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## MONAHAN'S INCROUCHMENT.

BY BIRDSALL JACKSON.

Patrick Monahan knew tenement houses from the ground up—indeed, from far below the ground up; from the good, sound building-stone that he laid in their foundations, to the hard-burned tile coping with which he capped the parapet walls. He had built them for a score of years and had lived in them all his life. This stock of experience, together with his pride in bringing each one as near perfection as possible, had placed him at the head of his craft.

He made hard work of building his tenements, hard work all the way through, from the time his laborers began excavating to the arrival of the tenants.

Did the material men send a load of washed brick or waney timber to the job? Patrick took one look at it and motioned the driver to pass on, with a gesture of dismissal that would have lent dignity to his forbears, the Celtic kings.

Did the "subs" hazard trying a few apprentices at journeyman's work? He was after them like a Nemesis. And a Nemesis with a big red mustache, an unending string of oaths, and a fighting weight of two twenty-five net is not to be despised under any circumstances.

The walking delegate, who came to order a strike on one of the Monahan buildings just as the roofers were straining every nerve to finish ahead of a threatening storm, gained this knowledge and took it away with him—in an ambulance. The Grand Jury found for the contractor.

Patrick sold his houses easily, though not particularly well. Some people said the houses sold themselves and gave the builder no chance to become an efficient salesman.

If perchance any did not sell readily, he had no difficulty, ordinarily, in finding good tenants for them, despite the vestibule and stair-hall decorations, which were without exception some variation of a harp of gold motif wrought upon a deep green background. For many flat-dwellers had come to know that Monahan was a generous landlord and would grant them anything reasonable, whether nominated in the bond or not.

So Patrick prospered fairly well for a time—well enough to take good care of the wife and children, who numbered in all thirteen.

But after Simonson, he of the keen black eye and broad, fat, comprehensive smile—after Simonson became his dogged competitor in building tenements, things went not at all well with Patrick. For Simonson soon began to duplicate the older man's houses, to all outward appearance at least, and to offer his for sale at much lower prices.

How he could afford to do this in a city whose stringent building laws allowed almost no latitude in matters of construction would have been hard for a layman to explain. Some of those in whose hands lay the power of execution, and who were extremely well versed therein, could have made the situation clear, doubtless; but this they most assuredly did not do; and Simonson himself knew only too well how indispensable to his comfort and untrammelled enjoyment of life it was to guard scrupulously the golden secret.

Fortune had just begun to snub the older man and to smile upon the younger when Patrick learned with grave concern that his rival had bought the lots adjoining those on which the Kildare and Killarney flats were growing heavenward five feet per day; and his uneasiness did not decrease at the rumor that his competitor's new houses were to be counterparts of his own. Still, Patrick said nothing, and was smoking his stub

pipe complacently in his office, when Simonson entered.

"Mr. Monahan," he began dejectedly, "I'm in a hole, an awful hole."

"Phwere is it?" said Patrick.

"Well, I'll tell you," returned Simonson with a woe-begone expression; "I've just got ready to start my job and here's your side-wall part way onto my land."

"How much?" asked Patrick.

"One inch, Mr. Monahan," wailed Simonson, "one whole inch that I wouldn't thought I could possibly spare for any money. But now your wall is built onto it, and I've got to sell it to you. It's the only way. I'm forced to do it."

"For how much?" said Patrick.

"Two thousand dollars!" And Simonson smiled his broad, fat, comprehensive smile.

Patrick Monahan took his pipe from his mouth and looked at Simonson.

"Not by a dom sight!" said he. "Far that money I can tear me wall down, brick by brick, an' put her up ag'in; an' I'll do it, be Gob, 'fore ever I'll put wan cint into yer dirty palm fur it!"

"You have the privilege, of course," replied Simonson, "to remove the encroachment within the time allowed by law."

"An' ye can have the privilege," said Patrick, "to rid me office av the incroachment av yerself in the time allowed by the law av Pataick Monahan, which is tin seconds or ye'll be throwed into the gutter."

Simonson went.

"Fur wanet," said Patrick to himself,—"fur wanet, if niver before, the craychure has mit the requirements av the law."

Then Patrick Monahan took his stub pipe and his red mustache and his unending string of oaths to the site of the Kildare and Killarney flats, and measured the wall, and cursed it, every brick of it, and every stone of the foundation, and the mortar, its ingredients severally and collectively, and the men who built it, from the foreman down, and those who furnished the materials and those who delivered them. These duties performed with thoroughness and complete impartiality, he hired a gang of Italians to tear it down.

In due course the side-wall arose again, Patrick having set out the building-lines personally this time; and soon the side-wall of Simonson's new buildings abutted it from top to bottom, as though the rival tenements were pressing together in grim antagonism to overthrow each other. After the first forceful venting of his outraged feeling on the subject (as essential to him, no doubt, as the safety valve to the engine) Patrick made no further comment, pocketing his losses stoically.

But his business troubles had only just begun, for his rival's houses were finished first, just barely in time for the season's renting; and while his own stood empty, Simonson's were fully tenanted. This would not have mattered greatly, but that prospective purchasers, scenting danger in the contentions of the two men, kept discreetly clear of all entanglement.

So the report gained credence that the Kildare and Killarney flats would swamp Patrick Monahan completely. However, the nonchalance with which he puffed at his stub pipe when Simonson came into his office again did not strike the latter as wholly befitting a man stared in the face by ruin for himself and a family of thirteen.

"Well, Monahan," began the visitor condescendingly, "I heard you wanted to sell your houses."

"Dom liel!" said Patrick, "I niver said it. An' I wouldn't sell to the biggest snakin' thafe av the nayberhood if I did."

"Come, come, Monahan, don't act like a schoolboy. You've been licked fair and square. How much do you want for the houses?"

"I've no houses fur sale. It's land I have to sell ye."

"All right," responded Simonson, anticipating a keen stroke of business, "I need land just as much as I do houses."

"Yis," said Patrick, "ye nade this land the worst av any ye iver bought."

"Where is your land and how much is there of it?"

"It's a two inch strip av mine benaythe the side wall av yer new tinimint."

"You talk like a crazy man," sputtered Simonson. "I built my wall against yours after yours had been rebuilt."

"Yis," said Patrick, "I know ye did. But ye didn't measure to see that I put me new wall two inches back av me line, did ye? No. Ye must build on all the land that was left anyway, whether ye owned it or not."

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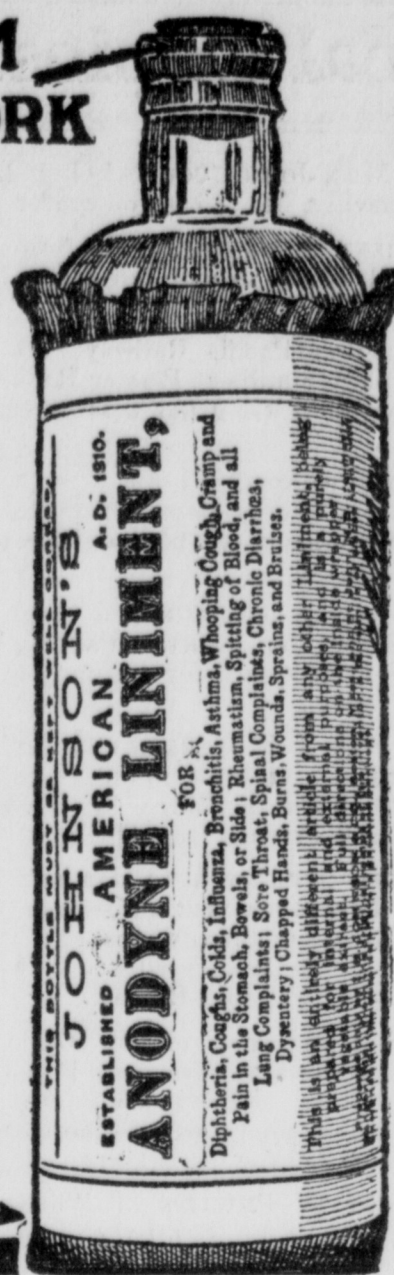
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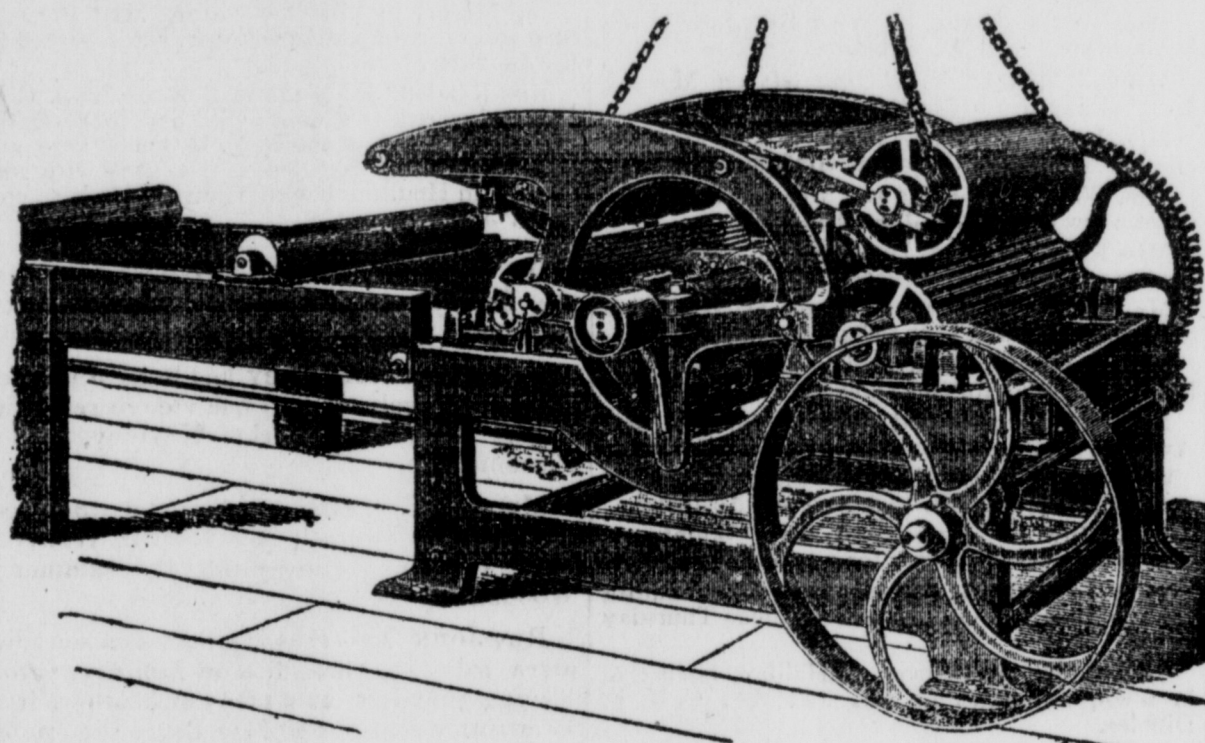
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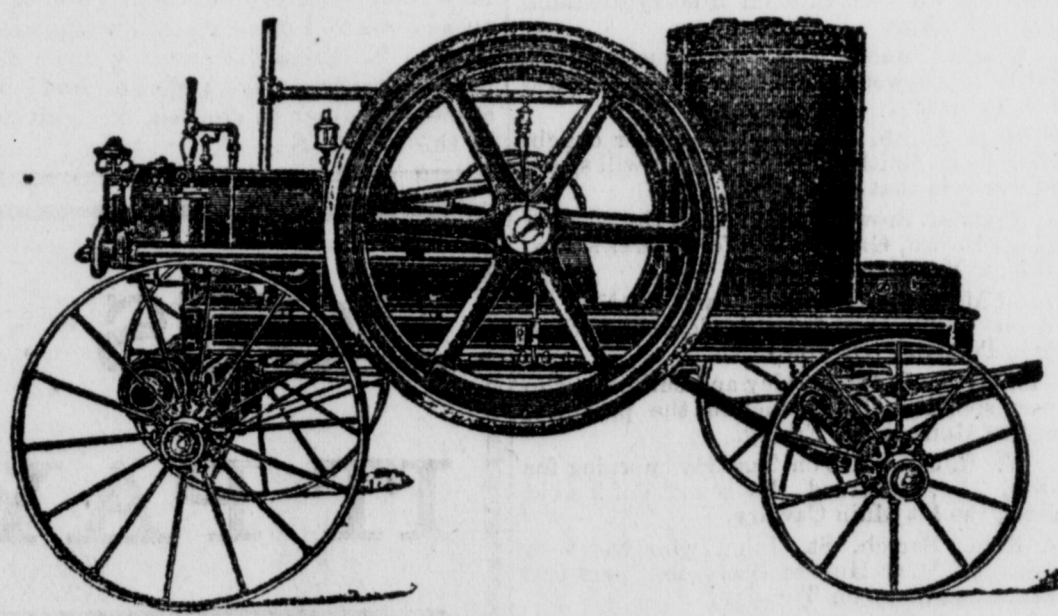
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As the liner cleared the heads and the heavy swell of the open Atlantic became noticeable, dinner was served. The twenty-six places at the captain's table were filled, and as the soup appeared, the captain addressed his table companions. "I trust that all twenty-five of you will have a pleasant trip," he said, "and that this little assemblage of twenty-four will reach port much benefited by the voyage. I look upon these twenty-two smiling faces as a father upon

his family, for I am responsible for the lives of this group of nineteen. I hope all fourteen of you will join me later in drinking to a merry trip. I believe we seven fellow-passengers are admirably suited to each other, and I applaud the judgment which chose from the passenger-list these three persons for my table. You and I, my dear sir, are—" The captain chuckled. "Here, steward, bring on my fish and clear away these dishes."

"I'll have it surveyed before I'll believe a word of it."

"I have a map of me property in me hand," said Patrick. "The incroachment is marked here, two inches. The price is two thousand the inch, as ye'll rimember. If no, ye'll have the privilege av removin' the wall within the toime sit by the law."

"But my tenants!" gasped the other.

"Yer tenants?" Be Gob! but they'll foind convanient lodgin' in the new Kildare an' Killarney apartments, the best av their kind in the town. They'll all sue ye, av coorse, fur the movin' an' ither damages if ye disturb them. Plaze yerself. Plaze yerself. But it'll be chaper to buy me land, which ye can have to-day at yer own assisment. I'm not sayin' at all phwat the price'd be to-morrow."

After some little hesitation, Simonson, with a smile that was this time more comprehensive than healthy, drew from his pocket a blank check, the one he had bought to use in buying some cheap houses, and filled it in to bind the bargain for some costly land instead.

Patrick put the check carefully away and took a few puffs at his pipe.

"The requirement av the law av land incroachment is satisfied," said he, "out the incroachment av yer prisence on me premises remaynes, an' the law av Patrick Monahan in that respect is the same as before, the toime fur raymooval bein' tin seconds."

Simonson went.

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### Wisdom's Whispers.

The schemer who schemes much is kept busy, and accomplishes little in the way of results.

No matter how important you may feel, there is always some one to give out a contrary thought.

An upstart is one who means well enough, but he says and does things in a way that is decidedly offensive.

It is easy to let others know how little you do know without telling them.

Allow your friends to occasionally attend to their own affairs and there will be less trouble on your mind.

Show the appreciation which should be inspired by an act of kindness if you expect another.

To say nice things about people brings out a feeling of self-satisfaction.

Nothing comes to him who is too tired to make an effort to get something.

The disposition to grumble produces a condition which inspires general dis-satisfaction.

### Dangerous Stuff.

From The Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Did you get a taste of Russian vodka that Jim Murchison brought home from Manchuria?"

"No. Pretty powerful, isn't it?"

"I should say it was! You know John Mildy?"

"Yes."

"Well, he drank only half a wine glass of it and then went home and ordered his mother-in-the to leave the house."