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Select Poetry.

THE OLD STONE STEPS.

I dreamed last night of my childhood home,
The place where I spent my happy days.
I was there, as before I began to roam—
Before I entered on life's rough ways,
I thought with my sister sweetly I played
'Neath the old maple trees where I played before,
And we sat at evening's approaching shade
On the old stone steps by the farm-house door.

Ah, would that beautiful dream were true!
And I who have none for whom to care
Were playing again as I used to do
With my little sister, gay and fair,
And when we were weary and worn with play,
And dusk her mantle the land spread o'er,
We would sit, as we did in a by-gone day
On the old stone steps by the farm-house door.

There, as the dusk deepened into the night
In the long warm evenings of joyous spring,
We would sit on those steps in the fading light,
And list to the sweet-voiced night birds sing,
And a tender mother would hear with joy
The prattle of one she'll hear no more,
As I sat beside her—an innocent boy,
On the old stone steps by the farm-house door.

A beautiful mother, with face as fair
Almost as the glittering, drifting snow;
An angel sister, with golden hair,
Too beautiful for this world of woe;
I, too, was innocent then, and pure,
And knew but love in those days of yore,
Had naught but pleasure then to endure,
On the old stone steps by the farm-house door.

Alas! How changed is all to me!
How different does life's pathway seem,
But could I live it o'er and see
Again the picture of my dream—
My tender mother, sister, all—
As now my hard life I deplore,
And listen to my mother's call
From the old stone steps by the farm-house door.

But they are past, those scenes and gone
Forever, ne'er shall come again,
Mother and sister have left me alone
In this hard world of sin and pain.
They have gone, from whence they'll ne'er return,
And as my heart aches to the core,
One place for which it e'er shall yearn
Is the old stone steps by the farm-house door.

My weary life has been in vain
Since I left those old steps of stone,
Mother, and sister. Life has been pain
Since I left them all to try it alone;
I am mourning now for one to love,
And oh, my heart is bleeding sore
For all but me are home above
From the old stone steps by the farm house door.

—GEORGE RIVERSIDE.

Select Story.

A SCHEME'S GOOD ENDING.

BY HARRIETT FRANCENE CROCKER.

The campus at Centreville Academy looked its very best that lovely June commencement day.

The close-cut lawn could not have been greener, the marble fountain-basin whiter, nor the silver spray of the rising and falling water more sparkling and sunshiny.

The dull-red brick walls of the great building, prosaic enough at most times, took on a mysterious something that day, that was very inviting. The great, green masses of clinging ivy had a pretty, softening effect upon the classic severity of the lines and angles that formed the outline of the imposing structure, and the silver birches before it dropped alluringly over rustic seats and shady resting-places.

Two women walked slowly up the long avenue together.

One, tall, slender, sweet-faced, with a rare, unconscious grace about her as she walked, her brown-braded hair shining in the sunlight, her gray-silk gown rustling pleasantly as she stepped.

Not a young woman—not young, that is, as years are counted. A sweet maturity shone from her deep-brown eyes and a soft, slow air of perfect repose and unassumed dignity was about her.

A woman whose forty years had dealt richly with her, ripening and finishing into perfect womanhood a rather plain and unattractive girlhood. Life deals thus with some women—bringing out new graces and undreamed of beauties as the years go by.

Her companion, a plump, petite girl of eighteen, walked sedately at her aunt's side, but every movement was life itself—every gesture eloquent of youth and energy and love of motion. Her firm, free step, elastic with health and girlish strength, her well-poised head thrown back happily in the sunshine, her blue eyes flashing with smiles that chased each other to her full red lips and back again, her small hands, never quiet, toying with her roses and her fan, all spoke of a nature restless, impetuous, ardent, willful, but in every way charming.

The elder lady spoke in a low, sweet, magnetic voice, a rich, full voice, that one would unconsciously expect to find belonging to her.

"It is not greatly changed, my dear; not so much as I had thought. Fifteen years are not so very long after all."

There was a little tremor in her voice that made the words pathetic, the girl looked up quickly, with eyes full of sympathy. She knew her aunt's story, and guessed the meaning of the momentary shadow that crossed the down-dropped face, but she said nothing.

They were at the great stone steps that led up to the entrance. The massive doors were thrown back and people were passing in an out of the sunshine into the cool dimness of the long hall. They passed in with the rest. The scent of roses was everywhere, the flutter of fans and the soft rustle of silks. Faces, young, eager, flushed with the pleasant excitement, were everywhere. Grave, subdued figures moved about among the white-clad girls, and black-coated students, with bright, expectant faces and gay knots of flowers on their lapels, wound about among the people or stood in groups laughing and talking together.

"Auntie, this is Ralph Armstrong, one of my classmates, you know. Ralph, my aunt, Miss Travis. Now do get acquainted, while I go and see one of the girls. I'll be back presently." And Elsie tripped away, a little figure in creamy-white and roses, leaving them together.

They drew back into a window recess out of the way of the crowd, while they waited for her.

Miss Travis looked at the young man at her side. A thrill of mingled joy and pain shot through her heart. How very much this Ralph was like the other she had known in her youth—that other Ralph Armstrong with whom she went to school.

"You are very like your uncle," she said, for the sake of saying something.

The young fellow turned a radiant face to her.

"That's what they say," he burst out heartily; "and, if it is so, I am glad; for a better, truer, kinder man never lived than my uncle Ralph."

She smiled at his boyish enthusiasm, then her eyes strayed from his face and looked half absently out upon the green campus and the flashing fountain.

"Did you know him, Miss Travis?" he went on, perching comfortably upon the window-seat and swinging one foot boyishly.

"Yes, for many years," she answered; but I have not seen him for a long time now—fifteen years. I suppose he is greatly changed?"

"O, yes, of course; fifteen years *would* make a difference, you know," he replied, lightly, "but," more seriously, "since his wife died, five years ago, he has seemed more like himself than for a long time before. She was an invalid for a long, long time, you know, and was a great care and anxiety to him. He and consin Bess seem very happy and contented together. They are here, to-day—come on to see me graduate. I hope you'll meet. Ah! here is Elsie back again—it's time to go!" And the two young people escorted her into the great chapel, and after settling her comfortably with fan and programme, left her alone. For they were both to graduate that day.

Left alone, Miss Travis sat staring unseeingly at her program. Her mind was in a whirl; her heart was beating heavily; she feared she was going to be ill.

He was here to-day—he and his daughter—ah, what would she be like? Bess—could it be he had thought of her in naming her? He had always called her that instead of Elizabeth. What had been his wife's name? Anna! Yes, she remembered. Could she ever forget? And now she was dead.

A faint color glowed in her cheeks as her thoughts went back over the years that were gone. The heavy feeling went out of her heart and she was herself again.

She looked up smiling as the song of welcome burst upon her ears, and caught her niece's blue eyes. Near by were Ralph's blue eyes. How finely his tenor blended with her voice! Ah, she and that other Ralph sang together in a chorus of welcome, once, too!

She looked very womanly and sweet, sitting there with the yellow roses on her gray silk gown and her fan lifting a brown tress from her forehead.

Far from her, across the room, a pair of deep, dark eyes were watching her. A young girl, looking at her father, noted his earnest gaze and followed it, wondering who the sweet-faced stranger was.

"Ralph," said Elsie, drawing him aside when the exercises were over and the guests departing, "we've done so well to-day, so far, that we must do one thing more—one lovely, glorious deed of love and kindness.

Now listen: Auntie is talking with Mr. Armstrong and Bess, and we can mature our plans. I've the nicest scheme in the world," and her eyes fairly danced with mischief. "Promise to help me and I'll tell you."

"I promise," he replied. "Do hurry and tell me; I'm devoured with curiosity."

"O, then, you're willing to admit it, are you, sir? I thought we women were the only curious creatures."

"Elsie, stop your teasing and tell me. Haven't I promised?"

She laughed roguishly, enjoying his suspense; then she told him.

The June evening was as perfect in its way as the day had been. The full moon rose over the pine-clad, eastern hills, and sailed slowly zenithward; the soft, sweet sounds of twilight came out; the frogs in the distant marsh, the whip-poor-will in the elm-tree avenue, the mellowed notes of a guitar and a voice singing somewhere. The hour was perfect. Elsie threw a fleecy wrap about her aunt's shoulders and drew her out into the moonlight.

"It's too beautiful to stay indoors, auntie," she said. "Let's go up to the building and see the view."

They walked, leisurely along together, hand in hand.

"It's such a comfort to have you here, dear auntie," Elsie was saying, "boarding-house life is so dreary, when one is alone."

She put her arm around the slender figure and leaned her pretty head against her shoulder as they walked. Miss Travis looked down at her tenderly: "My sweet girl graduate with golden hair," she quoted, softly.

They reached the great building, and stood a few minutes looking at the quiet, moon-lit village below. Then Elsie drew her gently toward the grove of pines that bounded the campus on one side. The shadows lay in quivering masses on the ground, and the moon shone softly through the murmuring boughs.

Suddenly the girl darted off among the trees, flying like a winged moonbeam among the shadows.

Miss Travis stood still, looking after her in consternation—then, before she knew what had happened, she found herself infolded in two strong arms, and leaning submissively against a great, manly form, while a voice she knew murmured broken words of tenderness in her ear. It never occurred to her that this was a singular proceeding for a woman forty years old; it seemed the most natural thing in the world that she should rest there, with those strong arms about her, and her head lying on his shoulder.

And Elsie? Flying like a white moonfairy through the grove of pines, laughing breathlessly as she glanced over her shoulder at two dark forms she had left, all at once a strange thing happened. Two strong, you arms caught her, and held her f panting and breathless and frig ened; two warm young lips fou hers, and left a throbbing kiss up them; and a dear voice was breat ing almost unintelligible words words of love and tenderness and s entreaty.

It was a queer time to laugh, b Elsie did it; laughed a little nervous perhaps, but with a keen relish of t humor of the case. But the answ she gave him finally was all that a lover could desire.

Late, when they walked homeward in the moonlight, they caught glimpses, now and then, of a sedate couple lingering along romantically under the elm-trees, and they wondered what they were saying.

What Ralph Armstrong, senior, was saying was:

"It was all a put-up job between those two young folks. The boy lured me out into the moonlight, out in the pine-grove to meet my fate, and I am satisfied with the result."

He looked questioningly down into the face of the woman at his side. She did not reply in words, but the peaceful joy in her upraised eyes was answer enough.

"Ralph," said Elsie, with her plump hand resting within his arm, "Ralph, it turned out beautifully, didn't it? For them, I mean; but as for me, well, truly, I was never so surprised in all my life, and I did most surely get more than I bargained for."

Her mischievous eyes were looking up at him; a friendly elm-tree shut out the moonlight for a moment, and he improved the opportunity.

When he raised his head, he said, with a deep, new tenderness in his voice and in his eyes:

"It is commencement day with us, indeed, my darling, the commencement of a happiness that shall always last."

Does the Pitcher Plant Eat Meat?

Notwithstanding the admitted fact that bits of meat, insects, and other animal substances are more quickly decomposed in the leaves and other trap-like appendages of the pitcher plant, sundews, venus fly traps and various insect eating plants, than they are in open air, there is a body of scientists who deny that the plants themselves have any agency in the matter, or exercise any vital power in capturing the prey that falls in their nets. Dr. Mostedt is one of these skeptics. He favors the idea that the decomposition of the imprisoned insect is owing to chemical action simply, and that the effect is produced in almost exactly the same way that a person is poisoned by coming in contact with a poisonous plant.

Keep no hogs in the horse pasture.

THANKFUL'S TRIALS

"I'm sure," murmured Thankful Pennypacker, "I don't know what to do."

Thankful Pennypacker had come to the far West on what the facetious inhabitants of Blue Gulch would have called "a wild goose chase."

She was one of the great majority of unemployed women in the State of Vermont, and her cousin, Squire Todd, had heard from his nephew's wife, who had a sister at Blue Gulch, that there was a district school teacher wanted there.

"Chance for you, eh, Thankful?" said Mrs. Todd. "Better get off as fast as ever you can, or it'll be snapped up. Such positions don't go a begging long."

Thankful looked up with big, wistful eyes.

"It's awful cold weather to go West, isn't it?" said she, a little timidly.

"Oh, if you're afraid of a little cold wind and snow flurry or two!" said Mrs. Todd, elevating her nose.

And Thankful packed her trunk at once and departed.

"Ain't it ruther barbarous mother," said the squire, "to send the poor gal way off West in such a blizzard as this 'ere?"

"Well, Joshua," said his helpmeet, "she's been here two good months now, and we want her room for your aunt Eliza, that's got money to leave some day; and, besides, Dr. Lothair's a-coming pretty soon to visit Dr. Jenningses folks, next door, and it's jest as well to have Thankful Pennypacker out of the way."

Squire Todd's lower jaw dropped.

"Why?" said he in amazement.

"Why?" mimicked his wife. "Well, give me a man for solid thick-headedness! Hain't you got a darter of your own? and ain't Thankful Pennypacker a pretty gal, if she is past five and twenty years?"

"Oh," said the Squire. "Match-makin', eh?"

"Well, call it what you please," said Mrs. Todd. "Anyhow, it's time

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piteous sentence that head's our story.

The nephew's sister was called McCray—a stout, cheerful body, with bright blue eyes and a double chin.

"I 'clare to goodness, Miss Pennypacker," said she, "I feel sorry for you, but I hain't a minute's time to spare a-listenin' to what Miles Wendell said just now. Two o' the Chinamen have gone, and Bridget won't stir into the dinin' room as long as Wong See is there. It's strange how she and the Chinese hate each other. And the train is due in forty minutes, and eighteen mealers have telegraphed ahead."

"Can't I help you?" said Thankful.

"You? Why, you're an educated lady," said Mrs. McCray.

"That's no reason I can't cook a fricasee, or bake a pumpkin pie," said Thankful, smiling in spite of her troubles. "And I have no especial prejudice against Wong See, so I'd as soon go into the dining room and see to the table as not."

"Well, I'd be mortal obliged if you would," said Mrs. McCray, with a sigh of relief. "Here's one o' my big white kitchen aprons to tie over your black serge dress, so it won't be spiled; and you'll find Wong See very teachable and docile."

So that Miss Pennypacker was flying around presently in the neat, coo rooms of the railway restaurant where long tables, draped in white were decorated with evergreen an holly berries, and the glass and crock ery, albeit of the coarsest, was spark ling and clean.

The Blue Gulch meal station, Mrs. McCray told Thankful, was cele brated all along the line for its p geon pies, its toothsome waffles, an its dainty bits of home made crock ery.

"And now you're here to sort keep Wong See straightened up, said she. "I can give my whole min to the waffles.

A keen wind howling down the railway cut; a cloud of drifting snow, sharper than needles and pins; and then the shriek of the train. Wong See adjusted his clean white tunic and rubbed his hands.

"Supper allee readee," said he. "Missee Cray she got waffle all cookee."

"Och, haythen Chinee," said Bridget, in her den behind the coffee holder, as she scowled unutterable things at the smiling Celestial.

The passengers rushed on with one accord for the warm, cosy, savory smelling dining room, for the fame of the Blue Gulch waffles had penetrated far and wide—when all of a sudden there was an exclamation, a pause, a confusion.

"What is it?" said Thankful, who, with swift hands, was carrying tea and coffee this way and that.

"A gentleman had slipped on the icy car step," said Mrs. McCray. "I reckon likely he's broke his leg or arm or something. Here, Miss Pennypacker; you come to the waffle irons. I'll just stop and see what the trouble is. McCray ain't never on hand at any emergency."

When the train had gone the hurt passenger lay in a white curtained room up stairs.

Dr. Fenton had set his broken arm and bandaged his sprained ankle.

"If you have moderately good luck," said he, "you need not be detained more than two or three weeks, and the people here are very kindly and respectable. They'll make you fairly comfortable, you'll find."

The wayfarer uttered a groan, but there was no appeal. On all the earth there is no autocrat like a country doctor.

Mrs. McCray was kind and motherly. Wong See, with his little almond shaped eyes and perpetual smile, proved to be a capital nurse, and after a little the patient got used to his captivity.

"Who is that I hear singing down stairs at times?" he asked, one day.

"Well," said Mrs. McCray, "it's our Bridget. Does she disturb you? She will keep singing, 'Nora, My Nora,' say what you will, and—"

"No, it isn't that coyote howl," said the sick man, with a shudder. "It's some one singing bits out of the 'Trovatore'—little sweet trills and rune like a nightingale."

"Oh!" said Mrs. McCray. "I reckon that's Thankful."

"And who is Thankful?"

"Miss Pennypacker? My sister's husband's uncle's cousin, that came all the way from the state o' Vermont to teach deestrick school, and when she got here another woman had gobbled it up—the sitooation, I mean.

"Oh!" said the invalid. "Yes, thank you, Mrs. McCray. If you'll put the lemonade pitcher on the table, I can reach it myself."

The big Michigan rose on the porch of the Todd farm house was all in blossom when Dr. Lothair came at last to make the long promised visit to his friend, Dr. Jennings.

"But it ain't no use!" sighed Mrs. Todd to Electria, her daughter. "He's brung a wife with him, I'm told—a bride all the way from Dakota Territory."

"Humph!" said the disappointed Electria. "A regular wild Indian, I guess. But, for all that I'm sort o curious to see her. Let's go in to-night, mother, when they're through tea."

So Mrs. Todd and the Squire donned their best clothes, and Electria put on her newest set of fish scale jewelry, and they all trudged over to "Jenningses house" when the sun had set and the whippoorwill began to sing.

"Why, ma look there!" said Electria. "It's cousin Thankful, sure's you're born, settin' on the piazzy, and—"

"No, it ain't!" said Mrs. Todd. "Yes, it is! Why, how on airth came she here?"

Thankful came running down the steps.

"How do you do, Mrs. Todd?" she cried, gayly.

"Well, I declare," said Mrs. Todd, secretly planning within herself how to avoid inviting Thankful to the

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cooked the game and entrees. It was quite a romance, he declared.

And Squire Todd stopped on the way home to indulge in a hearty laugh.

"To think," said he, "what a mortal hurry you was in to get Thankful out of the way of this very man, so't Electria could have a chance."

"Squire Todd," snapped his wife, "you shouldn't laugh out so loud and coarse. It's dreadful vulgar."

Ice in Greenland.

Civil-Engineer Peary, U. S. N., lectured to a large audience at the Brooklyn Institute recently, says the N. Y. *Evening Post*, on the "Inland Ice of Greenland."

Mr. Peary spoke of Greenland as a land of startling contrasts; a land of midnight sun and noonday night; of tropical skies and eternal ice. The length from north to south, he said, is greater than the extreme width of the United States from the mouth of the Rio Grande to the forty-ninth parallel, and its about the same as that of Mexico, or four times the combined area of the New England and the Middle States.

Four-fifths of this area, or about 600,000 square miles, equal to twelve times the area of New York state, is submerged by the inland ice, which is in places undoubtedly a mile in depth.

Greenland is but a narrow ribbon of ragged rocky mountains, surrounding an ice-submerged interior; a titanic mountain dam, in fact, holding in check a vast sea of ice, which pours through breaks in the dam in a resistless, groaning torrent, and descends to some fjord, or flows through shallow notches in the crest of the dam, to hang suspended in frozen aerial cataracts.

In approaching a part of the coast from which the inland ice is not far distant, or in proceeding up one of the fjords, if the day be clear, it will be noticed that the sky over the mountains has a peculiar silvery lustre; if the day be cloudy, the mountains are seen standing in silhouette against a pale, supernatural light which rises over every sullen peak, streams through every gap in their ragged profiles, and illuminates the clouds above them like the gleam of a winter sunset. This light is the reflection from the inland ice, and combines the brilliancy and steadiness of the electric light with the wierdness of the aurora and a ghastly lifeless glare peculiarly its own.

Seen from the summit of a commanding mountain, the inland ice at midnight, with the sun just below the horizon, is smooth, clear-cut, and blue, as a mighty shield of tempered steel, but grows indistinct and tremulous in the blinding white glare of noon.

Mr. Peary then described his experiences on the inland ice in the summer of 1885, when he, with a young Danish officer from one of the Greenland settlements, started from a fjord at the head of Disco bay, and penetrated 100 miles over the ice, attaining an elevation of 7,500 feet above the sea. After lifting and carrying his sledges, on which were packed his provisions and sleeping-gear, nearly 1,000 feet up the ragged and precipitous face of the ice, he commenced his journey the first week in July.

After traversing some time miles of rough ice, cut by numerous crevasses, in crossing which he and his companion had several narrow escapes, he found the ice covered with a layer of snow which increased in depth as he advanced. Once he nearly lost one of his sledges by its breaking through the thin ice of a pond which he was crossing. It being the latter part of the arctic day, which in this latitude is several weeks long, the sun was constantly above the horizon, and Mr. Peary marched between 6, p. m. and 6, a. m., when it was coldest and the glare of the sun less powerful. Between 6, a. m. and 6, p. m., when it was warmest and the blinding reflection from the snow was insupportable, he slept, sometimes stretched on his sledge and sometimes in a pit dug in the snow.

Twice furious snow-storms buried him and his companion in the drift, as they lay on the snow with the sledges turned on their sides to shelter them from the wind.

The last of these storms continued five days, and after a two-days' struggle against it, stopped Mr. Peary's further advance and kept him confined in a snow-pit three days. He did not start to return, however, until a clear day enabled him to get satisfactory observations. These placed him a little over 100 miles from the edge of the ice, and a mile and a half above the ice level. Mr. Peary spoke of his surroundings at this elevation as follows:

"We are more than half as high as the tallest giants of the Sierra Nevada and Rocky mountains and a trifle less than half as high as Mont Blanc.

"The snow and ice beneath our feet would cover Mount Marcy one-half mile, and Mount Washington one-fourth mile, and Mount Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Mississippi, 800 feet deep. It is evening; the great yellow sun is sinking to the northern horizon; the blinding midday glare is gone, and we can dispense with blue goggles. Beneath our feet the snow, fine and dry as granulated sugar, is over six feet deep and expands from us to the steel-blue horizon, an infinite marble slab. From east to west and round to east again, from zenith to nadir, this horizon and the sun are absolutely the only things the eye can fix upon. In the slant rays of the sun every snow crystal is a flashing jewel, and the sky and snow and air are one great vibrant chord of color. There are fairer, softer, warmer places on the earth, but nowhere else can one get so close to the mighty heart of nature as on this wind-swept, cloud-wrapped, sun-kissed, immutable sea.

On the return the two sledges were lashed together a la catamaran, rigged with mast, yard, and sail from alpenstocks and at midnight on the third night, having descended to an elevation of 6,000 feet, where the snow was covered with a light crust and the wind very fresh, Mr. Peary and his companion stretched themselves upon the sledge and began a bit of traveling which, as far as he knows, has no parallel in arctic work. From midnight till 5 in the morning he sailed his impromptu ice-boat down the icy slope at a speed varying from a walk to a run. At 6 o'clock the black mountains of the land came into view, and the next hour he dropped 600 feet with a rush like a toboggan. After a narrow escape of being driven into one of the blue lakes on the ice he got off and walked till the snow became a deep semi-liquid slush, and then turned in on his sledge. The next two nights he marched through slush and water, rushed the sledges over crevasses, and forded swift running streams till finally he reached the edge of the glacier.

One of these crevasses came near robbing Mr. Peary of his companion, who tripped as he jumped across, but fortunately, in falling, grasped the sledge which partly spanned the crevasse. This broke his fall and enabled Mr. Peary, who had seized the other end of the sledge, to pull both him and the sledge out after a struggle. Mr. Peary himself slipped into one of the glacier rivers dashing along in a bed of polished ice, and was carried a long distance by the resistless current before shallow water and a low bank gave him a chance to scramble out. The heat of the sun during his absence having melted the glacier face so that it was impossible to get the sledges down, he packed them over the mountains, lowered them down the cliffs with lines, and reached his tent after an absence of twenty days.

Moon Influences.

The Italians, and in fact all the inhabitants of lands bordering on or adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea, are firm believers in the moon influences. In this country we look for changes for better or worse in the condition of sick persons to take place immediately after midnight; in Persia they look for such changes as the moon appears above the horizon. In America, during a critical period, we say that the patient will not survive longer than till midnight; in India they say he will never see the moon rise again. During the time of the plague, 1660 to 1666, physicians noted abnormal changes for the worse just preceding and following each full moon. Dimerbroeck says: "Two or three days before and after each full moon there were twice as many deaths as there were during any other four or six days."

The influenza epidemic which has been raging in every civilized land, presented some excellent chances to test the moon influence theories and to settle for all time the question as to whether the word "Influenza," as applied by the Italians, is a misnomer or otherwise.

"Moon blindness" is another condition brought about—exactly how the most scientific of all the scientists cannot say—by the direct influence of the moon. Whole armies have been affected by this curious pyschological condition at once.

In Southern seas sailors warn intrepid "land lubbers," who persist in sleeping in the open air, to always woo the dreamy god under an awning; otherwise what might have been refreshing sleep may terminate in temporary loss of sleep. I say "(temporary" for the reason that it has never turned out to be a permanent calamity, although it frequently causes much trouble and gives the victim a scare he remembers the remainder of his life.

Poor shackly tools often cause damage.

Feeding Her Young.

In the Auk Mr. William Brewster records some novel and interesting observations upon a mother hummingbird and her young. The two eggs were hatched on the 4th of July in a gentleman's garden in Concord, Mass., and Mr. Brewster was taken to the nest three days afterswards. The young birds were then almost as large as their mother, although they did not leave the nest till they were exactly two weeks old.

The little ones' bills were about a quarter of an inch long—not half as long as the bill of an adult bird of the same species. Mr. Brewster took a position at a distance of about ten yards from the nest, and with a strong field-glass watched it for two hours.

During this time the mother visited the nest three times. At her first coming she fed the young, and after brooding them for forty-five minutes, buzzed about in the tree—not once leaving it—for about a minute. Then she returned to the nest and fed the young again, one of them twice in succession.

Immediately afterward she flew off out of sight and was absent sixteen minutes. At the end of this time she came directly to the nest, fed each young bird once, brooded both for six minutes, and then flew away again, and did not return while Mr. Brewster remained.

Her manner in feeding her offspring was as follows: Alighting on the edge of the nest, her tail pressed firmly against its outer side in the manner of a woodpecker, her body erect, she first looked nervously around, then thrust at least three-quarters of the total length of her bill down between the upraised open mandibles of the young bird. Next she shook her head violently as if disgorging something; then, with their bills glued tightly together, both birds remained for several seconds perfectly immovable save for a slight, rapid, pulsating or quivering motion of the mother's throat.

The actual contact of the bills lasted once four seconds, once six seconds and twice eleven seconds, the time being taken with a stop watch. The father bird did not appear at all. The young were perfectly silent. The mother in brooding them kept moving restlessly about, as if she was tramping on them.

The close and prolonged contact of the bills, the shaking of the mother's head, the subsequent quivering motion of her throat, and above all, the fact after sitting on the nest for nearly an hour she fed the young a second time without leaving the tree, convinced Mr. Brewster that the humming-bird's method of feeding her young is by regurgitation. That is to say, the humming-bird, like the pigeon, transfers partially digested food from her own crop to the crop of her nestling.

It has been the dream of Edison's later years to discover a method of obtaining electricity directly from heat, or coal, without the intervention of steam. Direct power from heat was the object. Then the costly steam engine which now comes between the fuel and the electric current would be done away. Can it be possible that, after all, he is to be forestalled in this great discovery, and that another is to wrest the honor from him? It looks so, if the Hartford (Conn.) discovery is true.

H. B. Cox, a young man from Maine, made the invention, which he says is so simple that it scarcely deserves the name of invention. He claims by this method to obtain electricity from live coals as easily as steam is obtained from water, "without the aid of boiler, engine or dynamo." Patents have been issued and a company with a million capital will begin to make the machines, so the story is. The revolution this will work in our industries, should the invention be successful, will be greater even than that hitherto wrought by electricity. A gas jet will furnish power enough to run a sewing machine. Thousands of things now done slowly and painfully by hand power will be accomplished swiftly and easily by machines.

The deepest well in the world is soon to be dug in the environs of London. It will be nearly 1,300 feet deep, and will be furnished with stairs and be illuminated. The object of the well is to enable the students to observe the various geological strata.

Silver can be kept bright for months by being placed in an air-tight case with a good-sized piece of camphor.

A whisk or sm[illegible]sting brush is the best for sweeping stair carpets.

The oftener flour is sifted for sponge cake, the lighter the cake will be.

A Palace of Silence.

There is in New York, upon one of the most fashionable thoroughfares, a magnificent house, a veritable palace, which can never be looked at by the sentimental woman without a tear coming to her eye because of the story attached to it.

It was designed and built by one of the richest men in New York—the head of an old Dutch family—for the woman he loved. Throughout the whole house, which might have been called "The House Beautiful," were the colors, furnishings, ornaments and dainty touches that were the young bride's taste. The ball room, in which she expected to trip so many merry measures, was walled and ceiled in many-colored marbles; but the lover himself directed the building of the porte cochere under which her carriage was to roll, so that, stepping out, she would not be touched by a drop of rain or a flake of snow. Everything was ready; the horses were pawing in the stable, waiting for the day to come when they would carry their new mistress out; the coachman and the footman had their big, white rosettes at hand to wear on the wedding day; the house was full of fragrance, for beautiful flowers were massed to please the coming mistress, and everything seemed to be in harmony with all this thoughtful, loving care; for the sun shone bright, and it was somebody's wedding day.

Yes; but it wasn't an earthly wedding, for when, with quick footsteps, her mother went to wake the expectant bride, she found her dead. The last kiss she had given had been to her lover the night before. The last kiss he ever gave to any human being he gave to her as she rested in her coffin. But he lives on in the beautiful house and does with his great fortune a deal of good, all in the name of the woman he loved. The shutters are never opened in that wonderful house, the carriage has never been used, no feet have danced in the ball room; but it and the solitary man are there as evidences of the fact that a love can so completely fill the heart that all life is nothing without it.

Cows Leaking Milk.

The teats of cows are provided with a ring of contractile muscle at the lower end by which the orifice is closed. In some cows this muscle is naturally weak, or becomes so as the cow grows old, and it permits the milk to escape when the udder is fully charged with milk or the formation of the milk is excited by any cause. No positive remedy is known for this defect, but an application of photographer's colodion, which forms a tough film that shrinks on drying, to the end of the teat after milking contracts it and keeps the orifice closed. The film is broken easily when the cow is milked. This application has in course of time tended to strengthen the muscle and remove the difficulty. Any druggist can supply the collodion, which is also useful to apply to scratches and cuts on the teat, drawing the edges of the wound together, protecting them from air, and causing rapid healing. When cows are much troubled in this way and are yielding much milk it is advisable to milk them at intervals of eight hours each, that is, three times in the 24 hours.

The Piute Father-in-Law.

"Among the Piutes," says the Virginia City (Nev.) *Enterprise*, "it is always the father-in-law that makes the trouble. Every married Piute is always glad of a visit from his mother-in-law. He welcomes her with his broadest grin. The arrival of the mother-in-law gives him a double team where before he had only one animal. He hails her appearance with delight, and piling a jackass-load of wood upon her willing old back sends her into town with his wife (similarly) packed to peddle out the fuel and bring back to him a supply of money for his favorite game of poker. The Piute father-in-law is of no use as a wood-packer, nor will he gather grass seed or pinenuts. On the contrary when he is around he himself goes for all the poker money that reaches the shebang."

The Sioux Indians tell a strange story about an historic locality. They say that on the hillock where Custer fell now grows a plant never seen there before—a curious plant with tall, slender leaves, curved in the exact form of a saber, with edges so sharp as to inflict keen wounds upon unwary hands, and those who pluck it once soon drop it, so strangely cold and clammy are its leaves. It bears a golden hued, heart shaped blossom, and in the center is one small spot of brilliant red, like a drop of blood. The Indians regard it with superstitious awe. They call it "Custer's heart," and cannot be induced to touch it, claiming that the blossom crushed in the hand leaves a blood red stain impossible to remove.

The course of true love never did run smooth, and it would not be half the fun if it did.

Fresh apple sauce, warm, if possible, is a good supper dish in winter. A dash of lemon improves it.

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