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MIRAMICHI ADVANCE

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Egerton's Will

"You are brutally frank, Heriot."

"Well, my dear Fred, what is the good of mincing matters? You are absolutely a physical wreck. You have just been examined by one of the best doctors in Liverpool, and he declares that you have not got four weeks to live."

"Well, you needn't rub it in. When I met you four years ago I was a silly fool with a fortune. I am still the silly fool, but you have got my money. A delightful sponge you have been, and sucked up the lot. However, as I am going to peg out, it doesn't matter much; but I can't help thinking of my sister—dear little Mary; I wonder what will become of her?"

"To revert to our discussion, my dear Denman, you have not yet given an answer to my proposition."

"Have I not? Well, here it is in a nutshell. I have been your plaything and dupe for four years. I have lived like a weak-willed lunatic, but I am going to die a clean death."

"Then you refuse?"

"Your perspicacity is amazing."

"Then I'm off to London to-night, and you can die when you like, how you like, and where you like."

"You will desert me?"

"I have stuck to you for the last two years—when you have been practically a pauper. You have lived on my charity—even your sister."

"Ah, you will let me have that £25 to send her to-night, Heriot; you won't refuse me that?"

"Not a farthing; I have done with you."

"Look here, Roger, I—I—well, you know all my circumstances; you will let me have that £25 for Mary. She has nobody but me, and she still thinks that I am rich. I haven't seen her for four years, but I have always managed to send her money. You will do it, old chap?"

"Listen to me, Fred, and don't be a fool. Your sister, I understand, looks upon you as a noble brother. What is she going to do when you are dead?"

"Heaven knows."

"Would it not be better to keep her in ignorance of the fact that her brother lived the life of a gambler and died a pauper? Now, look here; agree to my proposition, and I will allow her £200 a year while you are alive and, if you carry things through properly, £500 a year when you are dead."

Fred Denman was silent for a few seconds, and then a fit of coughing seized him that completely exhausted him.

"That is pretty bad," remarked Heriot; "you had better make up your mind before it is too late. What is it to be?"

"What are the details?"

"Simply that you change your name to Philip Egerton, and before you die you send for a lawyer, make a will, and leave everything you possess to me."

"And Philip Egerton?"

"Is dead. You remember the row in Rafferty's saloon?"

"When the lights were put out and a stranger was shot?"

"That stranger was Philip Egerton."

"And you killed him?"

"An accident, my dear Fred. He had quarrelled with his father in London and was living in Australia under an assumed name. No one knew who he really was, so you see everything is quite safe. His father died twelve months ago, and there you are."

"And what am I, as Philip Egerton, supposed to be worth?"

"Hard to say. Perhaps £4,000 a year."

"All right, I'll do it. But what about my dear wife, Sophie?"

"She must know nothing about it. It is two years since we set eyes on her."

"Exactly; but you know my dear Sophie. She smells money as a vulture smells blood, and I wouldn't mind wagering that she'll be knocking at the door before the breath is out of my body."

"All right, let her knock. Now, here are the details. An old certificate of the birth of Philip Egerton, a photograph of his mother, a gold watch with his name on, the Bible his mother gave him, a few books and several specimens of his hand writing."

"You have got things fixed up."

"Now, you will remove to other lodgings, practise the signature of Philip Egerton, and rehearse your last earthly tragedy. Scatter these things about your room to establish your identity, and when you have made the will everything will be plain sailing."

Twenty-four hours later Captain Roger Heriot had arranged everything to his satisfaction and took train to London, there to await the speedy demise of the poor wreck of a man who had once been respected as Fred Denman.

He had not long to wait, for it was but ten days later when he received a communication from a firm of lawyers in Liverpool announcing the death of Philip Egerton, and begging the captain to journey north without delay.

The dead man lay in the darkened room, and a woman sat by the bedside. She glanced curiously at the corpse now and then, and the suspicion of a smile played round her mouth. The door opened and Captain Roger Heriot entered. At the sight of the woman he started back in amazement.

"Sophie! You here?"

"Yes, Roger; is not a woman's place beside her husband?"

"Hush! be silent! This is not your husband."

"Oh, I beg his pardon. May I inquire the name of this late gentleman?"

"Be quiet and don't be a fool. The lawyer is here now. Remember that this man is Philip Egerton; stick to that, do you hear?"

"On one condition."

"And that is?"

"Halves."

Further talking was precluded by the arrival of the lawyer, who after various preliminaries proceeded to read the will which Fred Danman had executed before his death.

"This will is short, sir, quite short, but in perfect order." This is the last Will and Testament of me, Philip Egerton, of Hyde Park Lane, London, in the County of Middlesex, and Dalling Lodge, Little Willoway, in the County of Surrey, Gentleman. Whereby I bequeath to Miss Mary Denman, of Oak Cottage, Barnes, in the County of Surrey, sister of my friend Frederick Denman, an Annuity of £3,000, and I make this Annuity a first charge upon my estate. The residue of my property I leave to my friend Captain Roger Heriot, of Albany, London, and appoint him sole Executor of this my Will. "That is the will, sir, duly signed and attested in the presence of witnesses."

"Do I understand that this Miss Denman receives an annuity of £3,000 a year, and that I am simply residuary legatee?"

"That is the situation, Captain Heriot."

"And until this annuity is provided I handle nothing?"

"Exactly."

The lawyer, after undertaking to see matters through, took his leave, and Sophie immediately indulged in a peal of laughter.

"Oh, Roger, this is splendid. Who would have thought Fred so cute? Three thousand pounds a year to his sister, and what do you get, my poor deluded friend?"

"A house in Hyde Park Lane, a lodge in Little Willoway, and £400 a year to keep them up."

"We can't live on £400 a year."

"We?"

"Yes. Either I share or you get nothing."

"I get precious little as it is. But I suppose it must be halves. I must stay here until to-morrow and see the late lamented put under."

"Right you are. I suppose that fool of a lawyer will communicate with this Mary Denman."

"I suppose so, unless I do so first. By Jove! I see a way out of it. If I marry Mary Denman that £3,000 a year is safe."

"And if there was no Mary Denman there would be no need for an annuity. Dead men tell no tales, nor women either."

"You mean—— ?"

"Exactly."

II.

Tap, tap, tap.

The blind beggar crept slowly along Hyde Park Lane, feeling the railings carefully with his iron-shod stick. Outside a certain house he stopped, and leaning against a pillar gazed vacantly through his heavily-rimmed glasses. The house door opened, and Captain Heriot and Sophie came out.

"You know the address, Roger?"

"Yes. Oak Cottage, Barnes."

"Well, play your cards carefully and meet me at the Trocadero at nine."

"All right. Here that confounded blind man again."

"Pity the poor blind."

"Oh, confound you; be off."

He hailed a hansom and drove off. The cab was no sooner out of sight than the blind beggar hailed another and was driven rapidly to Barnes. Taking up his position a short distance from Oak Cottage he waited, and an hour later Captain Roger Heriot made his appearance.

The captain knocked and was admitted. The blind beggar crept into the porch and sat down. A faint murmur of voices reached him, but he could not hear the conversation. When the captain left the beggar was walking aiong the Station Road—tap, tap, tap with his stick.

As soon as he was out of sight the blind beggar took off his spectacles, beard, and wig. The tattered overcoat was removed and thrown over his arm, and the erstwhile object of charity became a very presentable young man.

"And now for home and little Mary."

He opened the door of Oak Cottage with his key, but Mary Denman had seen him coming, and as soon as he entered a pair of arms were thrown around his neck.

"Oh, Jack—Jack, such good news. Guess. I am an heiress. £3,000 a year, Jack—just think of it."

"Good news, indeed, little girl; but tell me all about it."

"I can't understand it yet, Jack, but somebody has died and left it to me. A gentleman named Captain Roger Heriot called just now to tell me. I am to have all the money and Captain Heriot the houses, and—oh, Jack, it is so funny! It appears he hasn't got enough money to keep up the two places, and he wanted me to think about marrying him."

"Ha, ha! very funny!"

"Of course, I told him that I was going to marry you."

"But you haven't told me who left you the money."

"Oh; how stupid of me; I never knew the man, but his name is Philip Egerton."

"Philip Egerton!"

"Yes, Jack, a friend of Fred's, I believe."

"And—and is Philip Egerton dead?"

"Of course he is, you stupid; how could he leave me the money if he was alive?"

"Why, certainly. But listen, little woman, are you quite sure that you want to marry me now that you are going to be so rich?"

"Don't be an old goose, Jack."

"Well, I have told you my circumstances. My name is not John Castle; I have an enemy, that enemy is occupying my place; I am waiting patiently to track him down and until I have done that I cannot reveal myself."

"You have told me all that before, dear. I love you. I trust you."

Two days later the blind beggar took up his position in Hyde Park Lane. It was late in the afternoon; the autumnal wind swept the road in boisterous gusts, and the sky gave evidence of a tempestuous evening.

He had been at his post for an hour. Sophie Denman had entered the house, opening the door with her own key, but of Roger Heriot he had seen nothing.

But half an hour later his vigil was rewarded. Captain Roger Heriot drove up to the door and handed a lady from the hansom. They passed up the steps together and the captain fumbled in his pocket for the key.

"Here we are at last. You are not afraid to trust yourself in a bachelor's den?"

"Afraid! A woman will do much for the love of——"

The concluding words were lost as the door closed upon them, and the blind beggar stood as if turned to stone, for the voice was the voice of Mary Denman, his betrothed wife.

The twilight deepened into night, hour after hour passed, the rain was falling in torrents, but the blind man stood immovable. The inmates of the house made no sign and the street was deserted. Then a carriage drove up to the door and the driver waited without dismounting from the box. Then Roger Heriot came out and peered up and down the road, and the voice of Sophie called to him from the doorway.

"Is all clear?"

"Yes."

Sophie came down the steps with her arms around Mary Denman. The girl walked willingly enough, but there was a dull, stupid expression on her face. They helped her into the vehicle; Sophie and Heriot followed, and they drove rapidly away.

Mary Denman lay back in the carriage and appeared to sleep. Presently she opened her eyes.

"To where are you taking me?"

"I am keeping my promise, my dear. I am taking you to see your brother Fred."

"Ah, yes I remember."

She closed her eyes wearily, and Heriot and Sophie exchanged glances of satisfaction. The drug which they had administered was just sufficient to make her stupid and obedient.

After half an hour's ride the carriage pulled up before a dilapidated house sandwiched between two tall warehouses. Heriot opened the door and the three entered, after dismissing the vehicle.

The house was in darkness, but Heriot lit a lantern and led the way upstairs, and Mary noted wonderingly that the house was unfurnished. At the top storey Heriot opened a door at the back of the house and motioned the others in.

It was a low room with a window reaching from floor to ceiling. The rain beat upon the panes, and a number of disturbed rats ran to their holes in the dilapidated flooring.

"What does this mean? Why have you brought me here?" asked Mary.

"To make you listen to reason, you little fool."

"Hush! Sophie, you must not talk to her like that."

"Take me to Fred—oh! where is Fred?"

"Fred! I'll tell you where Fred is; he has gone out of this world into the next, and in a few minutes you are going to follow him."

"Silence, Sophie; there is no need for violence. Mary will agree to marry me and everything will be arranged comfortably."

"Marry you, Roger Heriot? I have shared your crimes and I have shared your poverty; do you think that you are going to give me up now that wealth is in your grasp?"

She threw open the window as she spoke, and the roar of the swift running river came up from below.

"The river runs swiftly, the night is dark, your body will be found miles from here," she said to Mary.

"But why do you wish for my death?"

"Your fool of a brother before he died assumed the name of Philip Egerton, he left you £3,000 a year in the name of Philip Egerton, and that sum we have to pay you while you live. See?"

"Take the money and let me go. I want nothing that is obtained by fraud."

"No, no, you know too much. Now Roger, waste no more time; we must get away."

"No, I will not do it. Mary will marry me, and then—stand back."

"You love-sick idiot, will you allow her pretty face to rob you of a fortune? Out of the window with her and have done with it."

She seized Mary and commenced to drag her to the window. With an oath Heriot sprang forward and threw her off.

Sophie spun round with his violence and reeled up against the window. She stumbled against the low ledge and with a wild scream disappeared into the river.

Heriot stood appalled at what he had done.

"It was an accident—an accident—you saw that—you saw it, didn't you? We must get away—but no, no, you know too much. Two women must die to-night. I cannot trust you—I—Hark! What is that?"

Tap, tap, tap. Tap, tap, tap.

With dropping jaws Heriot watched the door, and Mary was no less fascinated.

Slowly it swung open. Tap, tap, and the blind man stood on the threshold.

"The blind beggar of Hyde Park Lane."

"No, I am not a blind beggar."

"Jack, Jack—it is Jack Castle!"

"No, nor yet Jack Castle," he replied, as he threw his arm round Mary.

"Who are you, then?" asked Heriot.

The beard, wig, and spectacles fice and is so constructed that it can be made to give a calling ring in any room at any time; it can be set came off with one sweep of the hand.

"I am Philip Egerton."

"Philip Egerton!"

"Yes, I am Philip Egerton. The man you attempted to assassinate in Australia and then came home to steal his fortune. No, you cannot escape, except through the window: the house is guarded below. Justice has overtaken you at last, and if I mistake not the charge will be murder."

He blew a whistle and two men came up. Quickly they seized Heriot, who was too terror-stricken to offer resistance, and then Philip Egerton took Mary to her home.

Sophie's body was recovered two days later, and Roger Heriot stood his trial and was convicted of manslaughter.

Philip Egerton had no difficulty in proving his identity and recovering his fortune. Shortly afterwards he and Mary were married, and went for a long honeymoon that was full of love and joy, and now they are settled down to the quiet enjoyment of that wealth which was so strangely bequeathed by poor Fred Denman's last will and testament.—London Tit-Bitts.

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NEW SELF-KILLING PLAN.

A Record in the Annals of Self-Destruction.

John Myklehurst, a Norwegian, committed suicide at Millroad Infirmary, Liverpool, in a manner which constitutes a record in the annals of self-destruction. It was stated at the inquest that he was removed to the infirmary in consequence of his strange manner, and that while there he asked for a revolver to shoot himself. This being refused he declined food, and subsequently held his breath until he ruptured his lungs and died.

It has hitherto been held (a medical authority said) that no one has ever committed suicide by holding the breath. This opinion was based on the ground that the excess of carbonic acid circulating in the blood, caused by the deprivation of air, stimulated the nerves of respiration to such an extent that no effort of the will could prevail over the act of breathing.

How John Myklehurst was able to prevent air entering his lungs needs explanation. The "rupture of the lungs" was probably nothing more than the breaking of some of the smaller blood-vessels. This would suggest that the holding of the breath was not a mere stilling of the ribs and diaphragm, which act as bellows. On the contrary, the rupture points to their having acted vigorously, but without being able to overcome an obstruction in the windpipe. John Myklehurst, being insane, was possibly seized with a paralysis of the larynx or voice-box, the result perhaps of auto-suggestion.

GENTLE LADIES BIRCHED.

According to Truth, a curious method of dealing summarily with female kleptomaniacs if gentle birth prevails in certain London Westend shops. Every lady detected in the act is given the option of being prosecuted in a court of law or birched by the managress, a person specially selected for her biceps. The birch is a formidable one. In one shop alone, it is said, twenty ladies have accepted the ordeal of the birch, in addition to two young girls of foreign nationality, who, in consideration of their tender years, were treated to a milder form of chastisement.

Piles To prove to you that Dr. Chase's Ointment is a certain and absolute cure for each and every form of itching, blending and protruding piles, the manufacturers have guaranteed it. See testimonials in the daily press and ask your neighbors what they think of it. You can use it and get your money back if not cured. 60c a box, at all dealers or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.
Dr. Chase's Ointment

A party of negroes were fishing from a pier when one of their number, a boy of about ten, fell into the water. The lad was unable to swim, but although the tide was running strong an elderly negro leaped into the water, and after an exciting struggle brought him safely to land. When the old man climbed on the pier again a bystander rushed up and shook him by the hand, exclaiming: "My noble fellow, you have done a deed that puts us all to shame!" "Yes, boss," was the disconcerting reply, "dat boy dere got all de bait in his pocket."

A Trying Time On Feeble Persons
All Who Are in Low Vitality Have Reason to Dread the Coming Weeks—Fortify Your System by Using
DR. CHASE'S NERVE FOOD.

If you watch the newspapers for the next few weeks you will find that the death record is a large one, and made up largely of persons in advanced years and of weak constitutions.

Vitality seems to be at low ebb at this time of year, and the sudden changes of temperature and humid atmosphere are more than a weakened system can withstand. A little over-exertion, a little unusual exposure, a little neglect of the body, and health is undermined, physical break-down inevitable.

If you could but realize the reconstructive and upbuilding influence of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, it would be easy to convince you of the wisdom of using this preparation at this season of the year. When the blood is thin, weak and watery, Dr. Chase's Nerve Food enriches it by increasing the number of red corpuscles. When the nerves are exhausted, energy gone and strength declining, this great food cure builds up the system, restores and revitalizes the wasted nerve cells and rekindles the spark of life.

No physician can give you a better restorative than Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, for it is prepared in accordance with the most modern and most scientific principles, and contains in condensed form the most potent restoratives known to medical science. By noting the increase of weight while using Dr. Chase's Nerve Food you can prove for a certainty that new, firm flesh and tissue is being added to the body.

Fifty cents a box, six boxes for $2.50, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.

Earth at the Centre of All

And Man the Chief End and Purpose of the Universe.

The attention of the thinking world will be attracted by a remarkable article in the Fortnightly Review for March, by Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace, entitled "Man's Place in the Universe." The eminent writer has assembled all the latest astronomical and other scientific discoveries and knowledge bearing upon the subject. He deduces therefrom this marvellous theory:

First—That the earth or solar system is the physical centre of the stellar universe.

Second—That the supreme end and purpose of this vast universe was the production and development of the living soul in the perishable body of man.

It is impossible in a brief review to do more than indicate the chief features of Dr. Wallace's great contribution to modern thought. He first reminds us that to the early astronomers the earth was the centre of the visible universe, the sun, moon, planets and stars all revolving around it in eccentric and complex orbits. After that as progressive knowledge showed us the utter insignificance of even our solar system, we seem driven to the other extreme. The tendency of all recent astronomical research has been to give us wider views of the vastness and variety and marvellous complexity of the stellar universe, and proportionately, to reduce the importance of our little speck of earth almost to the vanishing point.

Modern sceptics, in the light of this knowledge, point out the irrationality and absurdity of supposing that the Creator of all this unimaginable vastness of suns and systems should have any special interest in so pitiful a creature as man, the degraded or imperfectly developed inhabitant of one of the smaller planets attached to a second or third-rate sun, while that He should have selected this little world for the scene of the tremendous and necessarily unique sacrifice of His Son, in order to save a portion of these miserable sinners from the natural consequences of their sins, is, in their view, a crowning absurdity too incredible to be believed by any rational being.

It must be confessed, he says, that theologians have no adequate reply to this rude attack, while many of them have felt their position to be untenable, and have renounced the idea of special revelation and a Supreme Saviour for the exclusive benefit of so minute and insignificant a speck in the universe.

Dr. Wallace then adduces the evidence from a great body of new facts and observations made within the last quarter of a century that the earth's position in the material universe is special and probably unique. He first asks, Are the stars infinite in number? Then he points out that with every increase of power in telescopes until recent years there had been a proportionate increase in the number of visible stars. There are about 200,000 stars between the first and ninth magnitude, the number at each lesser magnitude being about three times that of the next higher. Now, if this rate of increase were continued down to the seventeenth magnitude, there would be about 1,400,000,000 visible. In the best modern telephotographic charts show nothing approaching this number. The latest estimate does not exceed 100,000,000. As the instruments reach further and further into space they find a continuous diminution in the number of stars, thus indicating an approach to the outer limits of the stellar universe.

This conclusion is further enforced by the fact that the numerous dark passages in the heavens, where hardly any stars are visible, and those seen, projected on an intensely dark background, continue to present the same features in telescopes of the highest powers as they do in those of moderate size. This could not possibly happen if the stars were infinite in number, or even if they extended in similar profusion into spaces much greater than those which our telescopes can reach, because in that case these dark backgrounds would be illuminated by the lights of millions of stars so distant as to be separately invisible, as in the case of the Milky Way. The only other explanation would be that the star system is penetrated in several directions by perfectly straight tunnels of enormous length as compared with their diameter, in which no stars exist, and that you are going to give me up now that wealth is in your grasp?" Such a hypothesis is held to be so improbable as not to be worthy of consideration.

Dr. Wallace next considers the most striking proof of the limited extent of the stellar universe, which consists in an analysis of the laws of light. He quotes Prof. Newcomb and other physicists, who affirm that if the number of stars were infinite their combined light would be fully equal to the sun at midday, whereas starlight is only one-fourth as powerful as moonlight. This proof, which cannot be elaborated here, Dr. Wallace regards, when taken in connection with telescopic research, as altogether conclusive of the limited extent of the stellar universe.

The writer then proceeds to discuss in elaborate, fascinating and easily intelligible detail the distribution of the stars in space, the latest knowledge of their movements and, finally, the position in the universe of the solar system. His conclusions are:

"The result so far reached by astronomers as the direct, logical conclusion from the whole mass of facts accumulated by means of powerful instruments of research, which have given us the new astronomy, is that our sun is one of the central orbs of a globular star cluster, and that this star cluster occupies nearly the central position in the exact plane of the Milky Way, but I am not aware that any writer has taken the next step and, combining these two conclusions, has stated definitely that our sun is thus shown to occupy a position very near if not actually at the centre of the whole visible universe, and therefore, in all probability, in the centre of the whole material universe.

"This conclusion no doubt is a startling one, and all kinds of objections will be made against it, yet I am not acquainted with any great inductive result of modern science that has been arrived at so gradually, so legitimately, by means of so vast a mass of precise measurements and observations and by such wholly unprejudiced workers. It may not be proved with minute accuracy as regards the actual mathematical centre. That is not of the least importance, but that it is substantially correct there seems to be no good reason to doubt, and I therefore hold it right and proper to have it so stated and provisionally accepted until further accumulations of evidence may show to what extent it requires modification.

"This completes the first part of our inquiry, but an equally important part remains to be considered: Our position in the solar system itself as regards adaptability for organic life. Here, too, I am not aware that the whole facts have been sufficiently considered, yet there are facts that indicate our position in this respect to be as central and unique as that of the sun in the stellar universe."

It is not possible to follow Dr. Wallace's cogent arguments in detail on the question of the adaptability of other planets for the development of organic life and of the higher forms of intellectual beings. Writers on this subject, he says, have usually been content to assume that certain planets may possibly be now in a condition to support life not dissimilar to that upon the earth, but they never have considered the precedent question: Could such life have originated and been developed upon these planets? This is the real crux of the problem, and Dr. Wallace believes that full consideration of the required conditions will satisfy us that no other planet can fulfil them.

Dr. Wallace observes that materialists will object that the want of all proportion between the means and the end condemns the theory that the universe was created for the production and development of man, but he asks if there is any such want of proportion. Given infinite space and infinite time, there can be no such thing as want of proportion, if the end to be reached were a great and worthy one, and if the particular mode of attaining that end were the best or perhaps even the only possible one; Re may fairly presume that it was so by the fact that it has been used and has succeeded.

Dr. Wallace's conclusion is: "The three startling facts that we are in the centre of a cluster of suns and that that cluster is situated not only precisely in the plane of the plane of the Milky Way, but also centrally in that plane, can hardly now be looked upon as chance coincidences without any significance in relation to the culminating fact that the planet so situated has developed humanity. Of course, the relation here pointed out may be a true relation of cause and effect and yet have arisen as the result of one in a thousand million chances occurring during almost infinite time; but, on the other hand, those thinkers may be right who, holding that the universe is a manifestation of mind and that the orderly development of living souls supplies an adequate reason why such a universe should have been called into existence, believe that we ourselves are its sole and sufficient result, and that nowhere else than near the central position in the universe which we occupy could that result have been attained."

INQUIRED THE PRICE.

He—"Then everything is fixed and we can be married in May, can't we?"

She—"There is only one thing I have not spoken of, and mamma insisted that I must."

He—"Certainly, my angel. What is it? Bid me go through any trial for your dear sake, and I'll do it. Ask for the Golden Fleece, and if such a thing is in existence I'll get it—aye, even though I must swim the seas, climb the loftiest peaks, or search in the fuming craters of mighty volcanoes, I'll do it."

She—"It isn't much, my dear. Mamma said I must ask you how much you intended to allow me a week for pin-money."

He—"Um—er—how much are pins a paper now?"

Reporter—"To what do you attribute your long life?" Centenarian—"Perseverance—just perseverance. I kept on livin' in spite of everything."

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NEW AND STRANGE

Broughams and other vehicles of aluminium, and even a steel-clad Victoria, are now to be seen in Paris. They are lighter than the old styles of wood and metal combined, are more elegant, and safer in cases of breakdown.

The newest cure for anaemia is to take the sufferer up in a captive balloon, and let him stay at a certain altitude for two hours. Half a dozen ascents of this kind during as many weeks will effect a marvellous cure, and are equal to a three months' sojourn at a health resort.

Locomotives propelled by electricity drawn from the air without cost, and ocean liners racing over the sea by the agency of the electric current drawn inexpensively from the same source, are promised for the near future by Tesla. It is to be done on the principle of wireless telegraphy.

A French doctor has invented a harmless bullet, which ought to be very useful to French duellists. It is made of a chalky compound, and when it strikes a person it merely marks the spot without doing the least mischief. With a mask over the face, men can practice revolver shooting at each other just as they now practice fencing.

Molten wood is a new invention. By means of high distillation and high pressure, the escape of developing gases is prevented, thereby reducing the wood to a molten condition. When cool, the mass assumes the character of coal. This new body is hard, but can be shaped and nicely polished. It is impervious to water and acids.

When the fire of a heating apparatus is lighted for the first time at the beginning of the cold season, one sometimes notices a most unpleasant smell of ammonia and the like. It seems that large numbers of microbes gather in the pipes during the season of rest, and the warmth causes the organisms to vegetate, and thus a quantity of ammonia is produced.

A new calling device is being introduced in hotels, where guests request to be awakened at special times to catch more or less early trains. A clock is set up in the office to the required times, and it will do its duty faithfully, without oversleeping itself as porters and others sometimes do.

A bar magnet arranged in connection with the handle of the razor is the newest device for keeping that useful instrument sharp for a long time. As you pass the razor over your face, the magnet draws the edge, and so prevents it from becoming blunt so soon as it otherwise would do; when at rest, the edge lies along the magnet, so that the cutting part is always under magnetic influence.

A French postal clerk has evolved a simple apparatus for dispensing with the postage stamp and enabling any one to get his letter franked after office hours. The apparatus can be affixed to any pillar box; a coin is dropped into a slot, the corner of the letter is inserted, and the machine stamps the envelope with the amount paid. All you have to do, then, is to drop the letter into the pillar box for collection.

A novel device is being tried for automatically stopping a train. A double dial is attached to one of the driving wheels; this registers the number of miles. Another part of the dial is fitted with a series of stops, arranged to coincide exactly with the distance of each station from the preceding one. As the train runs into the station zone, the "stop" acts on a throttle valve, and pulls up the train within the specified limits. The inventor adds that it will be useful in case of carelessness on the part of the driver, or if he should be asleep.

A new form of Noah's Ark is one of the latest mechanical toys. The animals are attached to arms on a rotating shaft; a turn of the crank sets the shaft spinning, and the child looks through the doorway to catch a glimpse of the animals, which it cannot see properly till the shaft stops. Only one animal can be seen at a time at each stoppage, and the chances against the same animal stopping opposite the doorway twice in any given time are very small. Thus the child is always wondering how many animals are in the box.

PROGRESS OF INVENTION.

The average watch represents but twelve hours of human labor.

The electric motor is fast displacing the leather belt in factories.

Three of the eleven dirigible balloons made in fifty years have killed their inventors.

The missing link from Fashoda to Ujiji in the telegraph line from Cape Town to Cairo will be supplied by wireless instruments.

An English writer has recently described a battleship as the last word mechanical genius, naval construction, and cash payment can say in aggressiveness.

Experience has shown that nothing is gained, in ordinary conditions, by placing electrical power plants at the coal mines, it being cheaper to haul the coal by rail than to transmit its power by wire.

A few years ago quartz mines that would not yield $50 to the ton were despised and rejected as unprofitable. Now, with improved methods of extracting, ore containing as low as $3 a ton pays fair dividends to the stockholders.

The gas used in the modern gas engine performs nearly or quite double the work obtained from it when used for steam heating purposes. In time the gas engine, in utilizing the blast furnace gases, will make pig iron production more than doubly profitable.

"Pa," said little Johnny McSwilliman, "here's a piece in the paper about 'Parasites.' What are they?" "Parasites, my boy, are people who live in Paris. I think you ought to know that, and you in the Third Book."