

"O 41."

Captain Sprowl threw his hat on the bed and sat down in his easy chair in the cabin to light his pipe. Up curled the smoke, and through it the captain looked ruefully at a neat package that lay on the table.

'What a fool I was to buy that,' he thought. 'Old sextant was good enough, though I have had it nine years. Bought it in Liverpool, when I was second mate of the Julia A. Smith. And now I've put out a month's earnings for a new one. What possessed me I don't know.'

And so the captain went on. Now Captain Sprowl was not, as you may think from the name, a baldheaded old man, with bush whiskers.

No, names are very misleading. Instead, he was tall and slender, with a sandy mustache, and had not a gray hair in his head. He came from Maine, and, although but thirty years old, he had been for six years captain of the Edna Dunn, now lying at Constitution wharf, in Boston, discharging her cargo of sugar.

'Well,' puffed the captain, 'nothing to do now but to get rid of the old sextant. I should go ashore next trip if I had two sextants to navigate by. Must work the old one off on some landlubber or somebody.'

The package was lying on an old news paper which he had read through and through on his last trip out.

'The very thing!' said he. 'I'll put a notice in the paper—Sextant for sale, cheap, and if somebody doesn't bite at it, I miss my guess.'

The next morning the only thing the captain could see in the paper was this:

Sextant for sale, by a ship captain, nearly new and in perfect order; will by sold cheap. Address O 41, Globe Office.

And now my story's begun.

Etta Bourne had been at work in a millinery store in Boston for nearly two years. She and her older sister Annie had learned the trade with the village milliner down in Kennebunk.

But Annie, who had long since been the belle of the village, got married, and Etta concluded to try her fortune in Boston.

She was full of ambition. So it fell that in her two years in the millinery store she studied shorthand and typewriting, with the intention of fitting herself to be a confidential clerk.

One Sunday she saw this advertisement: FOR SALE—Jones' Premier typewriter, half price; been used less than a month; in perfect order. Address O 47, Globe Office.

Etta Bourne, being a Maine Yankee, knew a bargain when she saw it. She wanted to own a typewriter and so she wrote a brief note addressed to 'O 47, Globe Office,' asking where the machine could be seen, and dropped it into the letter-box as she went to work Monday morning.

Now I said at the beginning that the advertising clerk was to blame. Perhaps the mistake was that of Etta Bourne. At any rate, it will never be known.

The clerk was sorting the replies and putting them in their appropriate boxes. When he came to Etta Bourne's letter to 'O 47' he read it 'O 41' and put it in the pigeonhole as such.

That was a very, very little mistake, of course, but you who have noticed how things go in this world of ours have discovered that the most serious changes in the course of our lives come about from just such little happenings.

For it was that very day that Captain Sprowl advertised his sextant for sale. And Captain Sprowl was 'O 41.'

Now the tall captain was a very busy man, and it was late that afternoon before he went to the office to gather in the replies from people who were anxious to buy a sextant.

But the sextant market was apparently rather dull, for all the clerk could give him was one solitary letter. The captain tore the letter open and tossed it aside.

'I saw your advertisement in the Globe,' read the captain. 'I wish to buy a good second-hand machine of standard make, and if the one you offer is in perfect repair and the price is satisfactory perhaps we can trade. I cannot give more than \$50, and if you ask more you need not reply to this. Send your address, stating where machines can be seen, to H. E. Bourne, No. 450 Winter street.'

'Well,' soliloquized the captain, 'I've got one answer, anyhow. But what does a woman want of a sextant, for this is certainly a woman's writing! She seems to be in earnest, though. And \$50! Conscience! I never expected to get more than \$25. Well, she'll have to come on board, I suppose, so I'll send her my address.' And standing at the public desk he wrote:

H. E. BOURNE: DEAR MISS—Yours in reply to my advertisement is at hand. Please call on me on board the bark Edna Dunn, Constitution wharf, between 2 and 6.

EDWIN K. SPROWL, Captain.

The next afternoon about four a trim

little figure walked rapidly over the rough planks of Constitution wharf.

'It's a queer place to find a second-hand typewriter,' thought Etta Bourne, 'but I suppose the captain got tired of it, or couldn't use it because the vessel pitched so, or something like that.'

She saw the gilt letters, 'Edna Dunn.' A fat, bald-headed man with a little gingham apron on looked out at the door of a box-like house in the middle of the vessel.

A board plank extended from the wharf across the bulwarks. The man in the apron came forward.

'I wish to see Captain Sprowl,' said she. 'Yes, mim. Come right aboard, mim, on that there plank, mim. The captain's down in his cabin, mim.'

Etta Bourne stepped hastily along the plank and the stout cook, putting his broad palms under her elbows, lifted her lightly to the deck.

'This way, mim,' and he led her around to the after companionway.

They went down the brass-railed stairs, and as the cook knocked at the door Etta noticed how spick and span everything looked.

As a matter of fact, the captain, in view of a lady's visit, had kept the cook scouring the wood and brasswork all the forenoon.

'Captain, sir, a lady wishes to see ye.' The captain, with half an hour's work in his four-in-hand, bowed respectfully.

'I am Miss Bourne,' began Etta. 'I came in response to your advertisement in the Globe about a—'

'Yes, ma'am,' said the captain; 'this is the place. Will you take a seat?'

As Etta sank into an easy chair she glanced about her in astonishment. She had no idea that those little low houses on ship's deck were so comfortable as this.

Here was a dainty little sitting-room, with a rich, soft carpet, a hanging lamp of elaborate design, high plush easy chairs and sofa, a pretty rattan rocker and a table strewn with the latest magazines.

'I beg your pardon,' said the tall captain, who had been looking curiously at her, 'but are you not related to Miss Annie Bourne, of Kennebunk?'

'Why, yes, indeed; she is my own sister,' answered Etta with animation.

'I used to go to school with her in the old Berwick academy years ago, but I didn't know she had a sister.'

'Oh, yes, I went to the academy myself, but it was after she was graduated.'

'And was old Brown principal when you were there?'

From this they went on for ten minutes, and each knew so many that the other did that they soon became old acquaintances.

The captain at once noticed that she was a remarkably neat and pleasant little woman and Etta Bourne thought the captain a fine-looking man, tall and strong.

'Well, Captain Sprowl,' said she, finally, 'I mustn't forget what I came for. I believe you have a machine that you wish to sell?'

'Why, yes,' said the captain, wondering what on earth this attractive little woman could want of a sextant.

'And how do you come to want to sell it?' pursued she, wondering what use this sea captain had for a typewriter.

'Well, the fact is,' said the captain reddening a little, 'I bought a new one the other day when I really didn't want it, and of course, I haven't use for two. And,' continued he, 'since turn about is fair play, I am going to ask you what you want of one?'

'To earn a living with,' said she.

The captain looked puzzled as he went into his stateroom to get the sextant. He had heard that women were becoming the rivals of men in almost every trade and profession, and he vaguely wondered if Miss Bourne was intending some time to become Captain Bourne.

'Well,' said he, coming back and holding the sextant out toward her, 'here it is. The ivory on the scale is a little yellow, and the vernier glass has a little crack across the outer edge, but—'

He stopped. Miss Bourne was holding up her hands with amazement.

'Why—why—what is this?' she stammered.

'Why, it's a sextant,' said the captain.

'I thought you knew what they looked like.'

'But there's some misunderstanding here. I don't have any use for a sextant. It was a typewriter that I understood you had to sell.'

'A typewriter!' said the captain, astonished in turn. 'Why, no. Here's the advertisement,' and he put the paper in her hands.

'Now, as I have said, Etta Bourne was a Maine Yankee, and in less than ten seconds she had guessed how the mistake was made.'

'Well, now,' said the captain, 'I thought it was awful funny that a woman should want to buy a sextant. Now you have disappointed me. I don't see how I am going to sell it, unless I leave it at the instrument maker's and let him get what he can for it.'

'Oddly enough, from this point this story runs along so naturally that you can tell it yourself.'

The tall captain escorted Miss Bourne uptown, called on her two or three times

while he was in port, corresponded with her when he was away and in less than a year this notice appeared:

SPROWL—BOURNE—In Kennebunk, Me., May 8, at the residence of the bride's parents, Captain Edwin R. Sprowl and Henrietta E. Bourne.

And now my story is done.—Boston Globe.

ODDITIES OF SUICIDE.

Causes Which Most Frequently Lead to It and the Laws Against It.

Is suicide evidence of insanity?

The question involves a discussion not easily handled. The most vital instinct in man is the preservation of life. It would seem, therefore, that an act which traverses the first law of nature must emanate from a disordered brain. Not long since a judge in one of our New York courts held that suicide per se was evidence of insanity. On the other hand we have the examples of eminent men who have taken their own lives, under circumstances which appear to leave no room to doubt as to their sanity.

A recent dispatch from Roumania informs us of a suicide club, the members of which are pledged to commit suicide as soon as their names should be drawn. The surviving members of the club have all been placed in rigid confinement, and will be tried on the charge of having deliberately aided and abetted unjustifiable suicide.

It is remarkable how a suicide by a certain method or in a certain place will lead to another of the same kind. A surgeon of the Middlesex hospital in London went into a barber's shop to be shaved. The barber spoke of a man who had been unsuccessful in an attempt to kill himself by cutting his throat. 'He could easily have managed it,' said the surgeon, 'had he been acquainted with the situation of the carotid artery.' 'Where should he have cut?' asked the barber. The surgeon told him. He at once left the room, and not returning as soon as was expected the surgeon went to look for him and discovered him in the yard with his head nearly severed from his body.

It is worthy of note that the greatest number of suicides are committed by the Germans. The form of death they usually choose is poisoning.

In every country three-quarters of all the suicides are of the male sex, says the Albany Argus.

It is almost impossible to realize the readiness with which the Chinese commit suicide. It requires the merest trifle to induce a Chinaman to hang himself. In other countries when a man wishes to avenge himself on his enemy he kills him. In China he kills himself. Suicides of widows are very common there. Many hang themselves publicly, having given notice of their intention so that those who wish may be present.

On the morning of the appointed day the willing victim, dressed in gaudy apparel and holding a bouquet of fresh flowers in her hand, is carried in a sedan chair to the temple erected in memory of 'virtuous and filial widows.' There she performs the accustomed religious rites, with burning of candles and incense. In the afternoon she returns home and hangs herself before the multitude. Suicides of this kind meet with general approval in China. They do honor to the families in which they occur.

The first instance of suicide recorded in the scriptures is that of Samson (B. C. 1117). The second is that of Saul (B. C. 1055). Rather than fall into the hands of the Philistines, when hard pressed in battle, he drew his sword and fell upon it and so died. Judas Iscariot, through remorse, went and hanged himself.

Among the philosophers of antiquity Seneca stands pre-eminently forward as the defender of suicide. He says: 'Does life please you? Live on. Does it not? Go from whence you came. No vast wound is necessary; a mere puncture will secure your liberty.' Pliny says: 'God cannot end his own life, though he wish, but he has given to mortals this best boon amidst the burdens and trials of life.'

Two of the most distinguished men of antiquity who sacrificed their own lives were Brutus and Cassius, Mark Anthony, reduced to a desperate extremity, killed himself. Cleopatra was taken prisoner by Augustus, who had intended to exhibit her in a triumphal procession in Rome. To frustrate this design she killed herself by the poison of an asp. Cato, rather than live under the despotism of Caesar, stabbed himself, and when the wound had been stanching tore off the bandages and accomplished his purpose. Demosthenes, fearful of being subjected to slavery and disgrace, resorted to self-destruction. The persecution to which Hannibal was subjected by the Romans impelled him to have recourse to the poison which he always kept about him in a ring. Isocrates, the renowned Athenian orator, starved himself to death sooner than submit himself to the dominion of Philip of Macedon. Thomas Chatterton, the English poet, became indignant to the

verge of starvation and at the age of 17 poisoned himself.

From instances like the foregoing, one might well query whether the act of taking one's life is alone sufficient to indicate insanity.

The law regards suicide a crime, putting it in the same category with murder. Of course, where the crime is consummated no punishment is inflicted, but attempts are punishable, and principles in the second degree, present, aiding and abetting, and accessories before the fact, can be punished. For many centuries suicide has been regarded as a crime, not only by the state, but by the church. In the Greek church, the Roman church, and Protestant Episcopal church, it is severely condemned, and the burial services provides that the prescribed office of the burial of the dead is not to be used by any who have laid violent hands upon themselves. In England the crime was punished by forfeiture of estate and the body of the self-murderer was required to be buried in the open highway and a stake thrust through it as a mark of detestation.

This law was repealed during the reign of George IV, but even now the body of a suicide is required to be buried at night without the performance of religious rites. These laws of the state and church must be founded upon the idea of suicide without insanity, otherwise they would be monstrous.

Died by Drinking Water.

An easy way of poisoning criminals used to be, the Lancet says, to compel them to swallow large quantities of bull's blood. And it is interesting to note how this acted as a means of causing death. Bull's blood is not a poison at all in the ordinary sense of the word, but when it enters the stomach it forms a coagulum and instead of the organ being filled with liquid which might be ejected by vomiting, it is filled with a solid mass. This mass presses upwards upon the heart and displaces it. The pressure upwards upon the lungs interferes with respiration and the pressure backwards upon the aorta vena cava and the solar plexus would probably be sufficient to cause death. The same thing occurs in animals when they are at first turned out among the clover; they over-eat themselves, and are very like to die from over-distension. A case was recently reported in the newspapers of an Irishman who had eaten largely of potatoes and milk and who died suddenly. The post mortem examination revealed no disease. He was apparently healthy, except that his stomach was distended, and no doubt he died exactly the same way as the criminals who were compelled to drink bull's blood. Generally death cannot be brought about by the simple drinking of fluids, because the stomach is able to eject them. Apparently, however, this is not always the case. In one of the lay papers a few days ago there was a notice of three Frenchmen who had laid a wager as to who could drink most water, and all three of them died in a comparatively short time. The death in this case might have been partly due to the distension of the stomach and partly to the effect of the water on the blood after its absorption. It very rarely happens in a healthy person that enough water can be absorbed to cause any alteration in the blood, because it is excreted as rapidly as it is absorbed, and the composition of the blood is kept nearly constant. Death from the action of water on the blood may occur after profuse hemorrhage when thirst is extremely urgent. This has been noticed in the battlefield. In these cases it is always advisable not to give pure water to quench the thirst for it is also destructive to the blood. The risk of injury is considerably lessened by adding a little salt water, making it of the strength of the physiological normal saline solution.

Increasing Longevity.

The threescore and ten years allotted to man will yet be increased to twice that number," was the prediction made by Dr. Charles Hienkle, of the Laclède. "Instead of the world growing weaker and wiser, as the old axiom puts it, it is growing wiser and stronger. The average length of life is steadily increasing. In the days of good Queen Bess women were considered passe at 30, and few men distinguished themselves in statecraft, science or literature after passing five and sixty. Now a woman is in the heyday of her beauty at 30, and the ripest fruits of genius are frequently plucked at threescore and ten. Gladstone, Bismarck and Blaine are fair examples of that green and fruitful old age so frequent in these days. Yet science is but in its infancy. As it progresses the waste of life and energy will be gradually curtailed. While the fountain of youth sought by that interesting old crank, Ponce de Leon, will probably never be found; while man will probably never discover the secret of remaining an ever young Apollo, nor woman that of being as attractive at 60 as at 16, I firmly believe that the meridian of life will yet be raised from 35 to 70, that the day will come when man will not be considered a back number when he has reached his one-hundredth birthday."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Sanctimonious Sharpers.

A fellow who calls himself the "Rev." Florence Adams preached last Sunday to the scabs in the Homestead Mills. He took a text from St. Paul, and distorted it into an argument to prove that it took more courage to-day to be a scab—a "non-union man," he styled the thing—than it did in the days of St. Paul to be a Christian. Sermons in a similar strain on the Homestead strike were also held by K. C. Hayes and others, who likewise prefix the title of "Reverend" to their names.

These Pharisaic rascals may be the exception to the rule in the clerical profession. It is to be hoped that they are. Nevertheless, in the light of what is transpiring daily, the conclusion is forcing itself that the clergy of the United States, as a whole, is about to repeat, if not to improve upon, the sins it committed against conscience a generation ago, and, shaking hands with the press, turn itself into the twin prostitute of the red-handed oppressor.

"The American Church is the bulwark of slavery"; so ran the slogan from most of the pulpits forty odd years ago. If the sanctimonious sharpers, who last Sunday turned their backs upon the Master whom they insult with their impious lip-service, strove to sanctify the criminal doings of Frick, and endeavored to pull the wool over the eyes of the wretched victims whom capital has degraded to the stature of scabs—if these pietistic shufflers are types of their profession, if they even are but straws that point the direction of the stream, then history will repeat itself with a vengeance.

Where are the members of the cloth with manhood and decency enough to repudiate these clerical bunco-steerers!—The People.

New Definition of Man.

Starting with the proposition that man is an animal, there have been many attempts to define or explain what kind of an animal man is—that is to make an exhaustive definition, and one which shall completely differentiate man from every other animal. Plato defined man as "A two-legged animal without feathers," but Diogenes ruined his reputation forever by taking a chicken and stripping the feathers from it and exhibiting it as Plato's man. It evidently will not do to classify man as the animal that laughs, we are familiar with the laughing hyena and with a horse laugh, to say nothing of the grin of Cheshire cat. Nor, on the other hand, is man the animal that cries, else why should we read of crocodile fears?

The faculty of reasoning cannot be claimed for man alone. It has been sought to define man as the fire using animal, but this is not exact enough for a definition. Nor will the definition of man as the tool-using any more satisfactory. Many kinds of animals, birds especially, use tools with great skill.

But there is one definition of man to which no exception can be taken, and in which he stands solitary and alone. Man is the gambling animal. He alone of all the animal kingdom submits the decision of a question to the arbitrament of chance and tempts fate by an appeal to what he calls luck. Search as we may, we shall find no other animal that gambles.

Here, then, is the long-sought definition of man, and one in which no flaw can be found. It may not be particularly gratifying to mankind that it should be compelled to be confined to such a definition, but scientific accuracy cannot be sacrificed to mere prejudice or personal feeling. Man is the animal that gambles, and that is all there is to be said about it.

White Slaves.

It is innocently believed that slavery no longer exists in this country. This delusion will quickly vanish when one reflects upon the vast army of pale-faced, half-fed toilers that every evening emerge from their virtual prison dens in the shops and factories of our great cities. And in those countless thousands, sad-eyed women and delicate young girls prematurely old form a very large contingent.

Their youth is shrivelled and their bloom blighted in those inhuman shambles. The miserable pitance they receive for all their dreary toil means little more than starvation. A summer outing by the breezy sea or to the woods and green fields is a luxury they can hardly hope to enjoy. They live the lives of slaves.

How pathetically poor D'Arcy McGee pictures this sad state of white slavery when he sang:

"Welcome, thrice welcome, to overtaxed nature,
The darkness, the silence, the rest of the grave;
O dig it down deeply, kind fellow-creature,
I'm weary from living the life of a slave."

These lines were written when McGee was struggling with the octopus of poverty—well nigh to despair. They breathe the mournful *Re Profundis* of darkness and desolation. How many a white slave in every land might echo in his own inner consciousness the same sad verse.