

welcomed to your beautiful city, and also to make a few inquiries regarding several parties who desire to purchase our wares, but if my presence is annoying I beg a thousand pardons for the intrusion."

"My young friend give me your hand, and forgive me; but really these drummers (commercial tourists, if you please), have so provoked me of late that I swore they ought to be exterminated. Pray be seated, and if I can atone for my rudeness by being of any service to you I shall consider it an honor. Do you anticipate remaining in Council Bluffs over Sunday? If so, I should be most happy to have you visit me, and I will endeavour to make it as pleasant as possible for you."

"I regret exceedingly to decline your kind invitation, but I am booked for Omaha, where letters await me."

"Oh, but I insist upon your remaining, and will have your letters attended to. Come, now, what do you say?"

"Well, I will consent on one condition, and that is if you will promise to purchase a bill of shirts from me."

"But you informed me that you were selling drugs."

"Pardon me, I will explain. I did not think my line was drugs until arriving in the city, when I learned, to my sorrow that the merchants had just returned from market and had purchased their stocks, and that shirts were indeed a drug. Now, sir, you can be of service to me by walking to the hotel to inspect our patent new fangled, self-ventilating, concave and convex, double seam, re-enforced—"

"Stop, young man; I have been in business during the past twenty years, and this is the first time I have been taken in. I will go to the hotel with you and purchase a bill of goods, although I am overstocked. Come and take a drink."—*J. W. F. in Hatter and Furrier.*

THE INVENTOR.

HOW HE PLAGUES THE LIFE OUT OF HIS POOR WIFE.

"It is very well to talk about working for the heathen," said one, as the ladies of the circle put aside their sewing, "but I'd like to have some one tell me what I'm to do with my husband."

"What's the matter with him?" asked a sympathetic old lady.

"William is a good man," continued the first, waving her glasses in an argumentative way, "but William will invent.

He goes inventing round from morning till night, and I have no peace or comfort. I didn't object when he invented a fire escape, but I did remonstrate when he wanted me to crawl out the window one night last winter to see if it worked well. Then he originated a lock for the door that wouldn't open from midnight until morning, so as to keep burglars out. The first time he tried it he caught his coat tail in it, and I had to walk around him with a pan of hot coals all night to keep him from freezing."

"Why didn't he take his coat off?"

"I wanted him to, but he stood around till the thing opened itself trying to invent some way of unfastening it. That's William's trouble. He will invent. A little while ago he got up a cabinet bedstead that would shut and open without handling. It went by clockwork. William got into it and up it went. Bless your heart, he stayed in there from Saturday afternoon until Sunday evening, when it flew open and disclosed William with the plans and specifications of a patent wash-bowl that would tip over when it got just so full. The result of that was I lost all my rings and a breast-pin down the waste pipe. Then he got up a crutch for a man that could also be used as an opera glass. Whenever the man leaned on it, up it shut, and when he put it to his eye to find William it flew out into a crutch and almost broke the top of his head of."

"Don't any of his inventions amount to anything?"

"He says they do. Once he invented a rope ladder to be worn as a guard chain and lengthened out with a spring. He put it around his neck, but the spring got loose and turned it into a ladder and almost choked him to death. Then he invented a patent boot-heel to crack nuts with, but he mashed his thumb with it and gave it up. His coal scuttle has made more trouble than anything else. It was riveted to the grate, and when the fire got low it would turn over and pour on coal. The rivets got rusty so he couldn't get it off, and I just sit up in bed and listen to that scuttle all night. Then he arranged a corn popper so it would wiggle itself, and now he can't stop it. You can hear that popper going around in the closet, and he won't let me throw it away, because he wants to invent something to hold it still. Why, he has got a washtub full of inventions. One of them is a prayer book that always

opens at the right place. We tried it one morning at church, but the wheels and springs made such a row that the sexton took William by the collar and told him to leave his fire-engines at home when he came to worship. The other day I saw him going up street with the model of a grain elevator sticking out of his hip pocket; and he is fixing up an improved shot tower in our bedroom."

"Does he make any money out of his inventions?"

"He doesn't appear to. The other night a man came down and wanted William to get up a patent umbrella fastening. Since then he has wrecked all the umbrellas and parasols in the house. We haven't a thing to use if it should rain. Now he's at work on a combined cat and rat trap. The cat and rats go in at different ends and eat each other up—at least he says they will; and after that he is going at a pair of pantaloons, in which a man can fall down without spraining his leg. William means well, but he's got that mania for inventing, and I don't know where it will end." And the old lady sighed as she started for home to see what new inconvenience her ingenious husband was preparing to perpetrate.

SMALL ARMS vs. ARTILLERY.

The last report of the Chief of Ordnance is strengthened in the direction of the uselessness of the bayonet when the results of the trials of military small arms undertaken by Col. Benton and Capt. Greer are examined. The more small arms are improved the greater will be the tendency to fight at "long bowls." When, as these officers show, the service rifle, with service cartridge, is amply sufficient to disable, and possibly to kill, up to nearly 8000 yards, and that a 500-grain bullet fired from any rifle with a twist sufficient to give the necessary rotation will range nearly 8700 yards, and that with a specially prepared cartridge a longer range can be obtained, the efficiency of powder and lead can be better understood. Of course this is too long a range to be effective, but still it is on record that when fighting the Russians the Turks used their American-made arms effectively at 2500 yards, and that they went into action with from 100 to 150 cartridges to the man. Can, however, a target at 3000 yards be hit at all? Capt. Greer gives to Mr. R. T. Hare, of the national armory