

## The Check-Draft.

'Old man' Catlin, so called to distinguish him from his son 'Lishe' and his several nephews, had been a domestic potentate of the absolute type. When his only son married and his daughter-in-law was discovered to be a person of large, cheerful views, which she did not submit to the arbitrament of his judgment, he experienced a most annoying surprise.

One of Amanda's opinions was that the use of a coal-stove is primarily to keep the house warm in winter, rather than to give a superior economist an opportunity to show how little coal he can burn and still keep the fire actually alight. Hence arose the war of the check draft, which raged with intermittent fury from October to May.

The old man would come in ruddy from those outdoor chores with which he mitigated the tedious leisure of his old age, and remark: 'My, you've got it hot here! He would then pull out the check-draft with a defiant click.

Amanda's response depended upon her mood. If she happened to be engrossed in some prospective triumph of needlework, she paid no attention to the challenge until the room became too cool. Then she shut the check-draft, and no more words about it.

If she felt cross or tired, she made no such delay, but seized an early opportunity to carry the war into father's territory by heating the room a little hotter than it was before. This was not accomplished without a brisk exchange of verbal missiles, some of which were very likely to hit 'Lishe, who, whatever his original temper, had lived with his father long enough to acquire a cowardly taste for peace.

'One thing about it, Amamy, you and pa get lots of practice in repartee,' he said one day, when his sufferings as umpire had got the better of his discretion.

The older Mr. Catlin, besides possessing some strategic skill, had a sense of humor which lent a secret zest for him, even to those occasions when Amanda outgeneraled him. She had no such solace, but instead a domineering conscience which forbade her to quarrel beyond a certain point with her husband's father. When that point was reached, she suffered in silence, and being a clear-headed, hot tempered woman suffered acutely.

Old Mr. Catlin was a light sleeper, wherein he had the advantage of Amanda, who believed that no woman was truly doing her duty by her family unless she went to bed very tired every night. She therefore slept heavily.

The old man discovered that by getting up toward midnight he could open the check-draft and get back to bed again undisturbed. On occasions, therefore, when he was inspired by a particular obstinacy, he pursued this ingenious plan. One night, however, Amanda came forth from her bedroom, holding a lighted candle above her head, and confronted him, to his discomfiture.

'What do you want, father? Is anything the matter?' she asked.

'I came down to get a drink,' retorted father, with great presence of mind and an excessive dignity. So these two midnight prowlers surveyed each other with mutual defiance and suspicion. Amanda complained to 'Lishe of his father's duplicity, but he chuckled at it with a certain admiration and remarked, in a not too soothing way, 'Well, I shouldn't get up nights to quarrel with him, if he is stubborn.'

'Lishe's remonstrances always followed the line of least resistance; therefore he addressed them to Amanda, because she would pay heed to them and his father would not.

On one subject Mr. Catlin and Amanda were in full accord—Amanda's house plants. She kept a good many in a large bay window, and the old man sometimes informed outsiders that he considered Amanda 'a master hand with plants.' They were no ordinary geraniums and fuchsias that Amanda tended, but lantanas, calceolarias, heliotropes, begonias and delicate ferns.

When visitors expressed an envious admiration for them, father sat by and listened with ill-concealed pride. When they asked for cuttings, he produced his sacred pocket knife and carefully sliced off the designated shoots himself.

'Shears bruises 'em,' he was wont to remark, oracularly.

If Amanda could have brought herself to appeal to him on the ground of danger to the plants, he would have yielded the pleasure of manipulating the check draft, but unhappily, Amanda had as much stubborn pride as her neighbors. It irked her to appeal where she felt she had a right to demand.

In the fifth winter she began to feel the strain of those hostilities. She said sharper things to father than she had ever said before, repenting them afterward in bitter self reproach. When she had fits of crying, and even scolded 'Lishe, on whom usually she lavished all the motherly tenderness of a childless woman, her husband began to look grave; and he finally consulted the family doctor.

'I think father kind of wears on Amamy said 'Lishe, in a tentative confidence.

The doctor pricked up his ears. He had served on the building committee with Jacob Catlin when the town hall was built, and Catlin had worn on him, too.

'I think it's very likely,' he assented. 'You'd better have her go away and make a visit. When she comes back, get the old man to go off somewhere.'

'I don't suppose,' added the doctor, tipping back his chair and looking at 'Lishe with a twinkle of fun in his gray eyes, 'I don't suppose Amanda has the least idea that your father is so fond of her. But he is. He was down here yesterday, inquiring of me what ailed Amanda, and if I didn't think boneset and smartweed steep-

ed together made as good a tonic as you could take. He said he always had his family take them in the spring.'

'Lishe threw back his head with a loud laugh.

'Yes,' he said, 'father fetched home a bundle of each of those herbs and put 'em on the pantry shelf; and Amamy, she's got so kind of used up, she stuck 'em in the stove.'

'You have her go right off,' said the doctor.

So dispirited was Amnda that when she received an urgent invitation from her sister—inspired by the crafty 'Lishe—to make her a long visit, she never even protested that she had nothing to wear. She let 'Lishe take her to the station, without reminding him of any one of the innumerable things that would need his attention during her absence.

True, as the train was about to start, she did open her lips to admonish him that he must see that father didn't let the plants freeze. But looking into his kind, anxious face, she realized the futility of asking 'Lishe to cope with his father. So she only put her head down on his shoulder and cried a little, at the same time pushing him from her and urging him not to let the cars run over him when he jumped off.

Father reveled in his brief authority. He poked down the ashes with a judicious hand and shut the check draft to the sole end that he might pull it out again all unassailed. He took such complete delight in keeping the sitting room at the lowest temperature compatible with having any fire at all that he never noticed that 'Lishe kept the kitchen stove almost red hot, night and day.

Then the weather turned fiercely cold of a sudden, without any regard to theories of an arch economist. 'Lishe had been up late one night doctoring a sick horse, and on the next night he slept more soundly than usual. When he awakened in the morning the fires had been out for hours, and all Amanda's precious plants were frozen stiff.

Even Mr. Catlin had felt the bitter chill of the night, and looked more subdued than usual when he entered the kitchen, where 'Lishe was trying buckwheat cakes.

'I guess we let the fires get a little too low last night,' said 'Lishe, when father had duly performed his absolutions at the kitchen sink.

'Why so?' asked father, truculently. 'Well they went out. Must have been early in the night, and Amamy's plants are all gone.'

'Can't be. I put papers behind 'em, same as usual,' said father, with dogged excitement. He stepped hastily across the kitchen and threw open the sitting room door.

'They're froze stiff every one of 'em,' said 'Lishe, ruefully. 'I guess Amamy'll take the roof off when she sees 'em. That Japan lily was just getting ready to blow. There has never been a Japan lily in this township till Amanda gave fifty cents for that bulb.' 'Lishe looked with commiseration at the drooping, blackened stem of that regal lily of Japan.

'Amamy thought about as much of those plants as if they'd been children,' 'Lishe continued, at breakfast. 'A lot more than she thinks of me—at times.'

But the old man sat stiffly silent. He was not going to let anybody know how little prepared he felt to meet the coming eclipse of his daughter in law's bright face. To expect Amanda to refrain from saying, 'Now see what you have done? I was to demand a superhuman magnanimity, and for once in his overbearing life old Mr. Catlin knew that he had no adequate reply ready.

'I guess you'll have to build the fire in the coal stove, pa,' said 'Lishe, noisily clattering the dishes. 'I must get that wood hauled now while it's froze. We'll have a thaw after this cold spell.'

'I'll tend to it,' said father, briefly. During the forenoon 'Lishe, unloading his wood, noticed his father hurrying in and out, emptying ashes and sitting coal. 'Pa ought to keep his hat on,' he said to himself, 'seeing how cold the wind is.' But Jacob Catlin did not look at all as if he would receive advice graciously, and 'Lishe refrained from giving any.

When the fire was successfully kindled, the pans of mica were thoroughly smoked, and the oilcloth and carpet, where father had spilt ashes and then tried to clean them up, looked as if they had been smeared with some gray wash.

This result of his labors galled the old man who had a just appreciation, kept as secret as the grave, of Amanda's comfortable cleanliness. His jaw stiffened ominously as he surveyed his handiwork.

He went to the barn and harnessed his horse to the light wagon. The cold was not so keen when he set forth, but there was a chill in the air which penetrated his tired old bones. Stopping at the next neighbor's, he held a parley with her. She agreed to go to the Catlin home and clean up and fix things as they ought to be. For this service father paid her in advance. He also offered to drive her over, but she replied that with the wind blowing the way it did she'd rather walk.

Father therefore went on toward town and stopped at a florist's. He pattered about in the suffocating, steamy atmosphere from one greenhouse to another, because, although he knew many of the plants he wanted by sight, he did not know their names. He would have only the best specimens, and he bought some new ones which took his fancy.

'You can't take these home any such day as this,' said the proprietor, who had followed him around in amazement and some irritation at his deliberation and his criticisms.

'Why not? why not?' asked Jacob Catlin, testily. He was finally convinced with difficulty that it was too cold.

'We can send them out in our covered rig tomorrow if it warms up some,' said the florist, and Mr. Catlin was obliged to content himself with going away empty-handed as he had come.

Before he had reached home he realized that he felt very ill; and as he was pain-

fully putting up the horse, he said to himself, much as he might have retorted upon Amanda, 'I reckon what coal I've saved will cost me muddling dear before I get through.' Then he added, with a return of his wonted spirit, 'But it's worth some thing to find out what a tomfool an old critter can be that's bound to have his own way!'

He was cowering over the kitchen hearth when his son came in to supper.

'Lishe, as he went back and forth, observed the old man silently for some time. Then he said, 'You ain't going to have a sick spell, are you, pa?'

'I don't know but I am,' said the old man, forlornly. There was a kind of unconscious appeal in his face, already flushed and swollen with fever.

'Lishe acted promptly. Within an hour he had put his father to bed, and he and the doctor were making poultices.

Some time the next day Jacob Catlin's dulled senses apprised him that Amanda's face was bending over him, and that there was nothing in its expression to be dreaded, only a great and comforting compassion.

Upon this he resigned himself to a stupor broken by intervals of delirium, when he had it in mind always to tell Amanda something if he could summon strength enough. At last, one day when her quick, kind hands were busy about him, he managed to clutch one of them and hold it feebly. Amanda bent down close. In a sudden flash of intelligence she understood, and could answer that tormenting thought of his.

'Those flowers you got me are splendid, father,' she said. 'I never had any so pretty before. They're growing to beat all!'

Father listened greedily; finally he mustered all his strength. 'I sha'n't meddle with that stove again,' he whispered, hoarsely.

She laughed a little, lest he should imagine he saw tears in her eyes. 'Oh pshaw! Yes, you will; you can see now just how it acts.'

But the old man shook his head firmly, and having thus expressly announced the dictatorship of the check draft and set all right between himself and Amanda, he fell asleep, holding her hand in his tremulous grasp.

### THE JAPANESE NAVY.

A Formidable Fleet Built Since the Battle of the Yalu, Seven Years Ago.

One of the most notable surprises of recent years has been the rise of Japan from a condition considered to be hardly civilized to the position of one of the great Powers of the world. In part this is due to the admirable organization of her army and the exploits of her navy in the war with China. The Japanese fleet was handled then with an audacity and skill that startled professional observers all over the world.

The want of a sufficiently numerous fleet prevented Japan from retaining the fruits of victory, but her government at once set to work to create a navy adequate for the purpose of Japanese policy. The result is seen in the splendid squadron which Japan will soon have assembled in the Far East.

At the battle of the Yalu, Sept. 17, 1894, which disposed of the Chinese squadron, the Japanese had eleven vessels aggregating 35,264 tons against twelve Chinese ships of 34,975 tons and four torpedo boats. The Chinese squadron comprised two armorclads, the Chen-Yuen and Ting-Yuen of 6,430 tons each, superior to any individual vessel of the Japanese squadron, the largest ships in which were three of 4,300 tons; the Matsushima, the flagship, the Itsuka shima and the Hashidate.

Their inferiority in armor protection was compensated for by their formidable armament, but they were not able to venture into close quarters with the two Chinese ironclads, and the Matsushima was badly damaged that the Japanese admiral had to transfer his flag during the action to the Hashidate. The net result of the fighting was that four of the Chinese ships were sunk and several captured, and three Japanese vessels were more or less seriously injured.

In the less than seven years that have elapsed since then the Japanese navy has made enormous strides. Its first line is now composed of six battleships, including four of the most powerful of their class afloat. They are the Shikishima, Hatsuse, Asahi and Misaka of 14,900 tons and 14,500 horse power, with speed of 18.5 knots. The only thing that they are furnished with the now condemned Belleville boilers.

The other two battleships are the Yashima and Fuji Yama of 12,400 tons, 14,100 horse power and 19 knots speed. The six belong to the English Majestic class, but are more modern and have many improvements. They form a compact squadron in themselves superior to that of any other Power in the Far Eastern seas.

The armored cruisers number six and belong to one class in size, being of 9,850 tons, 19,000 horse power and 22.07 knots speed. Four of them, like the four great battleships, were built in England, and the other two coming from Germany and France. The two latter have Belleville boilers. They all manoeuvre with great facility, and are little inferior in fighting value to battleships.

The protected cruisers number thirteen, ranging from 2,700 to 4,800 tons, with horse power of from 6,100 to 15,000, and from 16.5 to 23 knots speed. Four are of the newest designs, and with their speed and armament form a valuable complement to the preceding armored cruiser squadron. Two, the Takasago and Yashima, are of English build and the latter by the rapidity of her fire did great execution among the Chinese ships at the Yalu. The other two the Knagsi and Chitose, are of American construction.

Of the other protected cruisers the only ones of European build are the Idzumi, formerly the Chilian Esmeralda, constructed in England, and the Sai-yen, built in Germany and captured from the Chinese at the same time as the Chen Yuen, coast defence ship, renamed the Chin yen.

The Japanese have also a numerous destroyer and torpedo flotilla of the most modern build, the destroyers being twelve in number. Their gunboats and unprotected cruisers are now, of course, behind the age and fit only for coast guard and customs service among the islands.

The great feature of the Japanese fighting fleet is the equipment of the heavier rapid fire guns in each ship. This is the result of the lesson of the Yalu, where the victory was largely due to the shower of projectiles thrown into the Chinese ships. In the event of Japan's finding herself at war with one of the European powers it is questionable whether any of the squadrons now in the Far East could make head against the fleet the Japanese have created since 1894.

### Reguish Ravens.

The raven of southern Europe is a bold fellow, not unlike his cousin, the crow. Some notices of the bird, given by an English traveller in Corsica, offer amusing proof of this.

A youth whom I employed to carry my camera could never look on ravens with any equanimity, for he had suffered much from their thievish impudence when sent to the bush to gather firewood.

On one occasion he lost his dinner, a loaf of bread wrapped in a napkin, although he was working close to the spot where he had laid it, and had turned his back for only a minute.

But the most unpardonable insult he had ever received happened on a day when he was out gathering wood. As he was stooping down to bind a bundle of fagots, a raven suddenly swooped from behind, lifted the cap from his head, and flew away with it to a lofty crag, from which she uttered croaks of triumph.

The cap was subsequently seen lined with straw and serving for a nest.

### BORN.

Truro, Mar. 23, to the wife of O. Wallace, a son.  
Digby, Mar. 21, to the wife of Mr. Webber, a son.  
Amherst, Mar. 25, to the wife of B. L. McKay, a son.  
Truro, Mar. 28, to the wife of Charles Phillips, a son.  
Hastings, Mar. 21, to the wife of Mr. Oulton, a son.  
Alton, Mar. 26, to the wife of A. J. Dennison, a son.  
Truro, April 5, to the wife of A. F. McCulloch, a son.  
Amherst, Mar. 20, to the wife of Albert Dwyer, a son.  
Colchester, to the wife of Samuel Taylor, a daughter.  
Colchester, Mar. 15, to the wife of Walter Grant, a son.  
Folly River, Mar. 27, to the wife of Harvey Grey, a son.  
Gaspereaux, Mar. 21, to the wife of Colin Hatt, a son.  
Folly River, Mar. 27, to the wife of Annie Stevens, a son.  
Port Dufferin, Mar. 9, to the wife of John Whitman, a son.  
Restigouche Co., Mar. 24, to the wife of H. C. Gillis, a son.  
Hantsport, April 1, to the wife of Harry Smith, a daughter.  
Moncton, April 7, to the wife of J. H. Matthews, a daughter.  
Truro, April 2, to the wife of Thomas Tibbitts, a daughter.  
Hantsport, April 1, to the wife of Fred Pentz, a daughter.  
Scotch Village, to the wife of J. C. Northup, a daughter.  
Amherst, April 1, to the wife of Ora P. Lamy, a daughter.  
Tide Head, Mar. 31, to the wife Wm. Duncan, a daughter.  
Milton, Mar. 26, to the wife of Joseph Freeman, a daughter.  
Sydney, Mar. 22, to the wife of J. A. Young, a daughter.  
Moncton, Mar. 31, to the wife of J. B. Gross, a daughter.  
Cumberland, Mar. 14, to the wife of Thomas Bowden, a son.  
Woodstock, Mar. 23, to the wife of Rev. H. D. Marr, a daughter.  
Campbellton, Mar. 30, to the wife of Frank LeBlanc, a daughter.  
Cumberland, Mar. 25, to the wife of Henry Smith, a daughter.  
Ken.ville, Mar. 26, to the wife of Ralph McDonald, a daughter.  
Rockville, Mar. 28, to the wife of John E. Vickery, a daughter.  
Roxbury, Mass., Mar. 28, to the wife of Dr. C. B. Darling, a son.  
Great Village, Mar. 11, to the wife of Donald McLaughlin, a son.  
Summersville, Mar. 21, to the wife of Alfred Wilkins, a daughter.  
Summersville, Mar. 16, to the wife of Elmore McLellan, a daughter.  
Summersville, Mar. 29, to the wife of Arthur McDonald, a daughter.  
Campbellton, Mar. 29, to the wife of A. McG. McDonald, a daughter.  
Mount Denison, March 29, to the wife of Norman McDonald, a daughter.

### MARRIED.

Truro, April 1, John Gero, to Anna Cook.  
Berwick, Mar. 26, L. S. Gove, to Kate Munro.

Caledonia, Mar. 19, Wm Tait to Berse Cashma.  
Campbellton, Finlay McBae to Catherine Mann.  
Telord, Mar. 27, James Park to Jennie Chisholm.  
Berwick, Mar. 26, Mr. L. S. Gove to Kate Munro.  
Colchester, Mar. 15, Ench Marsh to Eliza McKin.  
Halifax, Mar. 20, Ernest Black to Blanche Horne.  
Cupaud, April 8, Harry Howatt to Winnie Sturdy.  
Boston, Mar. 19, Wm Johnson to Mary E. Macgregor.  
Attleboro, Mar. 27, Ezekiah Grant to Terence Sibley.  
Malden, Mass., Mar. 27, Havelock Rix to Addie Rix.  
Gloucester, Mass., Mar. 30, Charles Malone to Edith Prior.  
Kentville, Mar. 27, James Dennison to Maggie Wood.  
Yarmouth, Mar. 20, Watson Rogers to Florence Smith.  
Ottawa, Mar. 28, Dr. Alfred Wiley to Miss Ethel Angus.  
Yarmouth, Mar. 20, Elbridge Nickerson to Bertina Soles.  
Charlottetown, John A. Macdonald to Mary Macdonald.  
Carleton, N. C., April 1st, James R. Earl to Jennie Ruggles.  
Park Corner, Mar. 27, Everett Macleod, to Johana Stewart.  
Carleton, N. S., April 1, James Earl to Jennie Ruggles.  
Lower Island Cove Mar. 27, Abel Garland to Sarah Johnson.  
Summerside, April 3, Samuel Symons to Abbie Constable.  
Newcastle, Mar. 26, Jerry White to Josephine Johnstone.  
Long River, Mar. 27, Robert E. Johnstone to Janetta Bernard.

### DIED.

Pictou, Mar. 23, Lottie S. Irving, 21.  
Michigan, U. S. Daniel MuQuarrie.  
Salisbury, Mar. 29, Peter Smith, 47.  
Truro, Mar. 28, Firman Macleure, 40.  
Waterville, Mar. 27, Mrs. E. C. Banks.  
Moncton, April 5, Mrs. J. C. Bent, 82.  
Hillsboro, Mar. 11, John J. O'Neill, 79.  
Somerset, April 1, George Magee, 58.  
Truro, April 3, Joseph D. Murphy, 36.  
Chatham, Mar. 29, James Lambert, 79.  
Tusket, Mar. 27, Eleanor J. Hatfield, 87.  
Westport, Mar. 24, Charles J. Collins, 47.  
Buffalo, N. Y. Mar. 31, Mrs. W. B. Dawson.  
Moncton, April 7, Mrs. Annie Gibson, 67.  
Boston, Mass., Mar. 21, Walter Martin, 44.  
Milton, Mar. 25, Miss Maud Fletcher, 19.  
West Annan, Mar. 25, D. A. McLellan, 27.  
Moncton, April 7, William A. Steever, 49.  
Worcester, Mass., Mar. 17, Fred P. Handy.  
Boston, Mar. 31, Miss Maggie Graham, 37.  
Bridgewater, Mar. 28, A. J. MacDonnald, 49.  
Chatham, Mar. 28, Mrs. Frederick Joudry, 80.  
Lower Stewiacke, April 2, Jessie S. Grant, 24.  
West New Annan, Mar. 25, D. A. McLellan, 27.  
Tatamagouche, Mar. 31, Capt. William Buckler, 87.  
Windsor, April 1, Hannah, wife of W. H. Blanchard.  
Upper LaHave, Mar. 24, Mrs. Edward Mallock, 97.  
Bridgewater, Mar. 28, Archibald J. McDougald, 49.  
Charlottetown, Mar. 29, Miss J. Louise Wetherbie, 25.  
Dartmouth, April 3, Bessie, wife of Thomas Stockall, 21.  
Truro, April 3, Jane, widow of the late Samuel Craig 81.  
East Chezzetcook, Mar. 28, Eliza, wife of Dennis Smith, 76.  
Margate, Mar. 23, Ellen, widow of the late David Sheehan, 73.  
Somerville, Mass., Mar. 20, Clara, wife of Freeland Goodwin, 35.  
Charlottetown, Mar. 29, Sarah, wife of Thomas Strickland, 62.  
High Bank, Mar. 11, Marion, widow of the late Hector Gillis, 76.  
Two Mile River, Mar. 20, Charles, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ray, 5.  
Clementon, Mar. 30, Mary J. widow of the late Alonzo Merritt, 58.  
Three Mile Plains, Mar. 28, Mary J. widow of the late William Nix, 73.

### RAILROADS.

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**Pan-American**  
**EXPOSITION**  
BUFFALO, N. Y.

May 1st to November 1st.  
One Fare for the Round Trip.

Going May 1st to June 30th, Return 15 days from date of sale.  
All Ticket Agents in the Maritime Provinces can sell via Canadian Pacific Short Line.  
For rates from any Station, Time Tables, Sleeping Car rates, etc., write to  
A. J. BEATH,  
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Or apply to W. H. C. MACKAY,  
City Passenger Agent, C. P. R.

**Intercolonial Railway**

On and after MONDAY Mar. 11th, 1901, trains will run daily (Sundays excepted) as follows:—

**TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN**

Express for Point du Chene, Campbellton and Halifax.....11.00  
Express for Halifax and Pictou.....12.15  
Express for Sussex.....12.40  
Express for Quebec and Montreal.....16.00  
Accommodation for Halifax and Sydney.....22.15

A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 17.05 o'clock for Quebec and Montreal. Passengers transfer at Moncton.  
A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 22.10 o'clock for Halifax. Vestibule, Dining and Sleeping cars on the Quebec and Montreal express.

**TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN**

Express from Sussex.....8.30  
Express from Quebec and Montreal.....12.40  
Express from Halifax, Pictou and Point du Chene.....16.00  
Express from Halifax and Campbellton.....18.15  
Accommodation from Pt. du Chene and Moncton.....24.45  
Daily, except Monday.

All trains are run by Eastern Standard time Twenty-four hours notation.

D. J. POTTINGER,  
Gen. Manager  
St. John, N. B., March 5, 1901.  
7 King Street St. John, N. B.