

OBSERVATIONS.

BY MAX ADLER.

We are not surprised when Mrs. Hotchkiss demanded a divorce. Mrs. Hotchkiss was a somnambulist, and after getting to sleep at night she would rise and grope her way down stairs to the kitchen. Then she would do the whole of the week's washing, and after hanging the clothes upon the line come back to bed. The next night she would do the ironing, and the next the sweeping and so forth. And always when she came down in the morning she would be astonished to find the work all finished, and she always insisted that Hotchkiss had done it for her while she was asleep. And Hotchkiss, the unprincipled scoundrel that he was, would smile and take the credit for it, just as much as she chose to give him, although he used to watch her get up in her sleep, and he knew well enough how it was. And when she would throw her arms around her neck and kiss him and tell him how very kind it was in him, that conscienceless rascal would say, "Oh, it's nothing, Harriet, nothing, my dear. I do it because I love my darling Harriet." Then Mrs. Hotchkiss would nestle her head on his waistcoat and cry over his shirt front, and he would stand there with the air of a man who was conscious of having done a great and noble action at the cost of fearful self-sacrifice. This kind of thing continued for several weeks, until one night, while Mrs. Hotchkiss was washing shirts in her sleep, a needle concealed in one of the garments ran into her finger and awoke her. For a moment she was bewildered. Then the truth flashed upon her. She went up-stairs. Hotchkiss was fast asleep and snoring like a fog-whistle. She shook him and waked him. He thought she was still in a somnambulist condition, so he exclaimed, "See here, old woman, lemme alone and go down and finish up that washing." Mrs. Hotchkiss did not nestle her head upon his bosom then. She nestled her hands among his hair and yelled at him, and pulled him out on the floor and hammered him with a chair. And the next day she went for a divorce. They made it up afterward, but she stopped washing in her sleep, and has taken to blackmailing Hotchkiss for bouquets. If he seems indisposed to disburse handsomely she always starts for a divorce, and he succumbs.

We never fought more than one duel. It was with a man named Blood, who was determined to make us fight whether we wanted to or not. When we got on the ground, our second said to us: "Do you want to kill your man?" "Of course not," we replied. "Because if you do," urged our second, "aim at that tree, three hundred yards to the right of Blood. I have seen you shoot. I know your style." "But we don't want to kill him." "Oh, all right; then aim directly at his heart. You are deadly with a pistol only when you don't want to be. I and Blood's second are going down to the bottom of the hill to be out of the way. Both of you fellows scatter too much for us. Call us when you are through." Then Blood and his enemy began. It was seven in the morning, and the battle began raged until noon. Seven hundred and thirty-four shots were fired, and the bullets hit all the barns in the neighborhood, killed stray pigs, perforated several ows in the surrounding fields, lamed a ploughman in the left leg, barked the trees in the woods to the right of us, brought down a musc on the towpath close by, riddled the fences until there was hardly a whole board left in them, and flattened themselves against the rocks, but neither Blood nor we had a scratch, excepting a slight wound which Blood got by shooting himself in the calf with his two hundred and forty-fourth bullet. Then we began to get hungry, and we asked Blood if he didn't consider this duel almost too monotonous. He said he did, and proposed that we should stop shooting and both go and jump off a precipice together. We urged that precipices always made us dizzy, but promised to see him buried comfortably if he wanted to take the exercise alone. Then the seconds came up, and didn't seem a bit surprised to see us unhurt. Then they proposed that we should settle the matter with a game of poker, to ascertain whether we were wrong or Blood. Blood held both Jacks and won. So we apologized and went home. The next day Blood called to say he was sorry about the affair, and to ask us to lend him seventy-five dollars, which we did, and we have never seen him since. And now we regret that we didn't aim at that tree three hundred yards to the right of Blood and kill him.

We have been both interested and puzzled by an advertisement offered by "Mrs. H. A. Robinson, a Psychometric Medium," in Chicago. Mrs. Robinson says that "upon receiving a lock of hair from a sick person she will diagnose the disease most perfectly, and send a remedy which will permanently cure it." Certainly this is very wonderful. We cannot understand how Mrs. Robinson can tell from a bunch of hair whether a man is suffering from biliousness, stomach-ache, or corns. If hair has one appearance when there is rheumatism and another when there are bunions, what is Mrs. Robinson going to do when a man has bunions and rheumatism both at once? And suppose a man has torpidity of the liver when he sends his hair, but he gets well of that before the hair reaches Chicago, and is taken with fatty degeneration of the heart, will Mrs. Robinson treat him for his liver, and will he have to take the medicine? And if a man with measles sends

hair in the same mail with that of a man who has mumps, and Robinson gets them mixed, what guarantee have we that the mump-man will not be deluded into the measles-man's medicine, and so die? And what is a bald-headed man going to do? Must he perish from disease, or can Robinson fix him by getting him to send a square-inch of his scalp, to be examined under a microscope? Can she discover lumbago by investigating a tuft from a wig, or can she perceive *deltirium tremens* in a few hairs from a mutton-chop whisker? Can she detect cholera infantum in a chignon, or can she ascertain a case of lame leg in a forty-cent curl? These things are important. We shall not treat with Robinson until she gives satisfactory answers to them, and tells us how she does it.

Some of the friends of a reporter on a Trenton paper called on him the other day, and with a neat speech, presented him with a pair of gold sleeve-buttons. The reporter said, in reply: "Gentlemen, I need not tell you that this is the happiest moment of my life. I have the most thorough appreciation of the kindness which moved you to this act of generosity; and if I could summon up words with which to express my feelings, I would endeavor to secure from

he settled up. They said "now we'll let Hillegas die. We have fooled with him long enough. He has either got to pay up or go down to the grave quick. No more Hillegas for us unless we can see some cash." So for six months they let him alone, and whenever one of them would drive past the house, he would pull up for a minute, look to see if there was any crapo on the door, shake his head solemnly and say "Poor Hillegas; the obstinate old fool is not long for this world." But one day Dr. Jones felt moved by humanity to break through the resolutions, so he called at Hillegas's house to see how he was—perhaps to see him die. As he entered the yard he perceived a stout man lifting a barrel of flour into a wagon. Then the man went and picked up a four-hundred pound cooking-stove in the shed with one hand, and seizing a keg of nails with the other, he began to walk off to the barn, but seeing a stranger he put the things down and came back. The doctor thought he recognized that scar on the man's nose; but he couldn't believe it. Nevertheless it was Hillegas, perfectly well, weighing two hundred pounds, and able to lift the roof off the barn if he wanted to. And Hillegas hasn't paid those bills yet, while medicine as a profession

lence to the proprietors. After a few rehearsals the mule did well enough. It would bound up the white pine precipice with an enthusiastic ardor which was most commendable. When the play was produced they trotted out the mule, strapped Mazepa on its back, and turned its head towards the precipice. But it manifested a reluctance to move up the frowning cliff. It began to back. It recoiled until it reached the footlights, and then it drove out its hind feet suddenly, and kicked the leader of the orchestra clean through the bass drum, nearly killing him. Then it stood still and mused over things, and summed up recollections of its youth, and meditated over the fitful past, and dreamed of bygone days, while it occasionally lifted its off hind leg and scratched itself on the side, stopping in the midst of the exercise sometimes, with its leg half-way up in the air as some new thought seemed to strike it. Then the scene shifter jabbed it with a sword to bring it out of its reverie, and all at once it began to pitch and rear and wheel round and round, and to reach its nose over and show Mazepa's elbow. Then it dashed through a canvas temple at the side, kicked over four muslin trees, tore a sixty-dollar vermilion sunset to rags, and nearly switched the eyes out of a Tartar chieftain with its tail. Finally it was seized with the blind staggers, and it lay down, rolled on Mazepa three or four times, and finally slid over into the orchestra upsetting the lamps and setting fire to the stage, and bringing up at last with one hoof in the mouth of the trombone and its tail tangled up with the triangle. Barnaby was in the hospital for a month, and now whenever anybody asks him if he ever played Mazepa he feels as if he wanted to commit murder.—*Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post.*

BOARDING IN THE COUNTRY.

BY MAX ADLER.

One of the greatest delights of boarding in the country for the summer, is the pleasure a man derives from his efforts to catch the early morning train by which he must reach the city and his business. When he gets out of bed he looks at his watch, and finds he has plenty of time, so he dresses leisurely, and sits down to breakfast in a calm and serene frame of mind. Just as he cracks his first egg, he hears the up-train. He starts, jerks out his watch, compares it with the clock, and finds that it is eleven minutes slow and that he has only four minutes left in which to get to the depot. In a fearful hurry he tries to scoop the egg out of the shell, but it burns his fingers, the skin is tough, and after fooling with it for a moment, it mashes into a hopeless mess, and he gets his fingers smeared; he drops the whole concern in disgust, grabs a hot roll, and scalds his tongue with a quick mouthful of coffee; then he stuffs the roll in his mouth, while his wife hands him his watch, and tells him she thinks she hears the whistle. He plunges madly around the room, looking for his umbrella; then he kisses his wife as well as he can with all that unswallowed bread distending his cheeks, says good-bye to the children in a lump and makes a dash for the door. Just as he gets to the gate he finds that he has forgotten his duster, and he charges back after it, snatches it up, and tears down the gravel walk in a frenzy. He doesn't like to run through the village, because that would be undignified, but he walks furiously. He goes faster and faster. Half-way down he does hear the whistle, for certain. He wants to run, but he knows that he will start up that yellow dog there by the sidewalk if he does. Then he actually sees the train coming in at the depot, and he feels that he must make a rush. He does. The yellow dog becomes excited, and tears after him. Six other dogs join in the chase, one after the other, and bark furiously, and frolic around his legs. Small boys contribute to the excitement, as he goes past, by whistling on their fingers, and the men at work on the new meeting-house knock off to look at him and laugh. He feels ridiculous, but he must catch that train. He gets desperate when he has to slacken up until two or three women, who are on the sidewalk discussing the servant-girl question and the price of butter, scatter to let him pass. He arrives within one hundred yards of the depot with duster flying in the wind, coat-tails horizontal and the yellow dog nipping his heels, just as the train begins to move. He puts on extra pressure, and resolves to make that train or to perish. He reaches it as the last car is going past. He seizes the hand-rail, is violently jerked around once or twice, but finally lands on the step on his knees, and aided in by his coat-collar by the brakeman, not mad, dusty, with his trousers torn across the knees, his shins bruised, and three ribs in his umbrella broken. Just as he gets comfortably into the car, the train stops, backs upon the siding, and lays there for half an hour while the engineer fixes a broken valve. Then he is madder than ever, and determines that he will move in town to-morrow, and swears, while he looks out of the window and watches the dogs that followed him engaged in a contest over a bone which the yellow dog found on the platform of the station; and he registers a silent vow to devote his first holiday to hunting up that dog, and braining him with a club.



"RAINING TO READ."

you a solution of a problem which seems to be too formidable to be explained. I would like to ask you—in fact, I—that is—as it were—I want to ascertain, you may say—I wish to inquire what in the thunder a man is to do with sleeve-buttons when he has no shirts? My wife took my last one yesterday for a pillow-case, and I am now wearing a gunny-bag, with arm-holes in it." They gave him four the next morning, and now he is more convinced than ever of the power of a free press.

We learn from a medical journal that the doctors have prepared for circulation in the profession a "black list," containing the names of persons who will not pay their bills. The purpose is to deprive such sinners of medical attendance. This reminds us of the case of Hillegas, who lived up in Montgomery county. For years Hillegas had been almost at the point of death. Broken down, emaciated, with his appetite gone, his lungs weak, his liver torpid, his heart affected, his legs paralyzed, his arms rheumatic, his head full of neuralgia and his back aching with lumbago, he lay on his bed for five or six years miserable, unable to move and expecting death every moment. All the doctors in the county had a shy at him one after another, and as he kept getting worse all the time it made him mad and he refused to pay their bills. So one day the doctors held a meeting, and after discussing the avarice of Hillegas, they determined not to look at him again until

peys less in that neighborhood than anywhere else in Montgomery county. People won't let a doctor come within a mile of their houses unless they feel perfectly well and know there is no danger.

We do not know the name of the man who told the following story of Anches Brown. If we did we would be perfectly willing to recommend him to any one who wants a good, strong, vigorous liar, who will hesitate at nothing. Brown, it is alleged, has a very bald head, and he used to permit his children to amuse themselves, while he took his afternoon nap, by playing ut-tat-to on his scalp with pieces of charcoal. One day the little ones grew tired of that game, and started to play "mumble-peg" with a jack-knife, and at the first blow drove the blade half an inch into Brown's skull. Nobody ever ascertained who would have won, for the game stopped suddenly, and Brown took a turn at another game in which he chased each child around him with a slipper. He sleeps with his hat on now.

Barnaby was leading man in the theatre at the city of Blank, Penna., and when the manager determined to bring out "Mazepa" as a show piece, Barnaby was selected as the person to represent the hero. None of the livery-stable people would hire a horse for the performance, and so the manager said he didn't care, he would rent a mule, even if the presence of such a long-eared animal upon the stage did do vio-