her that my aunt would be pleased to accede to the vicar's request. I thought it better to add that my aunt had altered a good deal, but that I hoped the vicar would not be pained by the change in her appearance. The maid went off with the message. Ten minutes later she reappeared, with the vicar's compliments, and his hope that there was nothing seriously the matter with my aunt. I replied that there was not.

Now I began to regret having lost Tubbs. Obviously a fascinating young woman could not go out in the habiliments of seventy-five. And obviously I could not buy dresses for a young lady. I compromised by telephoning to a firm of dressmakers, asking them to send out a variety of dresses for a tall and slim young lady. In the end they managed to fit my youthful aunt, and at three o'clock the same afternoon we set out for the garden-party sale.

I am sorry to say that the vicar proved hopelessly narrow-minded. He was polite, but firm. He could not, and would not, accept the attractive figure in the hobble skirt as that of my benevolent and aged relative. He was a charitable man, however, and did not accuse me of having drunken deeply. A slight mental lesion was the view he took. He flatly refused to let Euphrosyne make a speech, and instead introduced her to the company as "Mr. Horace's young friend." The local doctor's wife opened the sale, and managed to get in a few words in praise of the medical profession.

Looking back upon it, I think the vicar was justified in his action. Euphrosyne behaved scandalously. First, she took the curate in hand, and they were found together in a deserted marquee, eating pink ices, and talking frivolously. The vicar's wife took them to task about it, and Euphrosyne was positively rude. But she went off later with another girl's fiance, and left at least six long golden hairs on his sleeve. The vicar's churchwarden determined to inculcate some moral lessons, and interviewed her. We didn't see him again for half an hour, but when he reappeared he told us that he had been mistaken in his view of her.

I did not enjoy myself quite so much as Euphrosyne. Everybody wanted to know how my aunt was. I could see now that it would be inadvisable to explain that my aunt was at that moment making furious love to the curate. Then they wanted to know who my young friend was, and I was compelled to manufacture a pedigree for her. In fact, I manufactured several, but the details did not tally, and I got in a hopeless muddle. When I tore my aunt away from the scene of her frivolities I was the possessor of a ruined reputation, and the object of at least three separate scandals.

"You can't go on like this, aunt," I expostulated, going home. "You must remember your age."

"I can't," she giggled. "And I don't see what good it would do me if I could."

That evening I cabled to Surges. I beseeched of him to send me something to restore my aunt to herself. The next day a cable came from his agent at Robledo. Surges had vanished into the interior, and might not turn up for months. Just like him!

I crawled out of the house on the following morning, having turned the key on Euphrosyne for fear she should get into mischief. I felt ill, and incapable of managing a head-strong young woman with amorous proclivities. I met Barker near the station, and was catechised by him in the most rude manner.

"I say, old chap," he began, "why didn't you tell us?"

"What?" I asked crossly, and backed away from him.

"Why, that you'd got married, and set up house with your aunt. How do the three of you pull together, eh? I've been wondering."

"Oh, have you!" I sneered. "Well, keep it up. It won't do you any harm to think a bit."

"Don't get ratty," he said calmly. "I just heard of your marriage to-day."

"Can a man marry his aunt?" I asked, preparing to leave him. "You think it over, Mr Barker."

He was still thinking it over when I left him to turn homewards. It was very humiliating to me to see that my former intimates were of opinion that my mentality had been sadly disturbed.

Even at home peace fled from me. I found Tubbs waiting on the doorstep, wearing her sourest expression. She wanted to know if she could see her mistress for a few minutes. I explained to her rather wearily that she had seen Aunt Euphrosyne some days ago, but refused to acknowledge her. She shook her head stubbornly, and delivered an ultimatum. If I did not produce my aunt in the flesh within the period of two days, she, Tubbs, would get the police to inquire into the matter. The more I protested the firmer she became. I was my aunt's heir; a will had been duly drawn in my favour. I explained that unless I could prove my aunt's death I could not inherit. Tubbs admitted that she knew nothing of such legal matters, but was going to see her old mistress, or know the reason why.

Then she went away. I am a mild man by nature, but I think it's just as well she did. I went upstairs and released Euphrosyne—to myself I never thought of calling her "Aunt"—and found her in a temper. She did not like being locked up, and to show her displeasure went out for a stroll. I heard afterwards that she waved her hand to several complete strangers. Anyway, when I went out to look for her, I met her coming down the street with Barker, and smiling into his face in a way that gave me cute discomfort. I cannot believe that my aunt's youth had been lived in this riotous fashion; it must have been the youth of the Aztec princess she had inherited.

Meantime I had my own problem to solve. Tubbs had given me two days' grace. At the end of that time I had to produce my aged aunt, or submit to an interview with the police. I could think of no drug which had such powers as that. I asked Euphrosyne about it, but she flatly refused to believe that she had ever been old. I begged of her, even prayed of her, that she would go back to her steady and benevolent old age. She laughed at me, and the hours passed.

I met the vicar on the following day, and he cut me dead. I swallowed my pride, followed and spoke to him. He turned a grave face upon me, and remarked that he had not now the pleasure of my acquaintance. I turned sadly away. When your own vicar cuts you there is no hope in man. I told Euphrosyne, but she laughed, and said the vicar was a cheerful old dunderhead, and not in the same street with the curate, who was quite a sport. I don't know where she picked up such dreadful slang.

The day and the hour came at last. A fat inspector and a thin constable walked up to the door and inquired for my aunt. I brought her down at once. The inspector shook his head. The lady he wished to see was seventy-five, and stout. Tubbs had given him a photograph, so he knew. I told him that Euphrosyne was the only aunt I had, and that I kept no other. He shook his head, and begged to be allowed to search the premises. Of course, I had no objection to that, and after he had gone through the rooms I gave him a spade and told him he could fossick in the garden. We have about an acre and a half, so it will take some time. As I write this I can hear them at it, and the fat inspector has lost weight, while his thin subordinate puts on muscle at an amazing rate. Meanwhile, Euphrosyne absolutely refuses to take her old shape.

Will no one help me? It shouldn't be difficult to get a recipe for turning young people into old. I shall be much obliged if any of those who read this will assist a suffering nephew burdened with a flighty aunt, apparently some years younger than himself. You might send it to the editor, marking the corner of the envelope, "Stray Aunt." I am sure he will see that the letter is forwarded.

The inspector has passed my window just now, and looked in at me. He has a cold eye, and I am beginning to be afraid of him. As I write this my —hand begins—to tr——.

Hudson Maxim.

Continued from page 2.

for the manufacture of microscopic diamonds by electro-deposition.

He is the author of "The Science of Poetry and the Philosophy of Language" published by Funk and Wagnalls, 1910. The work embraces an exhaustive treatise on the nature and use of sounds in language, and contains many important scientific discoveries in the constitution and dynamics of human speech.

From the foregoing one can easily appreciate what a hard worker and fireless thinker this man must be, and yet, aside from inventive labours, he has won acknowledgment as writer, critic, philosopher and sociologist. He is an effective public speaker, and is also a frequent contributor to the leading periodicals on a wide range of subjects.

Mr. Maxim has had a great many narrow escapes in his long experience as an inventor and manufacturer of explosive compounds. In the manufacture of explosives, even after the work has become thoroughly systematised and the duties of the workmen become routine, there is an inseparable element of considerable danger; but in pioneer inventive work and experimentation with explosive materials, the risk of life and limb is very much greater, for the reason that the experimenter is obliged to deal with unfamiliar compounds and unfamiliar reactions under unfamiliar circumstances.

The pathway of the inventor of explosive materials is like that of the vedettes of an army passing over a road planted with the torpedoes of the enemy. One becomes accustomed to the danger of explosives, Mr. Maxim says, just as a veteran soldier gets used to the dangers of battle; but it does not lessen the risk.

One day, seventeen years ago, at his powder works in New Jersey, Mr. Maxim was experimenting with a new fulminate compound, one of the most dangerous and deadly explosives known to science, when, owing to a little oversight, his left hand was blown off to the wrist.

At another time, at the same place, when one of his assistants was weighing out some of this dangerous material in the laboratory, an arm supporting the scoop of the scales gave way and a weight fell, striking within an inch of a quantity of fulminate which was piled on a piece of glass. Had the weight struck the glass, there would have been an explosion, and as there were ten pounds of fulminate in a jar standing on a bench, the explosion would certainly have had fatal results.

At another time, requiring some dry gun cotton for an experiment, and not finding a suitable vessel to put it in, he was delayed a few minutes until one should be cleaned. During those few minutes, the gun cotton house where he was going for the material blew up. At another time Mr. Maxim was conducting some experiments in throwing aerial torpedoes from a 4-inch cannon. These projectiles, charged with a high explosive, were fired into a sandbank one hundred yards distant. The line of fire being parallel with a line of railroad about one thousand feet away, no danger to the railroad was suspected. Several torpedoes had already been discharged and the gun was reloaded when the whistle of a passing train was heard. The gun was fired, but the aerial torpedo, instead of striking into the bank and exploding, as the previous ones had done, glanced from the bank, mounted high in the air, and passed clear over the train into the swamp beyond, where it exploded with terrific force.

Once, when he was conducting some experiments with motorite, the combustion chamber exploded like a bombshell, blowing the windows of the workshop into the street, while the walls were pierced the fragments in all directions. Mr. Maxim and his assistant, though both standing in the room at the time, escaped without a scratch.

A smoker is often unintentionally the cause of many a conflagration, the exploder of fire-damp in mines, and the cause of the blowing up of powder mills. No smoker and no one carrying matches is ever knowingly admitted into any powder mill or dynamite factory.

One occasion when Mr. Maxim confesses to have been thoroughly scared was when an intimate personal friend a habitual smoker, escaping the vigilance of guards and assistants, entered one of the buildings at Mr. Maxim's experimental works on Lake Hopatcong, with a lighted and partially consumed cigar in his mouth, having an inch of hot ashes and cinders on the end of it ready to drop off at the least jar. When Mr. Maxim caught sight of him he was standing over a large box containing fifty pounds of dry guncotton, examining the material in his hand, and upon the same bench where the guncotton rested were two other boxes filled with smokeless gunpowder, one hundred pounds in each. Mr. Maxim went up to the smoker, threw a cover over the box, and quietly asked him to please stand back a little. Then he told him what he had done, and the offender was so scared that he nearly fell to the floor.

The teacher in elementary mathematics looked hopefully about the room. "Now, children," she said, "I wish you to think very carefully before you answer my next question.

"Which would you rather have, three bags with two apples in each bag, or two bags with three apples in each bag?" asked the teacher.

"Three bags with two apples in each bag," said a boy in one of the last seats. While the class debated as to the best answer.

"Why, Paul?" asked the teacher.

"Because there'd be one more bag to bust," announced the practical young mathematician.