

CARPETS

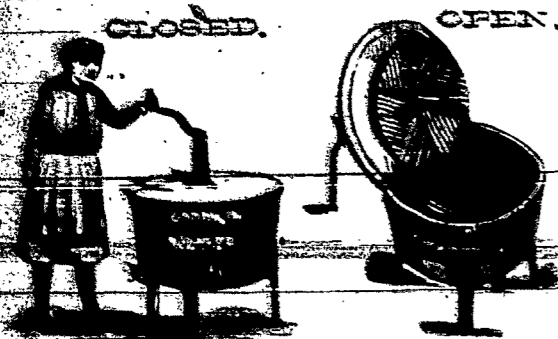
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quickly raised, and the engines were reversed.

No one had time to notice or to think of the coat; but Sir Toby always prided himself on his presence of mind. Instantly he seized it, tore off his own coat, which contained the pocket book and the papers, laid it down on the deck and put on the coat left behind by the suicide. It was a master stroke, a veritable inspiration, and Sir Toby retired to his berth knowing that the odds were at least a hundred to one against a rescue. At his leisure he examined the pockets of the stranger's garment; the only thing of importance it contained was a letter, apparently addressed to the dead man's wife. "As I thought," said Sir Toby to himself, when he read it at leisure; "ordinary cases of forgery, cannot live any longer—the usual bosh! I don't think Mrs. Bowsater will ever get this letter." And he burned it carefully, and a night or two later took an opportunity of throwing the coat itself overboard.

"Now I am really all right," he reflected. There was a great hue and cry in London when it was reported that Sir Toby Bunskin had actually disappeared. Half the detectives were employed to look for him, advertisements were inserted by the score, even placards were posted; no exertion in fact, and no expense were spared to discover his whereabouts. But not the slightest result followed until the news arrived from America that Sir Toby had jumped from an Atlantic steamer and had, of course, been drowned, leaving behind him a coat, in the pocket of which was a pocket book containing cards and private papers, obviously belonging to the unfortunate baronet.

It was a rainy day's wonder, but as nobody cared a straw about Sir Toby when alive, people soon grew tired of speculating as to the cause which had prompted the "rash act." And as soon as certain necessary legal formalities had been complied with, Jack Bunskin found himself Sir John Tobias Bunskin, Baronet, of Bunskin Hall and Grosvenor Square, and the possessor of a substantial rent roll and a goodly sum of ready money. Now, it was not very likely that Jack should feel any profound grief for his uncle. The manner of the old man's death certainly shocked him considerably, but the pleasures and duties of his new position speedily banished the unpleasant subject from his mind.

He had, too, plenty of things to look after. His creditors, of course, came down upon him in a hungry horde, and the amount of post-obits which he had to pay off was quite alarming. Moreover, he had no intention of leading the sober and quiet life that had suited his uncle. He bought a yacht, started a small racing stud and began to dabble in city companies, all of which things demand a considerable amount of time and attention, not to mention money. So a couple of years passed.

Jack, in common parlance, went the pace to the best of his ability; got himself elected M. P. for one of the divisions of Fallowfield, and finally became engaged to Miss Hilda Grains, only daughter and heiress of the late Sir Joshua Grains, M. P., the well known brewer and millionaire. There was, of course, a very grand wedding, and in due time the happy pair returned to London from a prolonged honeymoon trip on the continent. When Jack had finished examining a pile of letters and other documents, he inquired of the family butler whether he had any special news to communicate, for that individual looked like a man burdened with a guilty secret.

"It's my duty to tell you, sir," said Mr. Flaggos mysteriously, "as an old gent has been calling here every day for the last week, and says as he must see you."

"Is that all?" queried Jack.

"No, sir—he says he's your uncle."

"My uncle? What a—d nonsense! Why, the fellow must be a lunatic or an impostor!"

"Just so, sir; but we can't get rid of him, and I didn't like to give the poor old idiot in charge."

"Quite right; next time he comes I'll see him."

"Oddly enough, half an hour afterward the old gentleman returned, and Flaggos promptly ushered him in."

"Well, my man, said the new baronet, and what can I do for you?"

"Jack," said the stranger, "do you mean to say that you don't know me? In your Uncle Toby—I am, indeed, and not a blessed soul recognizes me?"

Jack stared at his visitor in astonishment. His clothes were shabby, and he wore a long dog leg; his face was disfigured in a most remarkable fashion, and the small remnant of hair that he possessed stuck upright in a strange tuft. He did not resemble the late Sir Toby Bunskin in the slightest; but the tone of his voice was horribly familiar.

"This is a very nice person!" he said.

"I wasn't drowned; it was another passenger," and Sir Toby confessed the story of the change of coats.

"But what on earth have you been doing for more than two years?" "I went hunting bears and things in the Rocky mountains," said Uncle Toby in a sepulchral voice. "We lost our way, wandered about for days, and were eventually captured by the Indians. Couldn't get away or even write."

"Oh, indeed! Is that why you have tattooed your face so elegantly?" asked Jack.

"I didn't tattoo myself—they did it for me," yelled Sir Toby. "My face is nothing to the rest of me. I've got a pine forest, a lake and a range of mountains on my back; three rattlesnakes on each arm, my chest is covered with tomahawks, arrows and pipes; and there are opossums, terrapins and all sorts of beastly animals on my legs!"

"Dear me, uncle, what's become of your left ear?" "Well, you see, Red Blanket, the chief, you know, took a great fancy to me; but sometimes he used to get drunk and throw things about. He cut nearly the whole of my ear off with a tomahawk one day."

"You must have had a rollicking time." "Don't laugh, you vagabond!" cried Sir Toby, waxing wrathful. "Look at my head! That was done by Blue Blazes, another chief; he tried to scalp me, and it was all that Red Blanket could do to stop him. He got about half of it off as it was. And now, Jack, when you've done grinning perhaps you'll talk business. I meant to play a joke on you, but it seems to me that I've got the worst of it. However, we'll let bygones be bygones; I'll make you a good allowance, though I hear that you've married a wife with a big fortune. But, of course, you know now you must clear out."

"Clear out of what?" "Why, out of my property and my money."

"You're welcome to the baronetcy, Uncle Toby," said Jack, thoughtfully; "but I'm afraid that I can't oblige you any further."

"What the deuce do you mean, sir?" "Simply that there's nothing left to clear out of. I've spent it—every blessed bob!"

Sir Toby turned livid under his tattoo marks.

"You infernal young scoundrel!" he shrieked.

"Are you mad?" "Not a bit of it, uncle; don't get excited. You see, nearly all the ready you left went to pay post-obits, and then I took to racing and gambling a bit. Had most shocking luck! Lost every sixpence, sold the house in Grosvenor square, sold Bunskin Hall under the settled estates act, you know; sold everything. If I hadn't married Hilda I should have been absolutely stone broke. She bought back Bunskin Hall, by special leave of the trustee; but all her money is strictly tied up, and I haven't a sixpence of my own in the world!"

"Is this really true?" said Sir Toby, sadly.

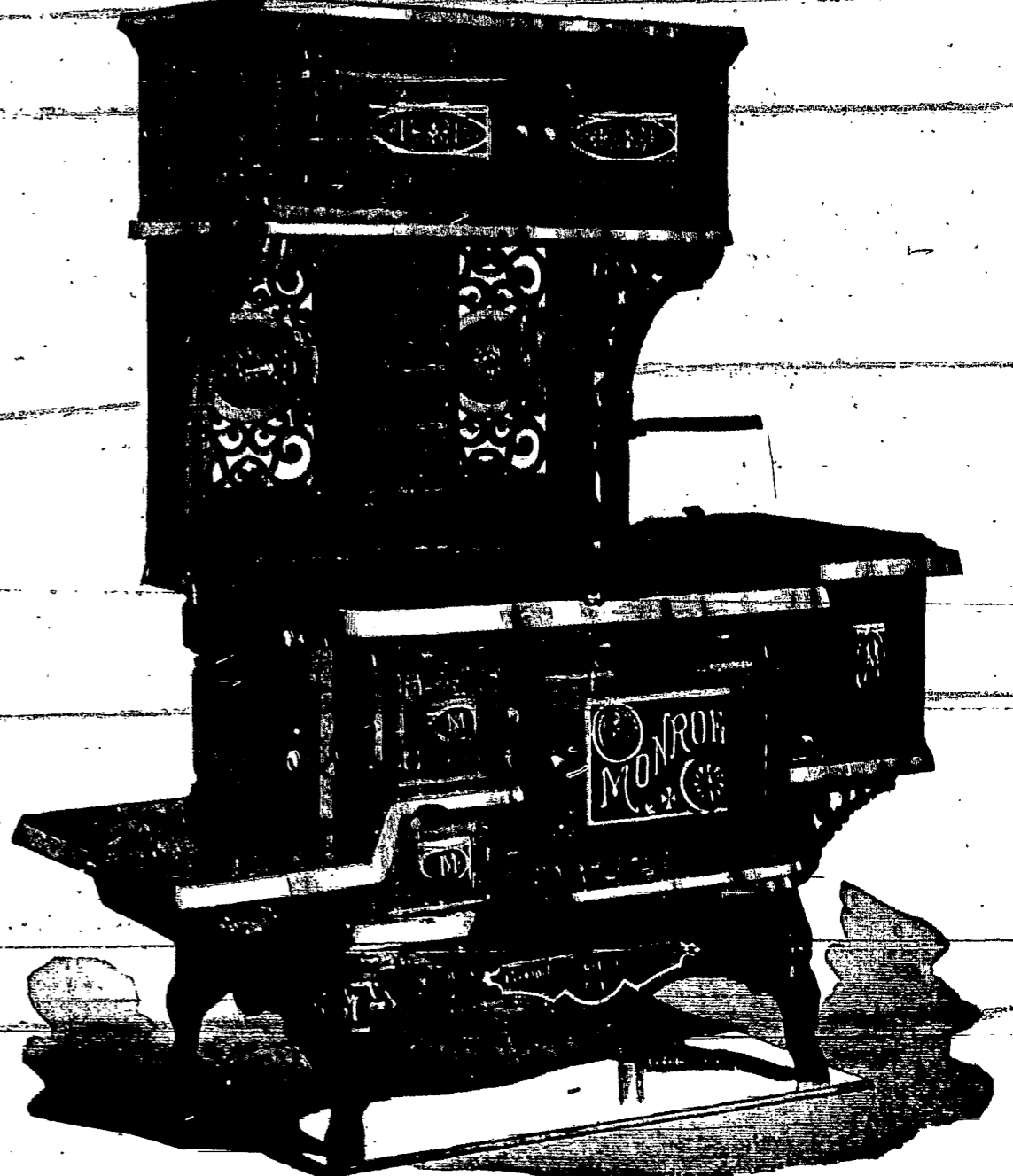
"Gospel truth, I assure you. Ask Taper and Deeds, they know all about it. Never mind, uncle, you've had your fun with the Indians, you know, and I've had mine. Won't you have a brandy and soda or something? You look quite green. Tell me what, if you let me keep the title, I'll get Hilda to make you head gardener at Bunskin—£250 a year, good house and precious little to do. Think it over, uncle."—London Truth.

Highest of American Peaks.

"The highest mountain in America" must now be changed from Mount St. Elias to Mount Wrangel, a little to the north of the former peak. Several of these mountains have been newly measured. Mount Hood, once "roughly" estimated at 15,000 feet, then "closely" at 16,000, was brought down by triangulation to 13,000. An aneroid barometer made it 12,000 and a mercurial barometer made it 11,225. Mount St. Elias, estimated by DeGesset at 12,672 feet, was triangulated by Mr. Baker at 12,500. It now appears that Mount Wrangel rises 2,400 feet above Cooper's river, which is in turn 2,000 feet above the sea level at that point. If this holds good, Mount Wrangel is a good 2,000 feet higher than any other peak in North America, and has the distinction of being within the United States besides St. Louis Re public.

The Cylindrograph

The cylindrograph is an instrument of French invention for taking panoramic photographs in connection with military surveys and the like. It is very simple in construction. A semi-circular cylinder having a small lens in the center moves on an axis, and it is provided with a dark slide of some material which will band without breaking. When a view is to be taken the lens is moved from one side of the landscape to the other.



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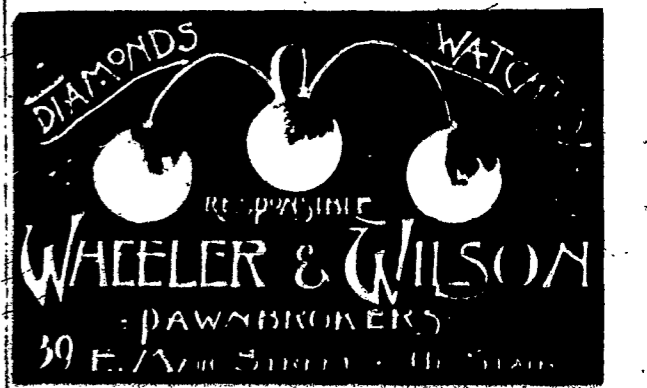
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