

# MAB'S RIVAL.

"My dear Mabel, they are all alike," said Miss Tabitha Price, shaking her head to emphasize her words. "Every man Jack of them. There is not a pin to choose between them."

"But, Aunt Tabby," said Mabel, between her sobs, "I thought Jack so—"

"Of course. It's the way of all you stupid girls. There is not one of them that I would trust—excepting your father, of course. And there's no knowing what he might have been had I not been near to look after him. After all, Mr. Aylmer is no worse than the rest."

"But I can't marry him if—"

"No, dear; of course not. But marriage is not essential to happiness. Better remain what the world ruddily calls an old maid than—"

"But I don't want to remain an old maid," said the girl, as emphatically as her sobs would allow. "Better be dead!"

"I don't think so. But are you sure you are not torturing yourself heedlessly? Are you certain 'tis his writing?"

"I should know it among a thousand."

"Ah! I suppose so," said Tabitha, nodding sagely. "Let me see it again."

Mabel opened her hand, in the palm of which lay a tiny ball of crumpled paper, evidently a piece of a letter.

Miss Price smoothed it out carefully and read: "Must get rid of Polly before the wedding. I am awfully fond of her, and don't like parting, but—"

Here the writing broke off, and, looking up, she said, "It is a thousand pities we have not the other portion. Did you look around?"

"Yes, aunt; you may be sure I did. As soon as I caught sight of this



But is it true, Jack? I knew it was Jack's writing, and picked it up. I searched all around, but could find no more."

"Well, dear, what will you do?"

"Do?" said Mabel, sobbing anew. "I shall pack up all his presents and send them back, and tell him how glad I am I found him out."

A heavy step on the gravel walk caused Miss Price to look up as a fresh-colored, clean-shaven young giant swung past the window, singing as he went. "Love was once a little boy. Heigh! heigh!"

"Yes," snapped Miss Tabitha, vigorously. "Once. But he's outgrown his innocence long since. There, run away, child, and dry your eyes. Don't let Mr. Fairleigh see you like that."

Walter Fairleigh entered with the freedom of one who felt himself at home.

"Good morning, Miss Price," he said, cheerily. "Where is Queen Mab? I thought I saw her here."

"Mabel," said Miss Price, laying stress upon the name, "is not very well. She has gone to her room."

"What a beastly nuisance!" said the young fellow, dropping into a chair. "Has she heard from Jack this morning?"

"Umph!" said Miss Price, bridling. "I believe there was a letter from Mr. Aylmer."

"Did he say whether he was coming down to-day?"

"I really cannot inform you. Did you expect him?"

"Well, I don't know. You see it all depends on whether—"

"He succeeds in getting Polly off his hands, eh?" said she, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Oh!—I beg your pardon," he stammered, flushing to the roots of his hair. "Did you say—"

"Yes," said Polly, "she answered."

"Oh!" he said, with great hesitancy. "I thought Jack had kept that matter secret. I was not aware that you knew."

"Walter Fairleigh, I know all," said he, reproachfully, with an air of relief. "The gist of that. I know Jack did intend to keep it close. In fact, he made me swear by the love I bore my dear Mercedes that I'd never—never—never divulge. His idea was that the dean might disapprove."

Tabitha smiled grimly, but said never a word as she thought of the crumpled paper in her pocket.

"Well, I'll get off," said Fairleigh, rising. "I'm awfully sorry about Mab. By the way, Miss Price, if there should be any news of Jack's movements, would you please let me know?"

But, of course, I don't want to see his coming here."

"Well!" exclaimed Miss Price, with emphasis, as her visitor quitted the room. "Well—I never did!"

"Ah!" she exclaimed, breaking off as the Rev. Timothy Price entered with Jack Aylmer.

"Timothy Price," she said, "you always were a fool!"

"Why, Tabby, what are you—"

"Timothy," she snapped, "ask Mr. Aylmer the nature of this private business that detained him in town."

"Why, really, Miss Price," said the young fellow, blushing to the roots of his hair, "it is a matter that—"

"Would not speak of?"

"Why, candidly, yes."

"Ah! I thought so. But, sir, we have discovered your disgraceful secret."

"Well, I am sorry—"

"That you are found out. Oh! I can believe you. And pray, sir, what of your victim?"

"What victim?" asked the dean, looking puzzled. "Jack Tabby, what is the meaning of all this?"

"Ask him, sir. Ask him to explain, if he can, his connection with a certain Polly," said Tabitha, her voice trembling with righteous indignation.

"John," said the dean, eyeing him sternly. "Is there any truth in this?"

"Well, sir," said Jack, "since Miss Price seems to know all about it, I may as well confess."

"And yet," said the dean, angrily, "you dared to speak of love to my child!"

"Why not? I admit that I ought, perhaps, to have told you. But respecting your well-known prejudice I thought it better to keep the matter to myself until I could succeed in getting rid of her."

"And pray, sir, have you succeeded?" asked Tabitha.

"Oh, yes. Perkins has taken her off my hands."

"A pretty arrangement, truly. And pray how does she take the matter?"

"Well, she may fret a bit at first. But she'll soon grow as fond of him as she was of me."

"I hope, sir, he will treat the poor thing with greater kindness than you have displayed."

"Kindness?"

"Yes, sir. And that he will not scratch her, as you appear to have done, upon the slightest provocation."

"Scratch her, Tab, what are you talking of?" said the dean, with a puzzled air. "You surely do not mean that Mr. Aylmer so far forgot his manhood as to—"

"Scratched her because he didn't like her flurp. I think it was 'form' Mr. Fairleigh said. But, of course, it's the same thing."

"What on earth mistake is here?" said Jack, glancing round with a look of puzzled amusement. "I certainly did scratch Polly, but—"

"By accident, of course?"

"Oh, no. I made up my mind to do it some days before."

"Disgraceful! Pray, sir, was there any serious engagement?"

"Yes, of course; otherwise I should not have wanted to scratch her."

"You would not have dared, you mean. Most unmanly! She may be thankful for her escape. If you cannot restrain your temper before marriage—"

"Marriage! Marriage! with Polly?" cried Jack, bursting into a peal of hearty laughter. "Ha! ha! ha! We've got mixed here with a vengeance. Ha! ha! ha!"

"And pray, sir, why not?"

"Why, not? Why, because—ha! ha! ha!"

"Hullo! Jack; there you are," said Fairleigh, looking in at the window. "Jones told me he saw you come up with his reverence. Sold the filly, eh?"

"Sold her? Yes. And, agad! I fancy some one has been selling Miss Price, too."

"Selling me, sir?" she said, with offended dignity.

"Confess now," he said, playfully shaking his finger at her. "Confess that you thought Polly was a woman."

"Certainly. What else should she be?"

"Why a horse, my dear madam," he replied, lightly.

"A horse?" cried the dean, with an air of relief. "Ah, Tabby, another mare's nest!"

"A horse?" she sniffed, incredulously. "Why make such a secret of it?"

"It was a race horse, my dear madam. Knowing the dean's prejudice against the turf, I determined to keep her existence a secret until I could place her in good hands. I was loth to part with her. But I could not allow even Polly to stand between me and Mab."

"But is it true, Jack?" whispered Mabel, who had crept into the room unobserved. "Is it really true?"

"True," he answered, "as your own sweet self!"

**Onion Plasters For Colds.**  
Onion plasters are prescribed to break up hard coughs. They are made of fried onions placed between two pieces of old muslin. The plaster is kept quite hot until the patient is snugly in bed, when it is placed on the chest to stay over night. Onion syrup is claimed by some to be unequalled as a cure for a bad cold in the chest.

The pyromosa has just recently been discovered. It was found off Avalan bay. It is about a foot long, with an opening at the end. It emits a faint glow until touched or frightened, whereupon it blazes out in a vivid blast of green light.

# FIGHTING COCKS IN DEMAND.

Many Sent From England to Cape Colony—Spurs for Export.

The export of fighting cocks to the colonies has been on the increase. Almost every liner that sails from Southampton for Cape Colony carries a consignment of these feathered gladiators.

Cock fighting is not only permitted by law in Cape Colony, but it has become almost a national pastime, and exhibitions of fighting cocks are as well established there as dog shows in this country. A large number of British fighting cocks are also sent to the west coast states of America.

Nor has cock fighting become extinct in this country, though forbidden by law. In the Black Country, around Oldbury, Wednesbury, and West Bromwich, it flourishes, patronized chiefly by the brawny puddlers on a Sunday morning. Most of the spurs, both silver and steel, are made at Walsall, they are intended for export, and are easily obtainable for home fights.

There still lives in North Warwickshire the representative of a family which for generations has been devoted to the breeding of fighting cocks.

**Skilful Pantomimists.**  
Old convicts are beyond all other men skilful in expressing their desires by gestures and movements of the lips and eyes. At chapel and exercise, and in the quarries and work-rooms, the faculties of men forbidden to talk, and with years of silence before them, are stimulated to the utmost, and without uttering a single word these men contrive to indulge in lengthy conversations. At chapel particularly men sitting widely apart can read each other's lip movements with the utmost ease and accuracy. Of course, certain signs mean certain things to all old convicts, but in many cases no preconceived signs whatever are used—pure pantomime being indulged in.

A relation of the writer was the mate of a vessel trading with natives amongst the islands of the Pacific. The regular interpreter, who knew any dialect spoken even by the most remote of the natives, died. The mate quietly got to know that there was amongst the crew an old convict. The man's services were enlisted, and by means of pantomime only he made the natives everywhere understand perfectly all that was necessary.

**Home Instinct In Cattle.**  
There are three thousand head of cattle running loose in the Pinal basin of Arizona and they are owned by twenty men. Each animal has a brand on his hip as broad as a ham, and crops, bits and underhacks galore in his ears. Beyond these marks of ownership he is as free as a deer, and should he so elect, could wander from the Mexican border to the Canadian line without running up against a barbed wire fence.

Yet such is the simple nature of cattle that they "use" the country where they are born and only the utmost stress of wind and weather will suffice to drive them away. They are "home folks" and stick to their barren canyons and water holes with all the devotion of untutored rural man. The calf runs with his mother and learns her ways, which become his ways. It is upon this home instinct that the practice of Western cattle raising rests.

**Significance of Barber Poles.**  
In former times the trade was conjoined with the art of surgery, and the stripes, representing the letting of blood, and bandages, with a basin suspended beneath to catch the blood, were hung out to designate their profession. The existence of barbers as surgeons can be traced as far back as 1371, when a corporation was formed in France which was under the jurisdiction of the king's barber. In England, the barber-surgeons received their incorporation in the reign of Edward IV (1461). In 1746, the connection was dissolved by an act whose preamble states that the trade of a barber is "foreign to, and independent of the practise of surgery."

**Newspaper Advertisements.**  
The first newspaper advertisement appeared in Great Britain in 1642. In Greece advertising was done by public criers. The first printed advertisement in England was got up by the celebrated printer Caxton. It announced the completion of a book called "The Pyer of Salisbury."

The ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans were the first to use bill posters, some of which were found on the walls of buildings in Pompeii. It was not until the eighteenth century that magazines and newspaper advertising became the recognized medium between manufacturer and buyer.

**Rule of Casts in England.**  
England is a land saturated with funkism, a land where a man born in ordinary circumstances expects and is expected to die in ordinary circumstances; where the scope of the individual's effort is too largely traced beforehand by the accident of social position; where a man is handicapped in all cases and crushed in most by the superincumbent weight of caste privileges, "good form" and the deadening artificialities of an old society.

—Outlook.

**Profile Likenesses.**  
The idea of profile likenesses was discovered purely through chance. In 330 B. C. Antigonous had his picture drawn, and as he had only one eye, a profile view was made to conceal this deformity.

# MATERIAL FOR MUSIC STRINGS.

Source of Supply—Great Amount Required to Meet Demand.

"One of the most generally accepted, but mistaken, ideas that is entertained by the people of this country," says S. R. Huyett, American travelling representative of a foreign manufactory of gut strings, "is that strings used on musical instruments are manufactured from catgut. If that were true, the cats of this world would have been exterminated many years ago in supplying the market with material for musical instrument strings."

"The fact is that they are manufactured from the intestines of sheep, and in obtaining enough raw material even from these animals the manufacturers at times find difficulty."

"The only string made from the intestines of the feline is that used for surgical purposes—for sewing up wounds. One would be amazed to know that there are millions of musical instrument strings used in North America alone, and just think where the tabbies would be if they had to supply the consumption!"

"Another amazing thing is that there are over 700 different grades of musical instrument strings. The demand for strings in North America is increasing every year, especially in the South and in Mexico. There are more guitar strings sold in Mexico than any other kind, but through the South the banjo string still holds its own, despite the fact that every year has marked slight but gradual falling off in the demand. The harp is becoming more popular, and there is a good demand for strings for this instrument."

**Direct Evidence Unstable.**  
People generally decry purely circumstantial evidence, not only in capital cases, but in minor criminal and even in civil cases, but as a matter of fact direct evidence is so conflicting it is notably unsafe to rely upon it. Let an accident occur upon a public street, within sight of a hundred persons, and the story will be told differently by every one of the witnesses.

For the purpose of illustrating the difficulty of procuring accurate evidence, Prof. von Liszt, of Berlin, arranged with two of his pupils to pretend to quarrel, consisting of hot words, a walking stick, and a pistol loaded with blank cartridges. The quarrel came off in the presence of twenty other young men, all "highly educated," who were not in the secret. No two of the twenty agreed exactly as to the cause of the quarrel. Eight different answers were given to the question, "Who began the quarrel?" And yet people read history!

**Women's Intuition.**  
That a woman's intuition is more trustworthy than a man's judgment has long been conceded by unbiased masculines. A good test—a perennial one—is furnished by the United States treasury at Washington. The late Gen. Spinner—whose signature was so fearfully and wonderfully made—declared as the result of long years of experience as Superintendent of that department that women were worth ten times as much as man in the matter of counterfeit detection. "A man always has a reason for a counterfeit," said the general, "but he is wrong half the time. A woman never has a reason. She says 'tis counterfeit because it is counterfeit, and she's always right—though she couldn't tell how she found it out if she were to be hung for not knowing."

**Japanese Courage.**  
The little men of Japan can give the world many thrilling stories of courage and many of clever strategem as well.

One of the powerful nobles of the olden time was forced to flee from his enemy in haste. He hid in a barrel and was borne away by servants, who, meeting the enemy, declared the barrel contained food.

"If there is anything living in it there will be blood on my sword," said the nobleman's enemy and thrust his weapon into the barrel. It went through the hidden man's legs and made a terrible wound. But he, with quick thought, wiped the blade on the hem of his garment as it was drawn out, so that it went out clean, and he was not discovered.

**Scotch "Drip Stone."**  
Years ago a Scotch great-grandpa brought to America a piece of sand rock that some persons thought was intended for a grindstone. What caused them to think so was not because it was round, but on the upper side it was hollowed out like a saucer, and the other side had a small projection like a chocolate drop in shape and size. Soon this was discovered to be what is termed a "drip stone" and when set in a shady place and the saucer side filled with water will deliver crystal pure and cold drops from the underside. The water is absolutely clean and pure as the result of this homely process. The idea was originally taken from the orientals, no doubt.

**Decay of an Old Custom.**  
Only 5,000,000 "hot-cross buns" were consumed in London on Good Friday, indicating the dying out of the custom. The cross-bun is the modern equivalent of the cakes eaten in honor of the Saxon goddess Eostre, from whose name the word Easter comes. Her worshippers became Christians, but, unwilling to give up the buns, compromised by making them with a cross.

# BEGINNING OF THE GYPSY.

Were Severely Dealt With As Far Back As Fifteenth Century.

Gypsies were found in England about 1514, according to "A Dialogue of Sir Thomas More" (1529), but the exact year of their arrival is unknown. They were present in Scotland in 1505, and possibly they were the "Saracens" whose depredations in that country prior to 1460 are on record.

Batallard and other authors believe that gypsies existed in Europe from immemorial times, for they find no account of their crossing the Boeosphorus, and no record is known to exist of their passage to England or Scotland.

They were better received in these countries than in any other, but so early as 1531 an act was passed requiring the Egyptians to quit the realm under pain of death, a similar edict being issued in Scotland in 1541 and at varying periods in most of the European states.

Transportation across the seas was among the milder means adopted and probably was the cause of much further dispersion of the tribes. Under Henry VIII gypsies were shipped from England to Norway or France, and from France, so recently as 1802, they were deported to Africa.

**Cast Steel in This Country.**  
The first steel castings made in this country were railroad crossing frogs, made in 1867 from crucible steel of about the same hardness as tool steel, with a smooth surface, but honey-combed throughout, and far from perfect. The improved Bessemer processes were not in successful use until 15 or 20 years later.

Now almost any shape which can be cast in gray or malleable iron can be made in cast steel. For large and small marine castings, and in car and locomotive work, cast steel is taking the place of cast, malleable and wrought iron, for many large and small parts from couplers, journal boxes and wheels to rods, truck frames, and locomotive frames.

**The Invention of Clocks.**  
Is by no means a modern one. Clocks which were run by weights were used by the Saracens at the time of the Crusades, and some authorities state that they were invented by Pacificus as early as the ninth century.

In the works of Dante are references to machines which struck the hours, and clocks must have been in use in Italy about the end of the thirteenth century. The oldest clock of which there is any certain record was erected in a tower in the palace of Charles V. of France in 1364.

**Discovery of Glass.**  
According to Pliny, the discovery of glass making was purely accidental. He tells us that two merchants were carrying a quantity of nitre over a desolate tract of country, and at length passed upon the banks of a river to rest.

Wishing to partake of some food, they built a fire and not finding any stones on which to place their kettles, they put them on some pieces of nitre. The heat from the fires melted the nitre, which mixed with the sand and formed a transparent matter, which was glass.

**The First Gun.**  
The Germans were the inventors of the first gun. About 1378, Schwartz, a German machinist, manufactured numerous crude guns which were brought into use by the Venetians in 1392.

It is a strange fact that cannon were made before small firearms. At Amberg there is still a piece of ordnance marked with the date 1308. Cannon were first used in war at the Battle of Crecy in 1346. It was not until 1544, however, that they were made in England.

**Gold in Bible Verse.**  
The first mention which we have of gold is in the 11th verse of the second chapter of Genesis, or in other words four thousand and four years before Christ.

Gold was used as money by the ancient Egyptians at a very early date. Herodotus tells that the invention of the coinage of gold belongs to Lydia, about 750 B. C. Authorities conflict about the first coinage of gold. Some say it was Miletus, and some the Persians, but there are no records to show just when.

**How Tears Are Formed.**  
All emotions, however slight, either decrease or increase the circulation of the blood. Those emotions that bring tears cause the blood vessels around the eyes to expand, thus flooding the lacrimal or tear glands with blood. The tear-glands always secrete a little to keep the eyes cool and moist, and carry off specks of dust through the nasal passages, but the extra supply of blood increases this secretion to such an extent that it cannot go off in the usual way, so overflows.

**Pawnbrokers' Three Balls.**  
Three balls constituted the device of the wealthy Medici family of Florence, Italy. They were primarily phylloxera, and the three balls indicated medicine. The family became in time the principal money-lenders in Europe, and their seals appeared on so many documents that had to do with the pledging of personal property, as security loans, that the device lost its original significance and came into use as the emblem of money-lenders generally.

# MODEL SHOVEL SALESMAN.

Story Told of the Duke of Wellington and a Elg Contract.

A millionaire shovel maker, as he sat in the smoking room of an Atlantic liner, said:

"I have been over to England trying to sell shovels to the British government. I failed. I didn't sell a shovel. A dead man named Jones was the cause of my failure."

"Jones was alive, very much alive, during the battle of Waterloo. He sat on horseback near Wellington's tent. Wellington seeing him there in civilian's dress, said angrily:

"Who are you?"

"I am a shovel salesman," said Jones, "and I came here from Brussels to see the battle."

"Now that you are here," said Wellington, "are you willing to carry a message for me to one of my generals? It will be a dangerous errand, but I have no one else to send."

"I'll carry your message," said Jones, "and as for danger, one part of this battlefield is no more dangerous than another today."

"So Wellington gave him the message, and Jones delivered it, but failed to return. The duke thought him slain, but one day eight or nine years later a man accosted the duke in London.

"Do you remember me?" he said.

"I do," said Wellington, shaking the man's hand warmly. "You saved two regiments of mine by the delivery of that message? Why didn't you return to me?"

"Jones said his horse had been killed by a cannon ball as he was returning, and he himself had been shot in the side but not badly—a few days a bed brought him round."

"Well, said the duke, 'what can I do for you?'"

"I am a partner in that shovel house of ours now," said Jones, "the firm name is Smith, Jenkins & Jones and I'd like to get that government contract."

"He got it," the millionaire ended sadly. "From that day to this all the shovels used in the British army have been supplied by the house of Smith, Jenkins & Jones. I wasted my time trying to compete with that firm."

**The Moon in Action.**  
In an article recently published in Nature, Mr. W. H. Pickering affirms his conviction that physical changes occur in the moon, notwithstanding that some astronomers are of opinion that the planet is a "burnt-out cinder on which nothing happens."

Pickering points out that surveys taken in 1870, 1881, 1892 and 1904 have all shown about forty craters, but on each occasion the appearance of new ones and the disappearance of others previously known to exist have had to be noted. As to erosion taking place, fairly conspicuous evidences of it exist on the central peaks of Theophilus and Eratosthenes, but the eroded valleys are small, and it requires good atmospheric conditions to observe them. The only strong evidence that water ever existed upon the surface of the moon lies in the dry river-beds, of which the writer mentions several.

**Lizards That Walk on Two Feet.**  
Lizards of several sorts can walk and run easily on their hind legs. The Australian water lizard, which is three or four feet in length, keeps quite erect when traversing long distances on land. It is found in the neighborhood of river banks and passes much of its time in shallow water.

The frilled lizard of Queensland also travels on its hind legs on level ground, keeping the frill folded while running. When attacked it expands this food of skin which stands out like a ruff at right angles round the neck, giving it a formidable aspect, so that dogs that attack and kill larger lizards will often retreat before a frilled lizard at bay.

There is also a tree lizard in Australia that moves in a similar way. All these species walk on all fours when merely moving about or going short distances.

**Largest Electric Station.**  
Chicago is to have the largest electric light and power station in the world. It will consist of a steam turbine plant, and all the boilers are to be equipped with automatic stokers, so that no manual handling of the coal will be necessary. There will be an electrical kitchen, where substantial meals will be cooked by electricity for the employees. There will be a refrigerating apparatus, an ice plant, a number of bed rooms, baths and other conveniences.

**Habits of Silver and Lead.**  
Silver and lead are generally found together, and some scientists think that lead disintegrates into silver. Gold and copper are also often found together. In New South Wales the Great Cobarr mine furnishes copper containing four ounces of gold to the ton.

**Why Lightning Zigzags.**  
Because electricity seeks the earth and strives to get there by the path of least resistance. In some places the air by its density forms a greater obstruction than in others. The lightning flies from side to side to find the easiest path.

**Nailless Horeshoes.**  
Nailless horeshoes are badly needed, owing to the injury done by nails to the hoof of a horse. A horeshoe-carrier fitting the hoof, and to which the shoe can be easily affixed, is the latest invention to solve the difficulty.