

West-Side Review.

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Funny Uncle Phil.

I heard the grown folks talking last night when I lay abed,
So I shut my eyes and listened to everything they said;
And first they said that Polly and Phil were coming here,
And a good old soul was Polly, but Phil was always queer.
And they never, never, never, in all their lives could see
How Polly came to marry him, nor how they could agree;
For she was just as bright and sweet as any flower in May,
But he was tight as a drum-head, and as black as a stormy day.
And his nose was always poking into other folk's affairs,
And he had altogether too fond of splitting hairs;
And he had so many corners you never could come near
Without your hitting some of them, or being in constant fear.
Well, I listened very hard, and I remembered every word,
And I thought it was the queerest thing a body ever heard;
And in the evening, when I heard the chaise come down the hill,
I almost couldn't wait to see my funny Uncle Phil.

But, oh! what stories grown folks tell! He wasn't black at all!

And he hadn't any corners, but was plump and fair and small;
His nose turned up a little, but then it was so wee,
How it could poke so very much I really couldn't see.

And when he saw me staring, he nodded hard, and smiled;
And then he asked them softly if I was Elsie's child;

And when grandma said she'd look me gently on his knee,
And wound my longest curl about his finger carefully.

And he told me 'bout my mamma when she was a little girl,
And all the time he talked he kept his finger on that curl;

Till at last I couldn't stand it, and I slipped down by his chair,
And asked him how he came to be so fond of splitting hair.

My! how he stared! and Jimmy laughed, and grandma shook her head,
And grandma had his awful look, and Uncle Sam turned red;

And then the clock ticked very loud, the kitchen was so still,
And I knew 'twas something dreadful I had said to Uncle Phil.

But I couldn't help it then, so I told him every word,
And he listened very quietly; he never spoke nor stirred,
Till I told him 'bout the corners, and said I didn't know
How he could have so many when there didn't any show.

And then he laughed and laughed, till the kitchen fairly shook;
And he gave the frightened grown folks such a bright and funny look,
And said, "Tis true, my little girl, when Polly married me
I was full of ugly corners, but she smoothed them down, you see."

And then they all shook hands again, and Jimmy gave three cheers,
And Uncle Sam said little pitchers had most monstrous ears;

And grandma kissed Aunt Polly; but then she looked at me,
And said I'd better "meditate" while she was getting tea.

That means that I must sit and think what naughty things I've done;
It must be 'cause I'm little yet—they seemed to think 'twas fun.

I don't quite understand it all; well, by and by I will
Creep softly up to him, and ask my funny Uncle Phil.

—Amelia Dailey-Alden in *Wide Awake*.

Ericsson's Substitute for Steam.

Scribner has a paper on John Ericsson, by Colonel W. C. Church, which it is claimed is the only full and wholly trustworthy popular account of this remarkable man and engineer. The following comment on Ericsson's latest invention, the solar engine, is the first authentic announcement of the machine, of which a large cut is also given:
No man has accomplished more with steam than Ericsson; yet he has never altogether abandoned his early idea of employing heat directly as a means of generating mechanical power. The flame engine is among the curiosities of the past; the calorific engine, though a mechanical success—over 3,000 of them having been built—has not accomplished

all that was intended. From the attempts to find a substitute for, or an auxiliary of, steam, in heat artificially produced, Ericsson has turned his attention to the problem of making direct use of the enormous dynamic force stored up in the sun's rays. Not that he expects or intends to supplant steam within its natural domain where the solar energy gathered during the carboniferous period is available for use; but over a large portion of the earth's surface the use of steam is impossible, neither fuel nor water being obtainable. It is in precisely this region that the radiant heat of the sun is the most intense and constant. Now this heat is wasted, neither producing nor sustaining life, converting what might be some of the fairest portions of the earth's surface into desolate wastes.

"There is a rainless region," says Ericsson, "extending from the north-western coast of Africa to Mongolia, 9,000 miles in length, and nearly 1,000 miles wide. Besides the North African deserts, this region includes the southern coast of the Mediterranean, east of the gulf of Gabes, Upper Egypt, the eastern and part of the western coast of the Red Sea, part of Syria, the eastern part of the countries watered by the Euphrates and Tigris, Eastern Arabia, the greater part of Persia, the extreme western part of China, Thibet, and lastly, Mongolia. In the western hemisphere, Lower California, the table land of Mexico and Guatemala, and the west coast of South America, for a distance of more than 2,000 miles, suffer from continuous radiant heat."

To make the enormous, and as yet unused, dynamic force of this radiant heat available for man's use is the problem to which Ericsson is principally devoting the remaining years of his long and useful life. It is in a lofty spirit that he has approached the solution of this great problem. An inventor of less noble instincts might well have his imagination fired by the prospect of adding so enormously to the sum of human capacity, until the idea of mere personal advantage should lose itself in the grander one of public beneficence. Ericsson has resolved in advance that he will not use the laws for the protection of inventors only to secure to the public what he intends to offer as his free gift to the race. It is a gift for the future, for, as we have said, he does not imagine that his invention can be made available in competition with machinery using wood and coal. But where or when artificial fuel is not to be obtained his solar engine will, he believes, open new possibilities to human achievement. To any one who will pay the price, he is prepared even now to furnish a solar engine of one hundred horse power. But the apparatus required to gather and concentrate the sun's radiant heat is too expensive to make the engine an economical one, and new conditions must arise before it will be required. Yet the solar engine is, its designer declares, a mechanical success and it needs only such a combination of wood and metal as he shall suggest to make at least possible such a transformation of the now-waste portions of the earth's surface that the prophecy shall be fulfilled, and "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." The work of training the forces of nature to man's service is to continue until the sun, from whose dread presence he now hides himself away, shall become the slave to till his fields and transform into a fruitful garden "the plain which from its bed rejecteth every plant;" propelling for him the machinery which is to introduce a new, and it may be an even more varied and complex civilization than we have yet seen, combining the warm fancy of the east with the practical accomplishment of the west. We are merely to follow Emerson's advice to "hitch our wagons to the stars," and Ericsson is to be the Vulcan who is to forge the coupling.

Moving Day.

"Moving day, with all its attendant horrors, is at hand," said James, yesterday evening, "and I don't see how I am ever to get through with it. It brings nothing but work, work, work."

"Why, yes," replied Grandfather Lickshingle, "it is a terrible day for us poor men folks, and no mistake. Seein' as how this dre'ful day has rolled around an' battered me over the bald an' beetling pate upward of a hundred times, I ought to know a little somethin' about it. Work! Well, I should say so. Git up in the mornin' before breakfast, sit around till it's ready, then eat an' off down town after a wagon. And right here I want to say that the standin' premium of a million dollars in gold offered by the United States government to the man that finds a wagon when he wants it has never been claimed. No mortal man ever finds a wagon without hoofin' 'round a whole square, an' jest this kind of work is knocking years and years of usefulness out of some of our best young men. Well, after the doggoned wagon is found, you must give the driver your old as well as your new address, as the papers say, and that's enough to break any ordinary man's back. By this time you're pretty well fagged out, an' you send the wagon to the house, while you go off down town about your business, an' your wife finishes up whatever little odds an' ends there may be to do about the movin'. Oh, its dre'ful, dre'ful! an' it raises the blisters on my hands to think of it." And grandfather bowed his aged head on his cane and groaned.—*Cincinnati Enquirer*.

There are no stamps in last year's vests.

TIMELY TOPICS.

The *Clinton (Iowa) Herald* says the following is the way they hurt the feelings of the street loafers in that city: Copies of the city ordinance forbidding loafing or congregating on the streets, printed in large type on cards, have been hung in some of the corner windows with salutary effect. Once in a while a fellow braces himself for a square "loaf" before the window, and as his eye mechanically wanders over the conspicuous warning card he suddenly grows uneasy and soon has business down the street.

The bravery of a Roman stoic was displayed by Police Judge Tilden, of Cleveland, Ohio, when he tried his son for stealing a coat from a juryman and found him guilty. It was a trying ordeal for the judge, and when he referred to the sad spectacle of a father prosecuting his own son he burst into tears, while his powerful frame shook with the violence of his grief. It was a mournful scene, and called for sympathy for the judge in his affliction, not less than admiration of his courage in thus showing that love for his offspring could not stand in the way of his duty to the State.

Mr. Horace White, English consul at Tangiers, says: "In the contemporaneous account given by Jackson of the plague which depopulated Western Barbary in 1799 and 1800, he states that a Mogador, at his recommendation, many persons had recourse to a remedy which had proved most efficacious in Egypt—namely, anointing the body with olive oil, and he knew of no instance of its failing when properly applied and sufficiently persevered in." During the outbreak of the plague among the Egyptian troops at Beyrout in 1836, the inhabitants of a certain village attributed their escape from disease to the fact that their clothes and persons were generally well saturated with oil.

There has been an extraordinary natural phenomenon at Rappelsdorf, a village near Erfurt, a fortress in Prussian Saxony. A lake near the hamlet suddenly rose with a violent boiling movement and overflowed its banks. A villager saw a column of boiling water rise to a considerable height from the middle of the lake, when it broke and was scattered in every direction. One unquestionable fact is that during the sudden and unexplained rise of the water many persons heard subterraneous noises. Deep fissures opened all round the lake, from which a sort of steam ascended. The ground over which the water spread was covered with small shells and dead fish.

Who wouldn't take oysters on the half-shell from the Broad river, S. C.? A man in Beaufort was regaling himself in this way in front of a counter in an oyster saloon, when the luscious bivalve girtled so harshly under his teeth that he was induced to find out the cause. He ascertained that the mollusk contained a mass of pearls, which upon being counted turned out to be thirty-four in number, and of the size of a grape seed, besides the one he unwittingly swallowed. Thirty-four genuine pearls the "size of a grape seed," are a prize not to be despised. But this is a world of deceit, and there are as many supposititious pearls in it as genuine ones.

A singular instance of human credulity is reported from Munich. The actress, Adele Spitzner, who was sentenced there about six months ago to a term of imprisonment for having swindled the public out of many millions by her banking institutions (the Dachauer Banken), conducted, as she asserted, for the furtherance of the interests of the Roman Catholic religion, tried again, after her liberation from prison, to earn a living on the stage. Finding that this could not be done, she has returned to Munich and again opened a bank. Deposits, on which she pays eight per cent. monthly interest, are brought to her in abundance, and, of course, another catastrophe will occur.

The editor of *London Truth* believes that land in England is diminishing in value for agricultural purposes, and gives his reason thus: The reason why land in England must become less and less valuable for agricultural purposes is that rapid communication is destroying distances, and the cost of the transit of corn from California and other places where it can be produced on plains that pay no rent and that require no "high farming," is every year diminishing, and every year will still further diminish. The reply for long was, "Yes, but land will always be valuable for grazing purposes." I doubt this. The importations both of live stock and of dead meat are assuming enormous proportions.

A correspondent of the *Burlington Hawkeye* tells a rather sensational story of an alleged discovery of the artificial manufacture of silver by Dr. T. Farriss, Jr., of the Iowa Wesleyan university, which carries one back to the days of the old alchemists. Dr. Farriss, it seems, when taking his class through a course of instruction in the primary chemical compounds was in the habit of setting aside the refuse waters, and one day was startled by the unusual silvery reaction which had taken place

in these solutions. This led him to investigate. Result—the artificial manufacture of silver, a business on which the doctor is said to have entered now on a large scale. Of course, details of the new process are kept rigidly secret from the scientific world, though credulous capitalists may be attracted by the glittering prospects, just as they have been in the past by other impossibilities.

The late ameer of Afghanistan was universally called the "madman" throughout his dominions, and so great was the awe in which he was held by his subjects, the *Times of India* says, that no one dared tell him of the defeat of his troops on the Peiwar Khotal by the English invaders. Shere Ali sat in his council-room waiting for news, but no one ventured to tell him the result. At last, the mother, of Abdulla Jan sent her little girl to tell her father. He was talking eagerly as the child entered, and she tried hard to blurt out her message, "My mother says I am to tell your highness—" but the ameer kept putting his hand on her mouth, as the discussion was important. At last he turned to her, "Well, what is it, little one?" The child came sidling up, all eyes upon her, "My mother says I am to tell your highness the Sahibs have crossed the Khotal." An instant stampede from the neighborhood of the ameer closed the council.

Yuma, Cal., has a famous rooster, and this is the way it came about: It is emphatically a self-made bird. The firm of Sisson & Wallace, amongst other things, sell eggs. It so happened that all the eggs were sold out of a particular can save one. Meantime the sun went on getting hotter and hotter, and presently the egg began to warm up to the situation. The progress of the novel solar gestation was watched with an absorbing curiosity by the store people. About the time the mercury reached 124 degrees in the shade the chicken began to peck its way out of the shell, and it emerged as defiant an infant rooster as ever wore spurs. At first it was a very shy bird, but as eccentric as its manner of birth, it is exceedingly bossy, and will attack a man, a dog, or anything that comes in its way. A visitor has to do to insure a delivery of battle by this pugnacious rooster is to hold up his foot, and straightway the bird will fly at him viciously. We have heard of many ways of hatching chickens, but a rooster hatched by natural heat in a tin can is a little ahead of our previous experiences.

A Lucky Holder.

A San Francisco correspondent writes: There are so many curious turns of fortune's wheel on the Comstock. I heard only yesterday of a case where cold-blooded persistency of purpose and tenacity of grit in face of most discouraging circumstances won a big fortune; and the case is the more remarkable because, knowing the parties, meeting them almost every day, being familiar with their surroundings, etc., I never before heard of it. It leaked out only by accident. Mr. Root is the man who designed all the machinery, laid all the plans, made all the contracts, and superintended the work of building Gov. Stanford's famous wire-cable street-railroad in this city, which runs a distance of two miles through the richest and best part of the city, and is to-day the model street-railway of the continent. Root is a young man, not over thirty-six, thin, wiry, homely, and—well, shabby. He is a splendid mechanic, and though for a long time in Central Pacific employ, nobody knew him until he built the Stanford street-railway, entirely on his own plans, that there was so much in him. To look at him you wouldn't think Root ever saw a mining-stock certificate.

Yet one day when Sierra Nevada was booming along at 200, Root walked into the office of a leading broker, an old friend, and said:

"Dan, guess we'd better get rid of some of this now," and he handed over two certificates, one of 500 shares and the other of 100. "Dan" took them, looked them over, and noticed that the backs of both were perfectly covered with receipts for assessments.

"Where in the world did you get these?" asked Dan.

"Bought 'em four years ago," said Root. "Had 'em lying in my trunk ever since. Paid, I think, fifty cents a share for some, six bits for some more, and got some for two bits. Been paying assessments ever since religiously, and the whole lot stands me in about \$5 a share. I want you to sell half of it now, for I guess it's time to 'call the turn.'" and within three days 300 shares of Root's stock found a market at from \$200 to \$220, and his broker passed to his credit over \$60,000.

The other 300 shares he got rid of at \$225 and \$240, and about \$70,000 more went to his credit. He hauled down \$50,000, and then, as to the rest, said to his broker (and here is the point I want to make), "I want you to put so many thousand into Norcross, so many into California, so many into Curry, and so many into Belcher. Pay for them, let them lie; and when assessments come pay on them."

"But," said the broker, "you may have to wait, and"

"That's just what I expect to do—wait. But sooner or later some one or the other of those stocks will make me a fortune."

And this is the spirit that our average working Californian goes into speculation on the Comstock with. Few here buy Comstock stocks for dividends. Let a mine there begin to pay dividends, and unless they are very big, or the mine has a prospect of keeping them up, not a dollar is added to the value of the stock. Our quiet buyer, our business man, our shrewd capitalist, are all actuated by the same idea. "Buy them when they are cheap, lay them away, and sooner or later if any mine within a mile makes a strike we may make 500 per cent. If the strike should come in our own mine we may make from 5,000 to 10,000 per cent., and, perhaps, if we have stock enough, walk off with the fortune we expected to have to work all our lives for."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Weather report—Thunder.

A novel thing—a readable romance. The chiropodist sways the whole foot's tool.

It is finally decided that W—ster's dictionary is the best.

Approaching a crisis—Walking toward a restless girl baby.

Drawing from nature is contagious, that is to say it's sketching.

A prescription warranted to make any sick woman re—"cover"—A new dress.

What sort of hard things can you throw at a dog without hurting him? Words—hard words.

"Of two evils always chose the least," said the girl, who jilted the grenadier and married a dwarf.

For a method of converting honey into a form of crystalline sugar, the Beekeepers' association offers a prize.

English physicians say that melancholia is always active in the morning and wears away towards night.

It is better not to expect or calculate consequences. Let us try to do right actions without thinking of the feelings they are to call out in others.

A Western paper, in its report of a recent railroad mishap, says "the guilty train went staggering from the track. Evidently a case of very elevated railroad."

Man can do many things, but there is one thing he can't do; he can't button on a new collar, just after cutting his thumb-nails, without looking up in the air.

A warbler's thrill
Awakes the hill,
For spring, a rosy lass,
Hath come, and brings
On vernal wings
Rare blooms and garden sass.

A chat with some people makes you feel as if you'd just had a cold shower bath and couldn't find a towel, while a chat with others makes you feel as if you'd had a pleasant walk in the sunshine.—*Aunt Prudence*.

After a man, upon some raw and gusty night, when everything is as dark as the shadow of fate, has run across a swaying clothes-line with his chin and neck, you never can convince him that there is any truth in all this nonsense about death by hanging being so pleasant.—*Hawkeye*.

There was an instance of the disagreement of doctors in France recently which led to a duel in the Bois de Vincennes. The participants were army surgeons, who had had a dispute. One of them was wounded, and his antagonist dressed the wound and helped him to the carriage, and subsequently committed suicide.

During 1878 the American and English societies distributed 3,850,376 Bibles, viz.: in Russia, 740,823 in 69 languages; in Turkey, 64,508 in 9 languages; India, 343,616; China, 159,103; Japan, 61,398; Italy, 52,828; France, 133,160; Servia and Roumania, 128,170; Spain, 68,393; Austria, 274,362; Germany, 468,108; South America, 35,348; Mexico, 30,000.

Arthur Gilman tells the following of an old lady at Concord: "Have you given electricity a trial for your complaint, madame?" asked the minister, as he took tea with the old lady. "Electricity!" said she. "Well, yes, I reckon it has. I was struck by lightning last summer and have out the window, but it didn't seem to do me no sort of good.—*Boston Traveler*.

A PURELY VEGETABLE PRODUCTION.

Oh, market maid, sweet harbinger
Of spring's returning pleasure,
I sigh to woo thee in a song
Of eight beets to the measure.

The time's been long since last we met,
I yam not loth to own it;
I long tomato maid with thee,
So lettuce not postpone it.

Nay, turnip not thy pretty nose,
I see thy radish outshies,
And if you carrot all for me
Off to the priest I rushies.

In the Russian Empire there are altogether only about fifteen hundred regularly licensed physicians, or one physician to each fifty thousand people, while in the United States there is one physician to each five hundred inhabitants. The Russian Government is not doing anything to advance medical education. There are but eight Russian medical colleges, and the students are required to prosecute their professional studies for five years; and such persons only are admitted to these colleges as have successfully undergone an examination in some one of the literary colleges, which have a seven years' course.