ARBITTERS
FREE FROM
CALIFORNIA
ALCOHOL
AR BITTERS.
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Druggists and Dealers.
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The St. Andrews Standard.

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LITERATURE.

Who Was He?

On a dreary November afternoon, in the year 1866, Mr. Blonger, senior member of the well-known firm of Blonger & Co., machinists and manufacturers of marine engines, established in 1803, was sitting before a blazing fire in his office in the east end of London, when a visitor was announced. "Show him in James," said the old gentleman and continued the perusal of the *Times*. A moment after, the door opened, and a young man, apparently about twenty-four years of age, plainly attired, entered and stood hat in hand, awaiting the leisure of the gentleman, who merely glanced at the stranger, and immediately resumed his paper, evidently thinking his visitor to be a person of no importance. After a silence of a few minutes, Mr. Blonger laid down his paper, and looking up, abruptly said:

"Well, my good sir, what do you want with me?"

"Are you the elder Mr. Blonder?" inquired the stranger with an unmistakable American accent.

"I am."

"I heard of you, and came to see you. I understand that you transact a large and successful business, but it is not on that account that I have called upon you. I am told that you have considerable influence with the chief persons in this government, and it is for that reason that I pay you this visit."

Mr. Blonger placed his gold-rimmed spectacles on his nose, and gazed in mute astonishment at his visitor, who continued:

"I am the inventor, or discoverer, rather, of a secret of nature, a process which will revolutionize the world, which will reverse natural laws, which will inaugurate a new order of things; a discovery, the results of which are so vast that no human mind can comprehend them. In short, I can suspend the law of gravitation."

At this monstrous assertion a look of alarm appeared upon the countenance of the listener; but as he compared his own brawny frame with the slight figure of the lunatic before him, it gave place to a contemptuous smile, as he answered, somewhat impatiently:

"Well, well, my dear sir, perhaps you can—perhaps you can; but I am not in that line of business, and you had better apply to somebody else."

The young man went on with imperturbable gravity: "I can swing the mightiest man-of-war England possesses into the air with my little finger. I can lift the largest cannon at Woolwich like a cork; I can—"

"Yes, yes, I know—but I am busy now," replied the manufacturer, rising and advancing toward the bell to summon a servant.

"Wait, Mr. Blonger," said his visitor, in a tone of such deep earnestness that that gentleman hesitated in spite of himself—"wait a moment. I am not mad. I know you do not believe me, and I do not wonder at it; but I will show you that what I say is true."

He laid his hat upon the table, and drew from the breast pocket of his coat a glistening blue wire. There was an iron anvil in a corner of the room. He wound the coil of wire round the anvil in a moment, lifted it like a feather from its place to the middle of the apartment, and then stepped proudly back. The anvil floated like a bubble in the air.

To say that Mr. Blonger looked astounded and aghast would convey but a mild idea of the expression of his countenance at this moment. It was one of absolute horror. He stood gazing first at the anvil and then at the man, and at last, with a sigh of relief, he ejaculated, "Perhaps this is only jugglery," and dropped into a chair. The young American snatched the coil of wire from around the anvil, and it fell at once with a terrific force, crushing in a portion of the floor. "I beg your pardon, sir, but is there any jugglery about that, think you?" he asked, with a smile, and also sat down. The conversation that ensued was long and earnest, and resulted in this conclusion; Mr. Blonger was to notify one or two of his personal friends in the cabinet, several scientific men of high repute, and two or three prominent foreigners, the whole number not to exceed twelve, that he wished them to meet him in order to investigate in concert a wonderful discovery in science, the nature of which would then be communicated. The young stranger agreed to repeat his experiments on the occasion of the meeting, and explain the process by means of which they were accomplished; for the present he declined to make any further revelations.

On the night of the 22nd of November, 1866, there assembled in St. George's Hall, in London, three members of the English Cabinet, four gentlemen well known in the scientific world, two prominent Frenchmen, and two Italians—eleven in all, exclusive of Mr. Blonger. At the earnest solicitation of that gentleman these persons had come to meet they knew not whom, and see they knew not what. On the platform, at the end of the hall, lay a small cannon, a heavy piece of iron shafting, and several large iron wheels. What these articles were for they could not imagine. At half-past eight o'clock the young man arrived, and was introduced by Mr. Blonger to his friends as a young American who did not care to have his name announced. The stranger was dressed in a rough suit, the worse for wear, and wore a slouched black hat. His hair was brown and straight, his eyes were large and bright gray in color, and his face was as destitute of beard as a woman's. He was above the medium height and very slender, and his age was apparently about twenty-four years, though he might have been older. He was evidently but little used to the society of distinguished persons, and at first appeared somewhat embarrassed at his position, but there was an expression of firmness about his mouth that showed a strong will and a habit of having his own way. When he spoke it was with the air of a man who knew the ground upon which he stood, and his manners were those of one who felt that he was the inferior of no man.

The Janitor having been dismissed and the door locked, Mr. Blonger proceeded to explain to those present why he had called them together. His young American friend, he said, had convinced him that he was in possession of a prodigious secret, of the magnitude of which they could judge when it was presented to them.

The whole affair at this point came near being broken off in disgust by an unexpected requirement which the unknown stranger exacted. He declined to proceed, unless all present entered into an agreement not to communicate what they might witness to any living person, for a period of ten years, without gaining his consent. The Right Honorable G—— was on his mettle at once. He washed his hands of the whole matter, and desired to retire immediately. The others were equally indignant, and expressions not considered elegant in high society were heard. It required all Mr. Blonger's sagacity to quell the storm. But the young man was immovable, and at last, at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Blonger, the guarantee was given. The stranger then took the stage, and the auditors the seats immediately in front of it.

"Gentleman," he began, "from what I have noticed of your incredulity this evening, I am satisfied that if I should inform you that the attraction of gravitation could be so suspended that objects upon the earth's surface would have absolutely no weight, and further, that I was in possession of the simple means whereby this end could be accomplished, you would only greet my assertions with jeers and ridicule. I will therefore show you what I can do first, and talk afterward. You see in my hands this coil of wire, blue like tempered steel. This cannon weighs nearly three tons. I wrap the wire around it. If you listen carefully you will hear a burring sound, similar to that made by an electeical machine. But that has nothing to do with the matter. The ends of the wire are joined. This cannon now weighs no more than a soap-bubble. You see I move it about thro' the air with my hand, with two fingers, with one. Here is a strong oaken chair. I place the cannon upon it, and when I withdraw the wire mark the result. The chair goes crashing to pieces on the floor under the weight of three tons of iron."

This conclusive proof of the grandest discovery ever yet made by man brought every person present to his feet. Mr. Blonger stood apart in triumph. The young exhibitor alone remained unmoved. "How is it done?" cried they all. "How did he make the wonderful discovery?" They now looked upon him with the awe one feels in the presence of a superior being.

He raised his hand and requested silence. "The action of the simple wire," he said, "is not confined to metallic substances. Its effects on all objects are the same. I put it round this wooden bench, as you see, and the bench weighs nothing; around this chair, and the result is the same. Here is this large iron shaft and these wheels. You perceive that it affects all alike. Perhaps you think it has no power over living substances. You are mistaken. I will agree to put this little wire round my waist and step from the dome of St. Paul's. I will show you."

A ladder extended from the floor to the lofty ceiling of the hall. The stranger climbed to its very summit, adjusted his belt, and sprung boldly off. He slowly unclasped the ends of the wire, and descended gradually and safely to the ground, to the infinite relief of the spectators, who gazed horror-struck at the scene.

Thus you see, gentlemen, said he, again ascending the stage, "what powers lie hidden in nature, until they are accidentally stumbled upon. You all think that there is some power contained in this wire. I must tell you that the wire has but little to do with it. And yet I will agree to go down to any of your sea ports, and put this wire or one like it, round any of your old seventy-four-gun ships we read of, and lift it into a dry dock, with a line no larger than a pack-thread, if the wind is not blowing at the time. This wire at which you all gaze so curiously, has no power in itself. It is only the means of communicating a power; still, no man shall examine it, except under certain conditions; and this brings me to the point I intended to make by calling gentlemen of your high standing and intelligence here to night. I wish to sell my knowledge to the English Government."

"And why to the government?" cried the Rt. Hon. B. I——, and the Hon. Mr. S——, in a breath.

"Because no private individual is rich enough to buy it. I once thought to dispose of it to my own government,—that of the United States—but I shall not enter into the reasons why I abandoned the idea and came here. Besides, it becomes public property after ten years. I would not agree to sell the right under any conditions for a longer time. The benefits of the discovery are universal, and in justice belong to mankind, and mankind shall have them."

Said a member of the cabinet: "Your idea of selling such a discovery to the government of Great Britain seems chimerical; and, I may add, it savors of selfishness to keep your knowledge from the world. But may I be permitted to ask how much you demand for your knowledge?"

Here the young man rose to his feet in an excited manner. "You talk of selfishness," said he; "I know what it is to labor and to suffer, to be lost amid mountains, and tormented with thirst upon deserts. I have labored hundreds of feet under ground with pick and shovel for my daily bread. I got tired of it; I swore off. I hold in my possession what will make me independent for life, besides conferring inestimable benefits upon my fellow-men, and I intend to use it so far. Selfishness, indeed! What did Morse or Fulton make from their inventions, except what was given them as a charity, after they had let their knowledge go out of their hands? No charity for me. I hold my discovery alone, and I will part with it only on my own terms.—You ask me what I demand for it. I want $5,000,000."

"A large sum! Have you taken into consideration what this discovery is destined to accomplish? Why, I tell you it will revolutionize the world. Take the dockyards of Great Britain alone. What, think you, will be the saving in a year, when every object, from the greatest to the smallest, can be moved to any distance, without expense? How long will it take to build your largest edifices, when your blocks of marble weigh nothing? Oh, gentlemen when you have considered this subject as I have done, you will stand overpowered with the magnitude of the results which are to follow. Think of its effects upon means of transportation. When there is no weight to carry, may not even the air be navigated?"

"Do you object to informing us how you happened to discover this mighty and mysterious secret of nature?"

'Mysterious!" Why it is so simple that any child can understand it. I stumbled upon it. Since I have discovered it, I wonder that is not found out a thousand times every day. But gentlemen, are you aware that I doubt whether I am really a pioneer in this field? There are books written thousands of years ago which I read while a boy, which have led me to believe that this is one of the lost arts, though it was known perhaps only to a favored few. I feel sure—very sure—that the simple law by which the attraction of gravitation is suspended was known in ancient Peru, Arabia, and perhaps in Egypt also, and went down into oblivion with other lost arts in some general catastrophe. The same law I re-discovered while working in a silver mine, 1000 feet under ground, and my knowledge I am ready to communicate under the conditions I have named."

"But should you die in the meantime, would not your discovery be again lost, and the world be deprived of its benefits?"

"Oh not at all. I have taken care of that. Whether I live or die, or whatever may happen to me, within ten years from the present, the world will be fully informed upon the subject."

After some further consultation a select committee was appointed, to meet in three days, to fully investigate the secret and take some action on the proposition of the stranger, who, after reminding all present of their promise of secresy, departed, and was never seen again.

Several months ago a distinguished gentleman, a resident of a great American city, received the following communication from a prominent solicitor in London:

"No.—, OLD BROAD STREET, LONDON, Sept.—, 1873.——Esq.—*Dear Sir:* A short time since an Italian, who was the confidential clerk of one of my much esteemed clients—Signor Suzzini, of the firm of Suzzini, Isola & Co., of London, Naples and France—died suddenly, leaving in writing the statement which accompanies this letter. What transpired in St. George's Hall in November, 1866, concerning a subject of the most absorbing interest to those present, has been kept a profound secret, under a solemn pledge; but, owing to the strange circumstances of the case, and the almost certain death of the remarkable stranger, supposed to be an American, whose re-appearance has been awaited with the utmost intense anxiety for years by those informed on the subject, Signor Sazzini has considered himself so far absolved from his obligation as to convey to some trustworthy barrister in your city the information herein contained.

"All communications received from you will be kept strictly secret; but, in any event, if you succeed in discovering the bank, impress upon the managers the supreme importance of carefully preserving at all hazards, the documents committed to their charge. I have the honor to remain,

Yours, etc.

"GEORGE MATHIOT MARSHALL."

The following is the statement of the Italian clerk:

"In November, 1866, a very important congregation came together in St. George's Hall, Strange things were seen. I was there. Much money was to be gained. A young man—a Yankee—had a secret in his pocket. It was a wire worth millions. He left the hall. It was a dark night—fog and smoke, thick and black. I followed him. Across the Haymarket, across Leicester square,—it was 11 o'clock,—and through a dark and narrow alley toward St. Martin's lane. I could have done it there but others came by, and I shrank back into the gloom. Through St. Martin's lane to the Strand, down the Strand to the turning of Waterloo Bridge, still I followed him. He was going to cross the bridge on foot I crossed the street and got ahead of him, and in the middle of the bridge I hid myself behind the parapet. By and by my man came along, slowly walking, his hands behind him, and his eyes bent upon the ground. When near me he paused, and looked toward St. Paul's whose huge bulk loomed up still higher as the moonlight tried to struggle through the fog. I was near enough to hear him. He said: "O mighty monument, the pride and glory of an empire, thy renown has gone forever. All I see around me, though the work of centuries, is but the amusement of a child, the labor of a day. How powerful am I!"—here I stole up behind him, without noise,—"in future ages my name shall be—" my stiletto fell between his shoulders, and he dropped like a lamb. His pockets yielded up a coil of wire and a bundle of papers, and his body went over into the river. Ah! I knew how to do it. I had done it often before, at Ferrara, on the Po.

"The secret was mine. I was frantic with excitement. I hurried home to my apartments, double locked the door, turned up the lamp, and examinad my prize. It was the wire, the identical wire, which had swung a cannon in the air not two hours before. I was impatient to test its powers. I seized an iron poker from the hearth, wrapped the wire around it, poised it aloft, let go, and it fell clattering to the floor. Again I tried, and again it fell. I tried different articles. I wound the wire in every imaginable shape, and still with the same result. Morning found me haggard and exhausted with my labor, and unsuccessful. Business at the ofice prevented further atlempts until evening, I worked fruitlessly until midnight, when suddenly I thought of the papers I had also seized. Fool that I was not to have thought of them before. They undoubtedly contained an explanation of the secret. I tore them open with my fingers. All were blank except one, and it contained the following: "Knowing the uncertainty of life and the dangers of travel, I have on this day (July 7, 1866) placed in the vaults of a reliable banking house, in the city of——, a sealed packet containing the details and explanation of the means by which the laws of gravitation are rendered inoperative. In case of my death or failure to return, the officers of said bank have explicit instructions to open said packet on May 1, 1876, and spread the facts therein contained to the world. My knowledge is at present confined to myself, but will not long continue so, as I shall soon proceed to Europe to impart my knowledge to the most renowned scientific men in the world. My only object in making the bank a depository, is to provide against accident, and secure to the world, beyond all preadventure, the benefits of the mighty secret."

"There was no name nor signature. After this I labored for months in vain to discover the secret working of the wire; until at last it occurred to me that the stranger had said at St. George's Hall that the wire itself had no power, but was only the means of communicating a power. Infuriated to the last degree, I threw the coil which had cost me so much misery, anxiety and suspense, into the Thames, one night where it could tell no tales. When I am dead, the company who assembled at St. George's Hall on that eventful night may be requested to cease their painful wonderings at the failure of the mysterious stranger to return. He will never come back, gentlemen. The Thames received his body nearly eight ago."

This finishes the case at present. But in what banking house is the invaluable packet of papers deposited, who was the man, and, in May, 1876, will the ancient but lost secret of surpending the law of gravitation becomes again known to the world?

Our young friend Parker went round the other evening (says an American contemporary) to visit the two Browns. After conversing with them for a while, Miss Susan excused herself for a few moments and went upstairs. Presently Parker thought he heard her coming, and slipping behind the door, he suggested that the other Miss Brown should tell Susan he had gone. But it wasn't Miss Susan, it was old Mr. Brown, in his slippers. As he entered he looked round, and said to his daughter, "Ah, ha! so Parker's gone, has he? Good riddance! I don't want any such lantern-jawed, red haired idiot foolin' round here. He hasn't got the sense of a turnip, or money enough to buy a clean shirt. He gets none of my daughters. I'll shake the everlasting life out of him if I catch him here again, mind me!" Just sa he concluded, Susan came down, and not perceiving Parker, said, "Thank goodness, he's gone. That man is enough to provoke a saint. I was awfully afraid he was going to stay and and spend the evening. Mary Jane, I hope you didn't ask him to come again." Then Parker didn't know whether to stay there or bolt, while Mary Jane looked as if she would like to drop into the cellar. But Parker finally walked out and rushed to the entrance, seized his hat, shot down the steps, and went home, meditating on the emptiness of human happiness, and the uncertainty of the Browns.

A NOVEL CONFIDENCE GAME.—An Indianapolis young woman has been playing a novel confidence game in St. Louis with the assistance of a male confederate. Their mode of operation was as follows: The man would enter jewelers' stores and listen to conversations between the owners of watches left for repairs and the clerks or salesmen, and then inform the woman of the time the work would be completed and the price. She would on the day appointed, call at the store under the pretence that the party leaving the watch was her husband, or in some way connected with her and that she had been sent for it. In this way she would almost invariably obtain the article. On being arrested she confessed her guilt, but said she was the tool of her confederate, who compelled her to practice the trick under theats of great personal violence.

WHEN Yelverton, the Chief Baron of Ireland, went over to England on the occasion of George the Third's illness, his companions were Curran, Egan, and a Mr. Barrett reputed to be fond of play. "He travels," said Fitz Gibbon, "like a mountebank, with his monkey, his bear and his sleight-of-hand man."

EGAN, the "bear" alluded to in the above was a very large man and very *hirsute*. "Did you ever see such a *chest* as this?" he exclaimed, strikink his breast. "A *trunk*, you mean my dear Egan," replied Curran. It was Egan to whom, Curran, when they were about to fight a duel, proposed to chalk out his own size, upon an understanding that any shot outside the chalk lines should go for nothing.

THERE is a story told of a wealthy German and a livery-stable keeper who was loth to let his best gig to a stranger. The German was determined to have his ride, and agreed to buy the horse and trap, and when he returned the stable-keeper might refund the money. This was done, and the horse and trap returned, and money refunded, when the German started to go. "Hold on," said the man of horses; "you have not paid your horse hire." "Why, my dear, sir," said the German, coolly, "I have been driving my own horse this morning; you only bought the horse just now."

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