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charge 50 cents for a Sunday shave, instead of 25 cents, as formerly. And the stranger goes away with a feeling that he has been the victim of graft. And he has—but it is a graft fathered by law.

As a matter of fact thousands of men are now shaving themselves who never attempted such a thing before, and all because they had to learn to do so because they could not get service on Sunday.

There is no question of working seven days per week. Any barber can take a day off in the middle of the week.

The Argus does not blame any man for not wanting to work on Sunday. But there are thousands who do so, and the services of many of them are not nearly as necessary to the public as that of a barber.

AMBROSE BIERCE IS PROBABLY DEAD

By Bailey Millard.

War has blotted out another bright life—that of Ambrose Bierce, a unique figure in American literature whose vivid army tales and keen satirical papers and poems stamped him as one of the most original and versatile of writers. Bierce was a master of English, as even his most ephemeral work will show, and technically none could touch him. He corrected Kipling, and even Howells, and in his critical essays he showed where many other famous authors failed in their facts or their diction. He wrote the most gruesome, the most harrowing, the most terrible tales ever published in this country. Some of his poems were of rare strength and beauty. His invocation is said to have been the real inspiration of Kipling's *Recessional*, and in this instance newspaper men have pulled the deadly parallel to the supposed confusion of the famous Englishman.

Bierce led a most remarkable life—half hermit, half Bohemian, and altogether egotistical and cynical. In the west he was the most hated and feared of writers, and also the most courted and spoiled. He lampooned nearly everybody in political and private life with hair-raising audacity. As the dean of Pacific coast letters he made and unmade authors and poets. The dilettante worshiped him. He has been called "the American Dean Swift," "the last of the satirists" and "the Maupassant of the west." He was an iconoclast of the first order.

When Villa rose against Huerta and the Constitutionalists rushed to arms, Bierce, who was a northern captain in the civil war and was breveted major for exceptional gallantry, went to Mexico and joined the staff of the doughty general. After the battle of Torreón he was missing and has not been heard from since. There is so little doubt of his death that his friends and relatives have given up searching for him and mourn him as lost. His publisher, the Neale company, which was paying him royalties on his collected works, cannot reach him with checks or letters of inquiry, and neither his daughter, Mrs. H. D. Cowden of Bloomington, Ill., nor his secretary, Miss Carrie Christiansen of Washington, with each of whom he corresponded regularly, has had any word from him for nine months.

At the time he joined Villa he was seventy-two years old. His friends unite in saying that if he were alive he would not have left them so long in suspense. There has been a report from San Francisco that on leaving that city for Mexico he was very despondent, (and that he was going back to his old game of war because he lacked the courage to commit suicide. There is another rumor that he actually did efface himself in Sonora.

Neither of these stories deserves credence. (Continued on Page 10.)



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Heater and heat cost but little and save much.

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