THE BRAVEST BATTLE.

The bravest battle that ever was fought!
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not;
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon, or battle shot,
With sword or nobler pen;
Nay, not with eloquent words or thought,
From mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in a walled-up woman's heart—
Of woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore her part—
Lo! there is that battlefield.

No marshaling troop, no bivouac song;
No banner to gleam and wave;
But, oh! these battles, they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave.

Yet, faithful still as a bridge of stars,
She fights in her walled-up town—
Fights on and on in the endless wars,
Then silent, unseen—goes down.

O, ye with banners and battle shot,
And soldiers to shout and praise,
I tell you the kingliest victories fought
Were fought in these silent ways.

O' spotless woman in a world of shame!
With splendid and silent scorn,
Go back to God as white as you came,
The kingliest warrior born!

—JOAQUIN MILLER.

CUPID'S HAIRPIN.

Mr. Robert Perkins entered his private office with a disagreeable frown. He tossed his hat at the nearest hook and dropped himself into his swivel chair. Then he lifted his knee in the air, clasped his hands about it and gnawed at his mustache. Ordinarily Mr. Robert Perkins was a good looking example of manhood. He wasn't at all attractive at the present moment, however. That's what the fair haired girl at the typewriter in the outer office thought. She could see him when she raised her eyes above her copy, and she wondered what disturbed him so.

The fact is, he was a very much disgruntled man. He had cause to be. Somebody was spying upon his movements. Somebody was even prying into his private affairs and stealing information that was of great value to him.

Mr. Robert Perkins was a real estate operator, a man of big deals, whose name, in spite of his two and thirty years, was already a power in the street. Up to within a few weeks he had been singularly successful, but now somebody seemed to be blocking all his important moves. Only the day before he had prepared in a sketchy way the plat of an extensive tract he had meant to secure, and now he had just discovered that the price had been jumped on him to an extent that meant an outlay of $10,000 more than he had counted on. He knew that his breast was the only guardian of this proposed deal—his breast and his desk, for in the latter was locked the precious plat.

Mr. Perkins pulled out his desk key and thrust it into the keyhole. At least he attempted to do so, but something interfered, something which stubbornly resisted the most violent efforts. He drew out the key and brought forth his knife. A few minutes of energetic prying and twisting dislodged the obstacle.

It was a hairpin.

A twisted hairpin of bronzed wire. Mr. Perkins instinctively turned in his chair and looked toward the fair haired girl at the typewriter. She was bending over her work and did not see him. Mr. Perkins knew that the fair haired girl used hairpins of bronzed wire.

Somebody had tried to pick his desk lock with a hairpin, the same somebody who had been making mischief for him right along. Could it be that innocent looking young woman? She handled his letters; she was to some extent familiar with his private business.

Mr. Perkins opened his desk with a bang. Then he struck sharply on a call bell that stood at his elbow. A boy appeared in the doorway.

"George," said Mr. Perkins, "shut the door."

When the lad's back was turned, he looked at the hairpin again and sighed. Then he thrust it carefully into his vest pocket. When the boy approached him, he was gazing intently at the plat where it lay, apparently undisturbed, in the desk.

"George," said Mr. Perkins, "do you remember that I left early yesterday afternoon?"

"Yes, sir," said George. "You went away at three o'clock with Mr. Tompkins in a carriage."

"Did you leave the outer office before closing up time?"

"Yes, sir. I went to the postoffice for stamps, and I came back by the way of Lawyer Briggs' office and left that abstract."

"How long were you gone?"

"'Bout half an hour, sir."

"Was Miss Phillipps in the office when you left?"

"Who—Miss Alice?"

"Yes, Miss Alice."

It was a pretty name. It was the first time Mr. Perkins had spoken it, and he thought it a very pretty name, and then his fingers closed on the hairpin and his heart hardened.

"She was here when I left and here when I come back, sir."

"Anybody else here?"

"Mr. Burnham was in just before I left. He was talking to Miss Alice, sir."

"Talking to Alice?"

There was something in his snappy tone that carried the intimation that Mr. Perkins didn't like this information.

"Yes, sir. Talking confidential like. When I looked around, he stooped down and said something real low, and Miss Alice kind of blushed."

"That will do, George."

As the boy opened the door Mr. Perkins called him back.

"Step across the hall to Mr. Burnham's office and tell him I want to see him."

"Yes, sir." Mr. Tom Burnham came puffed in. He was a short, stout man, with a double chin and a laughing face.

"Want to see me, Bob?" he cried as he took a chair.

"Yes," replied Mr. Perkins. He paused a moment. "I'm worried and puzzled" he added "Somebody is robbing me of my ideas."

"Get out!" said Mr Burnham.

"Yes, but it's true."

"Suspect anybody!"

"Yes."

Perkins rang the bell.

"George," he said, "tell Miss Phillips that I want her."

"Hold on," said Burnham. "I don't like this. It's all wrong. Just excuse me."

"Sit down," said Mr. Perkins.

The stout man sank back in his chair. Then the door opened and Alice entered. She cast a nervous glance from Perkins to Burnham. Her cheek paled a little, but her lips were firmly compressed. Perkins watched her narrowly.

"Sit down, Miss Phillips," he said. "I have called you in here to ask you a few questions. Somebody has been tampering with the private papers in my desk, Miss Phillips."

The girl started, but she returned his gaze fearlessly.

Yesterday afternoon this unknown was at work again. The tampering must have taken place while George was absent from the office. You, I think, were here until he returned?"

"I was here." Her voice was clear and steady.

"Did any one enter the outer office during that time?"

"Several men came to the door and inquired for you. Mr. Burnham is the only one who entered."

"Did you sit where you could see my private door?"

"Not all the time I moved my typewriter table to the window and put the screen about me."

"May I ask why you did that?" not flinch.

The girl hesitated, but her gaze did

"Because—because of Mr. Burnham's attentions."

"Come, now, I protest,"—began the stout man.

"Sit down," said Perkins.

He looked back at the girl. There was a deep flush on her cheeks.

"You mean that Mr. Burnham paid you attentions that you thought were out of place in a public office?"

Mr. Perkins' voice was cold and hard The girl compressed her lips.

"Yes," she murmured

"Hang it all, man," sputtered Burnham, "what has my saying a complimentary word or two to a pretty girl got to do with your alleged robbery?"

The girl turned her head and looked at him, and there was something in the look that made the heart in Perkins' bosom leap for joy.

"I have questioned George," he said hurriedly, as if the business had begun to nauseate him, "and he corroborates your statement. He saw Mr. Burnham stoop and murmur something to you—and—and you blushed.

"By George," cried Burnham, "this is deucedly unkind!"

Perkins did not notice him. He was looking at the girl.

"Yes," she slowly said, "I remember I will tell you what he said."

"It is not necessary," said Perkins.

"Certainly not," cried Burnham

"Do as you please," said Perkins.

"It was only a simple request," the girl went on. "He said"—

"I protest," cried Burnham.

"Go on," said Perkins.

"He said that he wished to clean an ink well, and he asked me for a hairpin."

Burnham laughed boisterously.

"You see," he chuckled.

Perkins arose and fumbled in his vest pocket.

"Is this your hairpin, Miss Phillips?" he asked. I found it in the keyhole of my desk this morning.

Burnham arose. His face was livid

"Just a joke, a practical joke," he muttered thickly and turned and rushed from the room.

"I knew it was that cur the instant you entered the room," said Perkins, but his voice changed as the girl arose

"Just a mo—moment," he stammered. "I—I want to ask you one more question."

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There is a new typewriter in the Perkins outer office, but as Mrs. Alice Phillips-Perkins herself picked her out it is believed that she is a thoroughly competent and trustworthy successor to that esteemed lady.

About Harem Baths.

It has remained for a German newspaper woman, Adele Stern, to penetrate the mysteries of the Sultan's harem. She says:

"Along the walls are low settees. In the middle of the room stands a magnificent Turkish clock. Near by is a mangal, an open metalic stove, from which comes daintily perfumed heat. On the top is a big bronze pot, in which delicious mocha is being brewed. At every other step is a sort of cradle, in which rest from one to three children.

"The dolce far niente of Turkish female life can nowhere be better studied than in a bath. The women of the harem enter the bath early in the morning and spend from an hour to the whole day there.

"And now to the bath itself. It is a veritable fairyland. The soft, damp air, the white marble, the perfumed steam, all help the illusion of being in some Nixie land. Right before me, splashing in the water, are two nymphs. Their immense black eyes glance sadly at me from beneath a mass of raven black hair. Their forms are exquisite, white as the alabaster surrounding them, and with skin as soft as the richest velvet.

"The bath finished, I am once more ushered into the dressing room. I drink a cup of coffee and depart."

Paid for Custer's Supplies.

A Western man has, after twenty years' efforts, succeeded in collecting $75 from the Government for supplies furnished Custer's army on its way to the Little Big Horn.

Consolatory Explanation.

Every woman, according to the story she tells to her second husband, was forced into her first marriage by the wishes of her parents.—Atchinson Globe.

BIGGEST OF GUNS.

Building a Monster to Protect the Harbor of New York.

The largest gun ever built in the world is now being constructed at the Bethlehem, Pa., Iron Works for the defence of New York Harbor. This enormous piece of ordnance will weigh, when completed, 126 tons. It will exceed by six tons weight the monster gun which Krupp, of Germany, exhibited at the World's Fair in Chicago, and, in length it will be nearly five feet longer than the German gun.

This monster American weapon is being fabricated by the Bethlehem Iron Works, under the orders of the War Department. It is the biggest order ever given to any establishment in the world. That an American plant can execute the order shows the tremendous strides which have been made in this country during the past ten years.

The intention of the War Department, it is announced, is to mount the great piece on a specially built foundation, on Romer Shoals. The protection for this gun will be a turret, which will wholly inclose the crew and the greater part of the gun. From its position on Romer Shoals the great piece of ordnance will have a full sweep of the channels leading into New York harbor. There is not, it is declared, a vessel afloat to-day with armor of sufficient strength to resist its shot. Mr John F. Meigs estimates that a blow from the new gun would have a striking energy equal to that of a 2,000-ton ship when running at full speed. The shot from the gun, he adds, would smash, crack and batter down any armor which it could be possible for a ship to carry. The question of piercing was hardly worth entertaining.

The calibre of the new gun will be sixteen inches The length, from breech to muzzle, will be forty-nine feet, two inches. Through the breech, in a vertical line the gun will have a measurement of exactly five feet. Mr. Meigs computes the weight of a shot for the new gun at a little over 2,300 pounds. That means more than a ton of metal. The heaviest shots fired in England have not weighed over 2,000 pounds.

The powder charge for the American gun will weigh nearly 1,000 pounds. Provided extreme elevation for range could be obtained, a shot from the New York Harbor gun would be liable to travel more than sixteen miles

The greatest care has to be exercised in the fabrication of this great weapon. If a jacket or hoop be shrunk on out of line the piece may be thereby rendered useless. All measurements are brought down as close as 8-100 of an inch. In the final rifling work the great mass of metal will have to be slowly turned on a lathe while the rifling tool works its way through the bore

All metal used in the great gun is fluid compressed The specifications which are being adhered to demand the most exacting physical tests. Specimen pieces of metal are taken from all forgings and are subjected to elongation, breaking and bending tests. Finally, every part of the gun must be of forged metal. The tube, for instance, has been cast and rough bored It will next have a mandrel introduced through its length, and then be placed under the hammer.

For this latter stage the Bethlehem Works have the largest hammer in the world It is capable of delivering a blow of 120 tons, or some ten tons more than the famous Krupp hammer.

The building of the new 16-inch gun is an expensive undertaking. The gun itself will cost about $120,000 For single guns the average cost to the Government for all fabrication work in this country is roughly estimated at $1,000 per ton of gun.

The cost of the gun carriage and turret will bring the cost up to as much again as the weapon, while the cost for foundation will, it is estimated, round out a grand total of at least $300,000. The foundation for the 16-inch gun will require a depth, it is said, of fifty feet if earth be the basis. This foundation must be constructed of concrete.

Brigadier-General Flagler is reported to have declared that a harbor such as New York should possess at least one gun capable of stopping any vessel an enemy might send in, when every other gun in the harbor had proved futile. In other words, the 16-inch is to be regarded as the salvation of the port when every other piece of ordnance in the harbor has failed.

FACTS BRIEFLY GIVEN.

A square mile contains 640 acres.
Telescopes were invented in 1590.
Envelopes were first used in 1839.
Iron horse shoes were made in 481.
Telephones were invented in 1861.
A barrel of flour weighs 196 pounds.
A barrel of pork weighs 200 pounds.
The first steel pen was made in 1830.
The first Atlantic cable operated in 1858.
Light moves 192,000 miles per second.
Watches were first constructed in 1476.
The first lucifer match was made in 1829.
The Chinese invented paper in 170 B. C.
Gold was discovered in California in 1848.
Sound moves at the rate of 743 miles an hour.
The first steamer crossed the Atlantic in 1819.
The pianoforte was invented in Italy about 1710.
The Vatican is the largest residence building in the world.
Storm clouds move at the rate of thirty-six miles per hour.
A peach 13¾ inches in circumference was raised in McMinn county, Tenn., last season.
Governor Morris was the framer of the Constitution of the United States of America.
Bear-head helmets were common among the American Indians at the beginning of this century.
In 1386 Richard II., being in financial distress, pawned his crown and regalia for a loan of $10,000.
The rabbit pest in New Zealand began with the introduction of seven rabbits into the country about 1860.
Nine hundred and fifty telegraph sub-marine cables are now in operation, most of them in Europe; their total length is over 80,000 miles.

SENATOR VEST'S PLEA

JUST TALKED ABOUT DOGS, BUT HIS CLIENT GOT A VERDICT.

An Episode in the Life of the Missouri Statesman When He Used to Ride the Circuit—A Homely Plea That Brought Tears to Judge and Jury.

Some years ago Senator Vest was down in Missouri to try a law suit. Another case, a dog case, was on the docket just ahead of him, and he had to wait till this was disposed of. One of the lawyers in the dog case asked Vest if he wouldn't help their side, and the Senator said he would. So he was paid a retaining fee of $250 by the plaintiff and the trial went on. Voluminous evidence was introduced to show that defendant had shot plaintiff's dog in malice, and quite as much to prove that the dog was vicious and had attacked the defendant. Then the lawyers made their addresses to the Court, going over the evidence with great thoroughness. All this time Senator Vest sat with his big round head buried between his shoulders, as he was wont, without saying a word. He seemed to be asleep most of the time.

"Vest," remarked his associate counsel, "it is now our turn to close. You do it."

"No," said the Senator, "you know more about the case than I do. You finish it up."

"But you must do something to earn your fee or our client will be sore."

So Vest rose from his chair, straightened the kink out of his neck, looked first one juror and then another in the face till he had spent several minutes in making the round of the twelve good men and true, and then began

"Gentlemen of the Jury—The best friend a man has in this world may turn against him and become his enemy. His son or daughter that he has reared with loving care may prove ungrateful. Those who are nearest and dearest to us, those whom we trust with our happiness and our good name, may become traitors to their faith The money that a man has he may lose. It flies away from him perhaps when he needs it most. A man's reputation may be sacrificed in a moment of ill-considered action. The people who are prone to fall on their knees to do us honor when success is with us may be the first to throw the stone of malice when failure settles its cloud upon our heads. The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is his dog.

"Gentlemen of the jury," the Senator continued, "a man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be near his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer; he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert he remains. When riches take wings and reputation falls to pieces he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens. If fortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him, to guard against danger, to fight against his enemies. And when the last scene of all comes, and death takes the master in its embrace and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by his graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true even in death."

Then Vest sat down. This remarkable speech he had delivered in a low voice, without a gesture. No reference had he made to the merits of the case in hand. Not a word had he uttered about the evidence. When he finished Judge and jury were seen to have tears in their eyes. The jury filed out, and in a minute or two returned to the courtroom The plaintiff had asked for $200 damages. The verdict gave him $500, and several of the jurymen wanted to hang the defendant."

The Last Match.

The ship had lain becalmed in a tropical sea for three days. Not a breath of air stirred the mirror-like surface of the sea or the limp sail that hung from the yards like drapery carved in stone.

The captain resolved to wait no longer. He piped up all hands on deck and requested the passengers to come forward.

"I must ask all of you," he said, "to give me every match that you have."

Wonderingly the passengers and crew obeyed.

The captain carefully arranged the matches in his hands as each man handed him his store until all had been collected. Then he threw them all overboard but one, drew a cigar from his pocket, and striking the solitary match on the mainmast, endeavored to light it.

In an instant a furious gale swept over the deck, extinguished the match and filled the sails, and the good ship Julie sped through the waves on her course.

A Surprising Theory.

The surprising theory that whooping cough is contagious only before the patient begins to whoop is advanced by Dr. Weill, a French physician. From many cases of exposure he has satisfied himself that all risk of infection ceases at the beginning of the whooping stage or very soon after.

Wilhelm's Autobiographs.

Kaiser Wilhelm is a great collector of autographs, and specially prizes the signatures of military commanders of the end of the last and beginning of the present century, of which he has a large collection.

Queer Petition for Pardon.

James Johnson, a convict in the Missouri Penitentiary, has petitioned the Governor for a pardon on the ground that he "wants to go to the Klondike gold fields."