dis-
tinguished from the inside, the sound
was perfectly smothered on the out-
side of the vault.

At one end of the drill was a
cavity rapidly growing larger in one
of the steel panels. At its other end
was a heavy, warty fist, part of the
anatomy of Pete, the industrious
mechanic.

Pete held the drill while his friend
Jerry pounded it in.
Pretty soon the two burglars became
aware that a terrible commotion was
going on within the safe. It nearly
drove them into fits. They were
certainly very much startled.

Jerry was for throwing up the job,
but his companion rejected the pro-
posal with a scorn as savoring of the
superstitions. Pete had a large family
to support, he argued. He spoke
frankly to his friend and co-laborer.
The burden of his remarks was in these
words—

"You make me tired wading your ghosts
and things, and I don't want any more
damn fooling, see? De damned job is
most 'tough, anyway."

Pete and Jerry went back to work.
At the first crack of the drill Jerry
said:

"Pete, there's a man or something
in that safe!"
Both men grew pale as ghosts at the
mere suggestion. Pete intently
applied his ear first to the lock then
to the drill-hole.

"Hey, in there!" he shouted, not so
loud, however, as to be heard out on
the sidewalk. There came the same
faint response very faint indeed—

"For God's sake give me air! I am
locked in here. Try and burst open
the safe."

The two burglars did not stop to
talk, but went at once to work as if
their lives depended on the result of
their labors, instead of the unfortunate
bookkeeper's. In less than three
minutes they had a hole somewhat
smaller than the business end of a
collar button knocked into the safe.

Then they stopped to rest, and the
man inside, who came so near his
death, breathed.

It was now that the two burglars
became aware of their predicament.
In all probability this was a member
of the firm or an employee. This
fact knocked the success of the night's
adventure sky-high, unless, when they
let the man out, they gagged and
bound him in silence.

But this would have an ugly look.
It might mean murder in the end,
whereas, if they did not let him out,
the chances were he would fall ex-
hausted before morning, and they
would still be murderers and respon-
sible for his taking off.

These were highly comforting reflec-
tions, but there was still one more
powerful. What it was remains to be
seen.

"Hey, in there!" cried Pete. "What
is the combination of yer safe?"
"3-15-73," came back in an almost
apologetic tone.

It was evidently hard work to draw
a breath through that hole. In ex-
actly fifteen seconds the safe gave forth
the same resonant click it had given
a half hour previously. Thanks to
the advent of the burglars, it opened
as lightly and airy as it had closed
thirty minutes before on the unhappy
accountant.

The latter gasped once or twice, and
without any assistance stepped out in-
to the free air.

Now comes the interesting part.
He was very pale, and his dress was
much torn and disordered when he
stepped to the floor, but the pallor
gave way to a red flush at perceiving
two burglars.

They were stock still as if they had
seen a ghost.
Without any kind of speech or warn-
ing or any attempt at bravado, the
bookkeeper walked straight to his desk
and rang a call for police.

Almost simultaneously, so quick
and quiet was the action, he opened a
drawer, took out a pistol and covered
the two burglars with a fatal precision.
As he did so, he uttered these words:
"Gentlemen, I would be the basest
of men if I did not feel profoundly
grateful for what you have just done.
I shall always regard you as any man
should regard those who have saved
his life with peril to themselves. Any-
thing you wish of me I shall make
every effort to perform. I have ac-
cumulated a little money, and with it
I shall seek the best counsel I can
engaged for your defence. If you are
convicted, why—"

Here the officers entered, having
broken in the door with a crash.

How It Ended.
Richard—"By the way, how do you
and Miss Smart get along?"
William—"Oh, that affair is all
over."
Richard—"You don't mean it?"
William—"You see, I'd made up my
mind about a week ago to bring
matters to a crisis. So I began by
saying that I had a question I wanted
to ask her."
Richard—"Yes."
William—"She tossed her head and
said any fool could ask questions."
Richard—"And you?"
William—"I merely told her perhaps
it would be just as well, then, to let
some fool ask my questions."

A FUNERAL IN CHINA.

A Well-Conducted and Hugely
Splendid Affair.

The most important event in a
Chinese life is his funeral. A
Chinese crowd is the culmination of
human noise, and the Chinese are
never so noisy as at a funeral. They
have hearty appetites at all times, but
they never eat as much as they do at a
funeral feast. When I first lived in
China, I used to find it almost im-
possible to distinguish between a
funeral procession and a marriage pro-
cession. In the centre of one, the
coffined corpse is born on the shoulders
of men. In the centre of the other
similar men bear upon their shoulders
the bride, who is in an inclosed sedan
chair, and she is followed by her brides-
maids. But to the casual observer
the two ends of the two processions
are quite alike in every other respect.
Tom-toms, red-clothed coolies carrying
roasted pigs and other dainties, smaller
coolies carrying cheap paper ornaments
of a Mongolian theatrical type—these
are the invariable elements of both
processions.

The Chinese are to-day the most
unique, the most ancient and the most
misunderstood people on the earth. I
say the most ancient because they are
the least changed from what they were
long centuries ago. The least changed!
They are not changed at all. The
China of to-day is he China Marco
Polo knew. A few of us have been in
China. I am not speaking of the mis-
sionaries. I regard them as a people
apart. What have we gained in China?
A strange experience—to me a pleasant
one—a pound of perfume tea, and a
bale of flower craps, for all of which
we have paid right handsomely. We
have been treated in the main politely,
but sooner or later most of us are bowed
out of China, if not by the emperor,
why, then by the climate.

The Chinese have at least three
religions—Confucianism, Buddhism
and Taoism. But the funeral rites of
the three sects are identical. There
are several reasons for this. The three
religions are much alike and are all
largely founded upon Indian Buddhism.
Moreover, religion is a very second-
class affair in China. The priests of
two sects often live together in the
chambers of a single house. Filial devotion
is the real religion of China. All China
is one huge family, and the emperor
is the great father. By the way, Great
Father is what the North American
Indians call God. And the Chinese
consider their emperor a god. There
is one more reason why all Chinese
funerals are greatly alike. China is a
land of ceremonies, and the smallest
details of those ceremonial are pre-
scribed by the "Leke," or book of
rites.

To disobey the least rule of this
great national manual is a crime and a
severely punished one. In two respects
only does one Chinese funeral differ
from another. The first is in the
amount of money spent, and the second
is in the period after death at which
the burial takes place.

The first ambition of every Chinaman
is to have a splendid coffin. A poor
Chinaman will half starve himself and
his family for years that he may daily
hoard a little cash toward the sum
needed for the purchase of the coveted
casket. When the coffin is really
bought, it is brought home with great
ceremony. It is given the place of
honor in the house and is regarded as
the most valuable piece of furniture in
the establishment. Among the poorer
classes it is customary to buy a very
thick coffin. No self-respecting Chinese
family—and the Chinese are the most
self-respecting of all the nations—will
bury a parent until they can do it with
more or less Mongolian magnificence.

Hence in China death by no means
implies immediate burial. When a
Chinaman dies, his neighbors come in
and help the women of the family to
make a shroud. The body is put in
its coffin. Then the funeral ceremonies
begin, if there be money enough. If
there is not, the coffin is put back in
its place of honor until the family
finances look up.

The day of the death, or the day
after, the relatives not living in the
house and the friends come to pay the
last duties of respect to the deceased.
When the visitors arrive, they are
shown into a room in which are all the
women and children of the establish-
ment. These latter set up a dismal
howl, in which the visitors join, or to
which they listen sympathetically.
When the tympanum of even a Chinese
ear begins to ache, the guests are
ushered into another apartment, where
the men of the house give them tea
and refreshment. The refreshment
varies according to the means of the
family. In the house of the rich it is
a dinner. After the visitors have
drunk and eaten, they are bowed out
by one of the kinsmen of the dead.

A well-conducted Chinese funeral is
the most gorgeous sight in Asia. It
may seem to us a little tinselly, but
that is a mere matter of taste. And
I, who make bold to like the Chinese,
cannot claim that they have a super-
abundance of taste. At the front of
the funeral procession walk the noisy
musicians. Then come
men—they may be friends, they may
be coolies—bearing the insignia of the
dignity of the dead, if he had any.
Next walk more men carrying figures
of animals, idols, umbrellas and blue
and white streamers. After them com-
men carrying pans of perfume. Just
before the coffin walk bonzes—Chinese
priests. Over the coffin a canopy is
usually carried. The casket is born
by about a score of men. Immediately
behind the coffin walk the children of

the deceased. The eldest son comes
first. He is dressed in canvas and
leans heavily upon a stout stick. He
is supposed to be exhausted by grief
and fasting to walk without the aid of
this staff. The other children and
relatives follow the chief mourner.
They are clothed in white linen
garments. White is the mourning
color of the Danes, of the Burmese and
of the Chinese. The women are carried
in chairs in the Chinese funeral pro-
cession. They sob and wail at intervals
and in unison.

When the burying place is reached,
the bonzes begin chanting a mass for
the dead and the coffin is put into the
tomb. When the coffin is laid in its
final position, a large oblong white
marble table is placed before the tomb.
On the middle of it is set a censer and
two vases and two candle sticks, all of
an exquisite workmanship as possible.
Then they have a paper cremation!
Paper figures of men, horses, garments
and a score of other things are buried.
They are supposed to undergo a
material resurrection and to be useful
to the dead in the Chinese heaven.
The tomb is sealed up or closed, and
an entertainment concludes the
ceremony at the grave. The forms of
Chinese tombs vary somewhat accord-
ing to the province in which they are
built, and vary much according to the
means of the relative who undertakes
the expense.

A Royal Russian Outfit.
When a Russian grand duchess is
married, her trousseau is something to
behold. There is nothing skimpy
about the Czar's wedding outfit for his
daughter. Indeed, its lavishness bor-
ders on reckless extravagance. It even
astonishes those accustomed to seeing
the generous trousseaux of royal brides,
for it required a whole floor of the
Sampson Palace for its display. One
room of this beautiful palace was whol-
ly devoted to the priceless furs, mostly
the finest black sables, which the im-
perial parents had provided for their
daughter, in the form of linings, trim-
mings, capes, boas, and such devices.
A rich cloak of emerald green velvet,
lined throughout with this costly fur,
with a huge collar of the same turning
back and crossing over the front, and
a long court train of purple velvet,
lined and deeply bordered with ermine,
which imperial ladies wear over their
shoulders at the wedding ceremony,
and a pretty driving cape, also of
ermine, reaching below the waist, were
the stars in this fur display. Sumptu-
ousness could go no further, it would
seem, but these furs are to last a life-
time and their preservation is entrusted
to special attendants of the ward-
robe, who are responsible for their
safety. The Russian court dresses fill
another room, and among them was
the bridal robe entirely of cloth of sil-
ver, richly embroidered, with long
hanging sleeves and an immense train,
with which is worn the Russian koko-
nik on the head, a kind of velvet cor-
onet, sparkling with gems, and a long
tulle veil. It is no small joke to be a
bride anyhow, but a Russian bride
must find the weight of all this splen-
dore more than she can endure, espe-
cially when it is worn in the summer
time.

A writer who saw these, and other
gorgeous things says that she was
struck in all the display by the small-
ness of the sleeves, which detracted
from the smartness of the toilettes,
and to fashionable ideas, but as the
Empress is averse to large sleeves, the
court eschews them, and poor little
Zenis's best gowns looked like those of
seven years ago. After all, an imperi-
al trousseau has its drawbacks! For
what matters the masses of evening
and day dresses, coats and a gown if
the sleeves are small?

One item in the fascinating list of
household linen was the dozens of
down pillows, all covered with pink
silk, and in every size, from large
square ones to tiny oblong pillows.
Here, then, is a new wrinkle for Ameri-
can brides to add to their expendi-
tures in preparing for housekeeping.
But there is one curious custom in
Russia they are likely to omit, and
this is the providing of a small trousseau
for the bridegroom. The Emperor
and Empress permitted their daugh-
ter to furnish the Grand Duke Alexan-
der Michailowitch with shirts and other
manly garments, including a grand
priest like dressing robe of cloth of
silver. The grand duke will probably
give this uncomfortable negligee to his
young wife for a sofa covering, for he
doesn't look a bit like a man who
would wear it. The utmost privacy
has marked these imperial nuptials,
and such accounts have been sup-
plied the correspondents appear to
have been grudgingly given, and
though the writers put on a smiling
countenance, and throw all the colour
de rose they possess into their letters,
there is a tinge of sadness about the
whole affair. Perhaps the accident
that followed the festivities was al-
ready in the air. Then, too, how know
the imperial family ever know an
hour's peace with assassination ever
lurking behind its door!

Doing Nobly.
Mrs. De Style—"How is your
daughter doing at college?"
Mrs. De Fashion—"Beautifully.
Madame Brimingham writes that she
is the best-dressed girl in her class."

An Adroit Question.
Farmer Tibbits—"Hang that cow I
always have to club her fore I can
make her stand still!"
Little Nephew (from the city)—"Is
that the one that gives the whipped
cream?"

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