

Sharp Practice.

There is a good deal of talk about the smartness of Yankees, but on the other side of the water they manage to turn out some very shrewd rascals. How is this for a case of sharp practice? "A certain Hungarian Countess, well-known for her riches and beauty (the same spirited lady who last year seconded her brother in a duel), graced with her presence the performance at the Aresa, or summer theatre. On one of her fair fingers my lady wore two splendid diamond rings exactly like each other. During an *entracte* there presented himself in her box a big fellow in grotesque livery—six feet of the finest flunkey imaginable. Quoth he, in the finest Hungarian, 'My mistress, Princess P., has sent to beg of your ladyship the loan of one of your rings for five minutes. Her Highness has observed them from her box opposite, and is very anxious to examine one more closely, as she wished to have one made after the pattern.' Without an instant's hesitation, the Countess handed a ring to 'Jeames,' who bowed with respectful dignity and retired. The performance over, the two great ladies met on the staircase, and the Countess begged her friend to keep the ring at her convenience. 'What ring my dear?' Denouement! Tableau! The 'powdered menial' was no flunkey at all, but a thief; and the ring was gone.

"The police were informed of the impudent trick. Justice seemed to have overtaken the culprit in a very few strides, for next morning, while still *en robe de chambre*, received a letter informing her that the thief had been caught and the ring found on his person. 'Only,' added the note, 'the man stoutly denies the charge, and declares the ring to be his own. To clear up all doubts, please come at once to the police station, or send the duplicate ring by bearer.' To draw the second ring from the finger and intrust it joyfully to the messenger—a fine fellow in full police uniform—together with a handsome 'tip' for the glorious news, was the work of a moment. Only when my lady an hour later betook herself radiant to the station-house to recover her jewels, a slight mistake came to light. 'Well, my rings? I could not come myself the instant I got your letter. 'What letter, madam?' Denouement! Tableau No. 2! The thief get them both!"

There is no power of love so hard to get and keep as a kind voice. A kind hand is deaf and dumb. It may be rough in flesh and blood, yet do the work of a soft heart, and do it with a soft touch. But there is no one thing that love so much needs as a sweet voice to tell what it means and feels; and it is hard to get and keep it in the right tone. One must start in youth, and be on the watch night and day, at work and play, to get and keep a voice that shall speak at all times the thoughts of a kind heart. But this is the time when a sharp voice is most apt to be got. You often hear boys and girls say words at play with a quick, sharp tone, as if it were the snap of a whip. When one of them gets vexed you will hear a voice that sounds as if it were made up of a snarl, a whine, and a bark. Such a voice often speaks worse than the heart feels. It shows more ill-will in the tone than in the words. It is often in mirth that one gets a voice or a tone that is sharp, and sticks to him through life, and stirs up ill-will and grief, and falls like a drop of gall on the sweet joys at home. Such as these get a sharp home-voice for use, and keep their best voice for those they meet elsewhere, just as they would save their best cakes and pies for guests and all their sour food for their own board. I would say to all boys and girls: "Use your own guest-voice at home. Watch it day by day, as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth more to you in days to come than the best pearl hid in the sea. A kind voice is a joy like a lark's song to hearth and home. It is to the heart what light is to the eye. It is a light that sings as well as shines. Train it to sweet tones now, and it will keep in tune through life."

A loving heart and a pleasing countenance are commodities which a man should never fail to take home with him. They will best season his food and soften his pillow. It were a great thing for a man that his wife and child, on could truly say of him, "He never brought an angry or ill-tempered word across his threshold." The best likeness of heaven ever seen on the earth is a well-conducted, happy family.—*National Record*.

Routing a Burglar.

A COURAGEOUS WOMAN'S COOL CONDUIT.

A little Eureka woman, says the Eureka (Nev.) Sentinel, awoke the other night to find a burglar prospecting her room for valuables. She lay very quietly until he had concluded his labors and transferred operations to the adjoining parlor, when she quietly arose, armed herself with a revolver which her husband had provided her with, and which was snugly encased under her pillow, and tiptoed into his presence. Covering him with the weapon, without a tremor in her voice, she commanded him to disgorge his plunder. There was blood in her eye and determination in her voice, and the bold burglar weakened at once. He deposited on the centre-table a bracelet, a gold chain, and a pair of earrings, all that he had managed to secure thus far, and meekly listened to a spirited lecture which the lady delivered impromptu. She wound up her address by expressing a regret that her scanty toilet prevented her escorting him to the jail, and ordered him out of the house. He did not stand upon the order of going, but went at once. The brave little woman then dressed, lit her lantern, and went to the furnace, told her husband of her adventure, and remained until daylight.

The Mazarin Bible.

The oldest printed book in the world is the Mazarin bible. It is so called because a copy of it was found in the library of that celebrated French statesman, Mazarin, in Paris, about the middle of the last century. It was beautifully printed in Latin, and when offered for sale, not a human being, except the artists, could tell how the work had been done. The printing was finished as early as 1455, and the binding and illuminating were completed at Mentz in 1456.

It was in two volumes, and there were about twenty copies, eighteen of which are still to be found, ten being in private libraries in England. Some of these are printed on vellum, a very fine kind of parchment, some on paper of choice quality, with black and tolerably handsome letters.

Of this book, Hallam, the historian, thus writes:

"In imagination we may see this venerable and splendid volume leading up the crowded myriads of its followers, and imploring, as it were, a blessing on the new art by dedicating its first fruits to the service of heaven."

A copy of this bible was sold a few years ago for twenty-five hundred dollars.

Plenty of Water.

Artesian well makers say that water can be found anywhere, the question being only one of depth. This would seem to be proved by operations in the desert of Sahara, the last place in which one would look for water. In that desert French engineers have sunk from 75 to 100 wells, which yield 600,000 gallons of water per hour. With this water a large space has been brought under a high state of cultivation. Among the more noteworthy artesian wells in the United States is that of the insane asylum at St. Louis, Mo. It is 3,843 feet deep, and yields 4,500 gallons per hour. The water is warm, averaging nearly 75 degrees. In the same city a sugar refinery has a well of 2,200 feet, yielding about 5,000 gallons per hour. In Louisville, Ky., is one 2,086 feet deep, giving 14,000 gallons per hour. Charleston, S. C., is poorly situated for water, and the city council has spent much money in trying remedies, commencing as far back as 1824. The result has been an artesian well 1,250 feet deep, yielding 1,200 gallons per hour. In Philadelphia the Continental hotel has a 206-foot well, 8 inches in diameter, giving 2,200 gallons per hour. There is a deeper and more prolific well in the United States mint in that city. In New Orleans there are wells of 600 feet; one in Columbus, O., 2,775, and at Onarga, Ill., 85 miles south of Chicago, within a circle of 40 miles diameter are 200 wells, averaging about 75 feet in depth, and yielding 2,225 gallons per hour. On the plains and in the Colorado desert artesian wells are to be found, and also in the oil regions of Pennsylvania. Many years ago the augers used in boring a salt well at Salina, N. Y., fell into some unknown lake 500 feet below the surface. The tools were lost, but the salt water came up abundantly. In California it is estimated that there are more than a thousand