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THE DESCENT OF WINTER.

With one strong foot upon the prone, dumb land,
Sowing the snowflakes out his great, rough hand,
Loud-voiced, in tempests poured beneath the sky
In whirling storm-gusts, doth he stand and cry:
"Lo, I am come—King Winter!"

Frozen becomes the bleak moor's shallow edge:
The lank crane shivers in the frosty sedge;
The little sparrows flit with trembling wings
Over the dank reeds, and the plover sings;
"Ah, he is come—King Winter!"

The frowsy pipe-weeds on the gary marsh
Stand frozen, battling 'gainst the cold winds harsh;
The homeless snowflakes, sinking, yet undumb,
Down-dropping in the black-pools, sigh: "We come,
The ensigns of King Winter."

Bent are the brakes beneath the whelming snows;
The timid rabbit through the marsh-grass goes;
Wet-winged the robin pipes beyond the fen,
At mournful twilight answered by the wren:
"Night—night! have pity, Winter!"

Still mute and prostrate the grim landscape lies;
Still fall the flakes down from the pitiless skies
In swarms thro' the wide dusk, on everything,
Sown from the Northland by the Giant-King,
Ruler of Rivers, Winter

Ruddy the lamps within yon cottage glow,
And childhood's voice comes wafted to me low,
In merry laughter and incessant mirth,
When the thawed roof-snow slips into the earth
Under the steps of Winter.

Shut fast thy door, my Soul, and bide within!
Heart-warmth hast thou, and Love to house thee in;
Let the snows fall, still shall our nights be mirth,
Quiet, with laughter by the fireside hearth;
Pour down thy snows, oh, Winter!

Still, when without I hear the piteous call
Of His lost robins in the gray nightfall,
I wish, while screams the wind with bitter cold,
All things of His house I warm within His fold:
His birds!—have mercy, Winter.

Where are His dew drops now? His tender leaves?
His social crickets 'mong the noonday sheaves?
Hath Earth no answer? Hark! 'Tis the heron gray
Calling, across the moor's edge far away,
"Cold are thy feet, oh, Winter!"

—*Charles J. O'Malley, in the Current.*

MISS SCAMPER.

None at the Rappaquah Sulphur Springs knew who Miss Scamper was, and few cared to know. She came with an old gentleman, who registered the pair as "S. Scamper and grand-daughter, New York city." They were doubtless poor folk on a holiday. They had no servants with them. The old man wore a suit of rather rusty black, and his trunk, an antique leathern convenience, bore the letters S. S. in brass headed nails. The young woman's trunk—she had but one—was large enough, and of modern make, but it was apparently not well filled, since she had shown but three dresses all the three weeks she had remained. One of these, of rich material, she wore evenings; the other two, of some washable material, worn alternately in daytime. She had no jewelry beyond a plain gold brooch. One of the eligible young men there said that "the Scamper had one Sunday-go-to-meetin' and two work day suits," for which his neighbor should have kicked him, but didn't. The eligible young man was looking for an eligible mate in the person of Miss Bolsover, the great heiress, whom the society paper had said was coming to the Rappaquah; though, as she hadn't come, the Brown's young man of the society paper labored under a delusion. The match making dowagers did not fear this modest, pretty, and well cultured young woman, for the gilded youth, who were also lying in wait for Miss Bolsover, much more gilded, did not dangle in her train. Indeed, she had no train. Her business was to look after her poor old grandfather, who was not in good health, and with whom the waters seemed to agree. Didymus Dodd, who had scraped an acquaintance with old Scamper, as the fellows irreverently called him, seemed to be her admirer: Didymus was nobody. He was well made, tall, handsome, and of good address; but he was only an upper clerk in a Philadelphia insurance company. To be sure, he would be superintendent after January, vice Higgins, retired and superannuated, and would then draw a salary of $5,000 a year. But no one knew that, and the possible good fortune to poor Miss Scamper; and had they known, five thousand a year was no great matter. So the field was left to poor Miss Scamper and welcome.

Didymus only began paying attentions to Miss Scamper out of courtesy, and because no one else did; but the more he saw of her the more he liked her, and it ended in his being badly hit. As he and she were the only impecunious people at the old and old-fashioned resort—the other visitors counting their dollars well up in hundred thousands—the matter attracted attention, and by way of getting both out of the way of marriageable sons and daughters, scheming mothers lent the affair all the quiet encouragement possible. And this passed into a more active nature from two little incidents that occurred about ten days before the end of the two months' vacation of Didymus.

There was a Mrs. De Nyse at the Springs, who was well-known as an amateur vocalist of merit, and whose voice, though a little ready in the upper notes, had been trained so to make her worth a hearing. were in the ught her to she expressed her readiness, but there happened to be no accompanist. Miss Scamper, who was chatting near by with Didymus, looked up, and quietly said, "Perhaps I can serve that way, Mrs. De Nyse."

"Can you play at sight, Miss Scamper?" inquired Mrs. De Nyse.

Miss Scamper nodded assent, and seated herself at the piano-forte, and accompanied the voice with such good judgment that the singer was delighted.

"I wish I could carry you about with me, my dear," she said. "But do you not sing? You surely must."

"A little."

Urged by all around, Miss Scamper, to her own accompaniment, sang an aria from "Il Trovatore." Her voice proved to be a rich soprano, of full register, clear as a silver bell, and admirably cultivated. There was a moment's pause when she had done, as though not to lose a note, and then a storm of applause.

Here was a sensation. Everybody talked of her method, and the gilded youth were in raptures. The mammas conferred, and concluded that Miss Scamper was a member of some church choir, or attached to some English opera troupe, who knew? But they were civil. There was a party going over to Almont, Colonel Parisfall's place, next day. Would she go? She assented. Didymus said to her in a low voice:

"It is a riding party, Miss Scamper. I know the best horse in the livery-stable here, and if you'll permit me, I'll secure it for you."

To which she replied in the same tone: "Thank you, Mr. Dodd; you are very kind: but I have one at command already. Get that for yourself."

Somewhat rebuffed, Didymus colored, but she added, "Mine shall not disgrace you," which was a distinct intimation that she expected him as escort. The spirits of Didymus rose from zero to blood-heat.

The next morning, as the riders were ready to start, a groom, known to be one of Colonel Parsifall's, rode up, leading a magnificent blooded bay horse, equipped with a side-saddle. As they were admiring the animal, Miss Scamper, in a neat riding-habit, made her appearance. The groom took off his hat. Didymus, not a little astonished, put forth his hand, and the lady vaulted to the back of the horse with easy grace. The cavalcade set out, Miss Scamper and Didymus together, and being better mounted than the others, were soon at the head of the column.

About a mile from the Springs there was a bar in the way. A lofty tulip-tree had been blown down during the night, and had fallen across the road, the trunk well up on account of the wide roots. Some one had already cleared a way by letting down fences on the road-side; but Miss Scamper did not go around with the rest. She faced the trunk, the horse went over, and then trotted on. Didymus faced it too. His brute got over, but half stumbled. Didymus was country-bred, had ridden horses to mill bare-backed, and was a half centaur when a boy; so he brought his horse up.

Miss Scamper smiled approvingly.

Everybody admired the ease and grace with which Miss Scamper managed her horse, and Didymus more than everybody.

When they arrived at their destination, the party dispersed in the house and over the grounds. They found old Scamper there. He had gone over before in a carry-all. Almont was the property of Colonel Almont, and was for sale, with its fine blooded stock of horses and cattle, its furniture, its library, and everything in the house and around it. The colonel and his family were in Europe, and intended to stay there while he educated his sons at Heidelberg. So he offered the whole—a house that cost a hundred and thirty thousand dollars, with all its offices of all kinds, stables, palmery, grapery and greenhouses, furniture made to order, and over twelve hundred acres of land in a high state of cultivation—"for," as he said in his letter, "a mere song." So it was; but as it was set to the tune of three hundred thousand dollars, there were few who could render the music.

They all admired the place. The agent, who was there, seized on the Scampers and Didymus, to whom he showed everything and explained everything. Didymus was amused at this, and whispered to Miss Scamper, "He has picked out the only three who could certainly not buy it." Miss Scamper, by the twinkle in her eyes, evidently appreciated the fun of the situation. Then the agent seized old Scamper, and dragged him off to look at the blood horses and imported cattle, leaving Didymus and the girl together.

"How do you like the place, Mr. Dodd?" inquired she.

"Like it, Miss Scamper! Why, it is a garden of Eden; that is, it would be so to me, if I had it with an Eve in it."

The young lady smiled, and said: "You like country life, then, Mr. Dodd?"

"Naturally," replied Didymus. "I lived in the country until I was twenty-two. I was born and bred there. I should have been there yet but for the death of both my parents. I went to the city in search of fortune. I have done very well for the last seven years, and have put a little by; but to covet a place like this is like wishing for the moon."

"The country is the place to live in, and the city to work in," said Miss Scamper, sententiously.

"To live in, I grant you, if you have the means—a good farm and money to work it. Otherwise you toil harder in the country than in town, with less comfort and less profit."

Then they discoursed on rural topics, with a marvelous unity of sentiment, until the venerable Scamper and the agent got back, which was at the time the whole party, each with a nosegay furnished by the hearing gardener from the greenhouses, was ready for a return to the Springs.

There were yet two days of the young man's vacation left, when he determined to place his fate at Miss Scamper's disposal at the first opportunity. The chance came that very night. That evening a number were seated on the veranda enjoying the moonlight. Miss Scamper sat apart from the rest, in heavy shadow, with her grandfather. The old gentleman rose when Dodd came, and left. Miss Scamper made room for Didymus at her side, and the two began to talk of the day's doings.

"By-the-by," said Didymus, "have you heard that Almont has been sold?"

"Yes."

"And to the great heiress, Miss Bolsover. I wonder if she will keep old maid's hall there?"

Miss Scamper laughed a low, silvery laugh. "I presume she will," she said, "unless she chance to marry. Wasn't that a sad accident at the mill to-day?"

"Very. The man has a wife and five children. I went over to see how they were—to see if they were in pressing need, you know; but that part is all right. This Miss Bolsover, who must be staying somewhere near, has been there, and provided for all their wants. I suppose, as she has bought Almont, she means to play the Lady Bountiful here, which is all the better for Micky and his family."

"I believe, Mr. Dodd," said the lady, "that you play the part of Lord Bountiful sometimes, especially if some poor woman left with five children should rouse your sympathies."

"How did you know?" he said.

"A little bird told me," she said. "You not only paid Mrs. Grant's rent, but got her eldest boy employment, and then fairly ran away to avoid her thanks. She was full of your praises."

"But she did not know my name," said Didymus.

"True. But don't you remember that a veiled lady sat there the last time you came? That was I. I was in Philadelphia on a visit, and looked up Mrs. Grant, who had been a servant in our family before she married. She told me of her troubles, and how a stranger had helped her. I looked at you well, and when you came here I knew you in an instant."

Didymus felt his heart flutter. Now was the time; but his tongue refused its office. After a little pause, Miss Scamper said, "I have had a pleasant time here, and am almost sorry that I leave to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" cried Didymus, in desperation, seizing her hand, which was not withdrawn. "Oh, Ruth—Miss Scamper—you must have seen—"

Here he stopped, but the fingers of the lady tightened a little in his grasp. A friendly cloud passed over the moon, and the recess grew darker.

"I love you, Ruth, darling," he murmured, and drew her unresistingly toward him.

The people on the veranda were too busy in conversation to hear a faint sound made at the sealing of a compact between two foolish young people But once it was all settled, the tongue of Didymus was fairly unloosened, and he went on building his—their joint scheme of life. He told her of the money he had laid away, and the big salary in prospect, and the cozy little suburban cottage on the Schuylkill, with its acre of ground, that he would be able to buy.

"And there is room for grandfather to live with us," he said.

"That might not suit him, Didymus," she replied, "though it is kind and thoughtful of you. He would prefer his own larger house in New York."

"His large house!" cried Didymus. "I thought he was poor."

"Poor! Silas Scamper poor! Why, he has a two-third interest in the great banking house of Gould, Silver & Co., New York, Paris and Vienna, though he figures as the Co. He has his own house, and a great many more of them."

Didymus, in spite of his acceptance, felt a gulf yawning somehow. This rich banker—

"I beg your pardon, Miss Scamper," he said, "but I somehow—"

"Yes, Didymus, you believed him poor. But why do you call me Miss Scamper? Why not Ruth? which is sweeter—from you. And then my name is not Scamper at all."

"Not Scamper, Ruth? Are you not Mr. Scamper's granddaughter?"

"Oh, yes, his only granddaughter, and all the near kin he has. But my mother was his only daughter—we are both orphans, Didymus—and of course I take my father's name. I hope you won't buy that cottage, since you like Almont; for I am Ruth Bolsover."—*Harper's Bazar.*

The Journey of a Million.

Statistics as carefully studied by Dr. Farr tells us that of a million children ushered into life nearly 150,000 pass away by the end of the first year. Twelve months later 53,000 more will have followed. At the end of the third year the number living will be diminished by 28,000 more. Each year of the decade following will make its inroads upon the ranks, but less serious in amount, till the thirteenth year will call for less than 4,000. Those remaining will fall out by twos and threes till the end of the forty-fifth year, when it will be found that in the intervening period about 500,000 have succumbed to the hardships of the way. At the end of sixty years 370,000 gray haired veterans would still be keeping step with the duties of the passing days. Eighty years would see 37,000 remaining, with strength impaired and steps growing feebie. At the end of ninety-five years but 223 would linger in the darkening path, and these would be rapidly thinned till in the one hundred and eighth year the last survivor of the million would disappear, and join the ranks of his predecessors in the great host of the majority.

Defective Ears.

The results of certain inquiries which have been made concerning the statistics of ear disease have been made known by Dr. Buskner, a German physician, and may be stated briefly as follows: Every third person in middle life does not hear so well with one ear as with the other. In an examination of 5,905 school children it was found that twenty-three per cent. presented symptoms of actual disease of the ears, while thirty-two per cent. showed a diminution of hearing power. The liability to disease of the ear increases from birth to the fortieth year, and then decreases to old age. Men are more subject to ear affections than women, in the proportion of three to two. The external ear is affected in twenty-five per cent. of the total cases, the middle ear in sixty-seven per cent., and the inner ear in eight per cent. The left ear is more frequently affected than the right in the proportion of five to four. Acute affections of the middle ear occur less frequently in summer and autumn than in spring and winter, and a little more than half of the cases treated are cured.

The assessed value of Illinois is $10,000,000 less than it was one year ago.

LADIES WHO LOVE LIQUOR.

WOMEN WHO DRINK WHILE SHOPPING IN NEW YORK.

Attachments to Drinking Saloons for the Special Benefit of Feminine Tipplers—What a Reporter saw.

The New York *Sun* says that passing through the storm doors at the side entrance of a Sixth avenue drinking saloon, one enters a short passage, or vestibule, with a small door at the side bearing the legend, "Gentlemen, unaccompanied by ladies, not admitted." This reversal of the customary warning to ladies unaccompanied by gentlemen is explained by a glance into the cosily-furnished apartment into which the small door opens, especially during shopping hours. The interior is connected with the adjoining saloon, and is often crowded at such times with ladies enjoying clandestine refreshments. Singly, in pairs, and in groups of three or four, they occupy little mahogany tables, with their glasses before them, while some are indulging in cigarettes. The glasses mostly contain beer, but there is a sufficient mingling of stronger beverages to indicate a trained habit on the part of the fair drinkers. In rare instances a male escort is observable at one or another of the little tables, but they are for the most part solely occupied by fashionably dressed women, some with packages of recent purchases, and others with no such indication that their presence in the drinking den is incidental rather than premeditated.

As a *Sun* reporter recently entered one of these retreats, duly chaperoned, there was a subdued hum of conversation like the soft murmur of a summer hive at noon. A white-aproned waiter of obsequious demeanor, who had entered by a ground-glass paneled door from the adjoining saloon, was taking the orders of a group of three ladies who had just appropriated one of the tables. Of a dozen or more others who were discussing beverages around them, one was enjoying a plate of Swiss cheese and another a sardine sandwich, and three young ladies in expensive sealskins and towering hat plumage were lazily smoking cigarettes over delicately-looking compounds that were airily suggestive of a vinous or alcoholic base. It was late in the afternoon.

"I must really be going now, dears," said one of a party of three, reluctantly rising, after finishing her beer and gathering up her packages. "I have been here two hours already, and will barely have time to see to the dinner before my husband comes home from his business."

"Stay for one more," urged one of her companions. "You gave, now, the holiday displays and the consequent crush in the stores as an excuse for late shopping, you know."

"No, thanks; I've tried that on twice already, and my husband is too wide-awake to put up with it again. Good-bye; and remember you both owe me a visit."

There was a little ripple of regrets and adieux as she tore herself away.

Then the solitary occupant of a table in the remotest corner, whom the reporter had not theretofore noticed—a very pretty young woman in mourning, but with feverishly flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes—signaled the attendant to her side and ordered "a little more whisky and seltzer" in a low, musical voice.

"I'd hate to be married and have to hurry home at a regulation hour, like a slave," observed one of the cigarette smokers, in comment upon the lady who had taken her departure in response to duty's small voice.

"So would I," said the younger of her companions. "Papa rarely asks me where I have been when I get home late. If he does, I've always a purchase or two as an explanation, and he drinks so much himself when down town that he can't discover anything in my breath when I kiss him."

"You should both rather wish to be married, as I am, to a man who is not over inquisitive," said the third, with a complacent smile. "Harry is the very soul of consideration, and spends the most of his time at his club when not at his office or playing billiards down town. Waiter, you may repeat these, if you please."

Every few minutes ladies were quitting the place and their seats were occupied by new comers. There was a constant rustle of skirts, mingled with every-day small talk and comments upon the refreshments produced. During one of the most bustling of these changes the pretty young woman in mourning furtively repeated her order, and shrank yet deeper into her corner, with her lace handkerchief half hiding the glass that was presently raised to her lips by the daintiest of gloved hands.

"I have been here a number of times, though never to remain more than a few minutes," said the reporter's companion. Many of those you have seen I should say are habitues. The aristocratic looking elderly lady yonder, with the little girl fondling a new doll at her side, must come here quite often. The little girl invariably accompanies her, and may be her grandchild. The two attractive women, with their heads together while imbibing something or other through straws, are likewise nearly always together and I think the plumper and more stylish of the two is the young wife of an old and very rich broker, who doubtless imagines her wholly engrossed with an every-day shopping mania, without suspecting the real nature of the attraction that keeps her from her home and children. As for the pretty little widow over there in the corner, she is Mrs.——, and I think she must be the oldest and steadiest frequenter of this retreat. I take it she is now a widow by reason of the weeds she wears so becomingly, although a year or more ago, when I first remarked her here, she was invariably accompanied by her husband, something of a swell, and a well known man about town. And then she drank nothing but champagne, which he paid for carelessly enough, though partaking but sparingly himself. Now her fortune seems to have undergone a decided change. By the way, did you notice the hesitancy with which the waiter filled the last order? I did. It was slight, but unmistakable."

There was scarcely a vacant seat at the little tables as the reporter and his companion took their departure, and the pretty widow, purse in hand, appeared to be holding a half-smiling, low-voiced argument with the white-aproned attendant, who had just taken up her glass and was reluctantly considering the propriety of its replenishment.

Subsequently one of the proprietors of the saloon was questioned by the reporter.

"There are twelve or fifteen saloons with side accommodations for lady tipplers, like ours, on this avenue, between Tenth and Thirty-second streets, and then there are others scattered all over up town according to the demand. In fact, without the ladies' room attachment our afternoon trade would be apt to go a-begging. Yes, they come at night, too, but we're mighty circumspect whom we admit after dark, and would sooner they would come at such times under escort. But taken altogether, ladies' custom is very desirable. With hardly an exception—I only know of one—they are as quiet and orderly as kittens, take what is set before 'em without a growl, and pay their shots like thoroughbreds. Beer is their favorite drink, but the majority of 'em know good liquor from bad as suddenly as an old rounder, and, in the way of mixed drinks, one has only to study the dear creatures' tastes attentively, and then cultivate up to 'em, to make steady customers of chance droppers-in. Oh, yes, the shoppers' trade is a paying one, and don't you forget it."

The reporter mentioned the case of Mrs. ——, the young widow, at which the saloon keeper at once betrayed signs of perturbation and uneasiness.

"Oh, yes, Mrs. ——, whom Jack —— left a widow a year or so ago!" he exclaimed impatiently. "She used to be a perfect little gem, coming here in a coach along with her husband, and making the champagne fly. But now she's getting vulgar, sir, positively vulgar. Twice she's got so full in there that one of the waiters has had to help her to a horse car, and it's only a question of time before she'll have to be kept out altogether. That woman is a regular temperance lecture in petticoats. First it was a coach and champagne. Then it was sherry and bitters. Jack's dead, and funds running low—see? Then it was brandy and water. Now it's whisky—ordinary rye whisky, you know, with a dash of seltzer. So it goes step by step, and each a little lower down. The next and last one will follow, and then the final tumble."

"What is next and last step?"

"Gin and water. After reaching that stage the career is altogether in one direction," he continued with a significant gesture of his thumb toward the neighboring gutter, "and it's mostly at a railroad jog at that. They generally give in to it, with mighty little regard to decency, when they get down to gin and water."

The Flag of Truce at Appomattox

General E. W. Whittaker, who was a cavalry officer under General Custer, in correcting some errors that appeared in the New York *Critic* in connection with certain war relics in the possession of Mrs. Custer, writes a Washington correspondent of the Detroit *Post*, makes the following interesting contribution to the incidents attending the surrender of General Lee's army: "The flag of truce at Appomattox was not tied to a pole and carried at the head of a little column of cavalry, but was in the hands of Captain Simms, of General Longstreet's staff, who alone met and arrested the charging cavalry column of ten thousand men led by General Custer by a vigorous flourish of a white towel and an emphatic declaration that General Lee asked the suspension of hostilities. Under General Custer's direction I accompanied Captain Simms back through the Confederate line of battle to inform General Lee that the charge would not be halted except on an announcement of unconditional surrender. The truce came into my possession when Generals Gordon and Longstreet asked me to take it and announce the surrender to General Ord's Federal infantry line of battle that was then sweeping in from the southwestward and reached an uncomfortably short range.

"My recollection is that I gave that truce to General Custer, first cutting from it a small piece for myself, and that General Sheridan presented to Mrs. Custer the table on which the articles of capitulation were written, and stated in a letter to her at the time that the country owed more to her gallant husband for the glorious event of that day than to any other person. If I am wrong, of course some of the many living participants in the event will correct me, and the truth of history will be reached."

Two Cautious Women.

"All women are alike in their fear of the cars," said an Illinois Central conductor. "They carry their caution to absurd extremes. That reminds me of a little story. Down in the Southern part of the State we have up at road crossings some of the old-fashioned signs. 'Look out for the cars when the bell rings.' At one of the crossings the other day two women came up, driving an old horse hitched to a buggy. They looked all about and couldn't see any cars, but happened to read the sign. 'Stop,' said one, 'I hear a bell.' They both listened, and sure enough, they heard a bell tinkling. One of the women got out, and amid considerable excitement took hold of the horse's bridle. The other one tightened her grip on the lines, set her jaws, and prepared for the worst. They looked anxiously up the track for the train, but still couldn't see it, though they could hear the bell a little plainer than before. They waited and waited. Five minutes passed, then ten, and still no train. The old horse went to sleep, while the women's nerves from long straining threatened to throw them into hysterics. Nearer and nearer came the bell against which the sign warned them and so they stood still. In about a quarter of an hour an old brindle cow came walking down the pasture by the side of the track, chewing her cud and monotonously jingling her bell. One of the women cried from nervousness, and the other one got mad at the railroad company, and said they were nothing but mean old monopolies any way."—*Chicago Herald.*

A correspondent of the London *Lancet* says that owing to the difficulty of obtaining human skin to graft over granulating wounds, he is using the skin of frogs with great success. Frog skin retains its vitality for a long time and can be carried to a distant patient by the surgeon, in his pocket.

WISE WORDS.

Our bravest lessons are not learned through success, but misadventure.

Conversation enriches the understanding, but solitude is the school of genius.

If men had only temptations to great sins, they would always be good; but the daily fight with little ones accustoms them to defeat.

The first mistake in the education of girls, and the one fraught with the saddest results, is made when they are allowed to leave childhood too soon.

The every day cares and duties, which men call drudgery, are the weights and counterpoises of the clock of time, giving its pendulum a true vibration and its hands a regular motion.

Self distrust is the cause of most of our failures. In the assurance of strength there is strength, and they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers.

Why, Oh man! do you vituperate the world? The world is most beautiful, framed by the best and most perfect reason; though to you indeed it may be unclean and evil, because you are unclean and evil in a good world.

The joys of parents are a secret, and so are their griefs and fears; they cannot utter the one, nor will they utter the other. Children sweeten labors, but they make fortunes more bitter; increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death.

It is only when our path leads down into some dark gorge of trial where no sunbeams fall that we learn the worth of the lamps of heavenly promise. Their beams shone dimly as we walked in the sunshine of human joy and strong earthly hope; but now in darkness, they flash out in brilliancy, and change night into day.

The best general test to which we can submit the question of accepting or declining the proffered help of others will be to discover whether or not it will strengthen our energies to help ourselves. If it will, we will do well to take it; if it weakens them and fosters a dependent feeling, we will do well to decline.

A Military Holiday in Russia.

A Paris letter to the New York *Telegram* contains what follows: Edouard Detaille, the battle painter, has recently returned from a visit to the emperor of Russia, who asked him to attend the Russian military maneuvers as his guest. The account the young master gives of his experiences in the land of the czars is interesting.

"We had a glorious time of it at Krasnoe-Selo," said he. "The czar was cordial and the czarina gracious, both seeming to do their utmost to make us forget their rank. The imperial party lodged in a group of little houses near the camp. I was accommodated on a ground floor just below the apartment of Prince Troubetskoi, grand marshal of the palace. Close to us was a wooden structure, which turned out to be Camp Theatre. The attractions were French operetta and Russian ballet, and the fashionable pieces at the time was "La Mascotte." In the early morning we went off to the grand maneuvers—the emperor in a caleche, the empress on horseback (looking wonderfully pretty in her riding habit) and I behind them in a victoria. Nothing could be more picturesque than the operations. The generals and officers would arrive in carriages, heralded by the melancholy sound of jangling bells. Such a medley of horses and grooms and Cossacks, such a confusion of brilliant uniforms! Conspicuous among all you saw the French military mission, commanded by General Meribel—French kepis, German caps, high black Austrian helmets and English ridinghoods all jumbled together—and as a background the Imperial Cossacks on their dwarf chargers, motionless!

"I was much struck by the familiar relations of the officers and their men. The emperor himself used to shout: 'Good morning, my children!' to the troops as he rode along the lines. Ten thousand throats would shout back in answer: 'Health to you, sire! Good-day!'

"Very amusing, too, were our impromptu lunches, eaten, maybe, outside the gates of some poverty-stricken farm. A table would be knocked up for their majesties. The empress would invite the French and German ambassadors to take the places of honor beside her. The rest would find room where they could—or stand, or squat on the grass. Before falling to, the peasants came out bearing offerings of bread, salt and eggs to the emperor. When his majesty passed by a village, the bells rang out and the local "pope" presented him the holy pictures. Our dejeuners were enlivened by the music of the military bands and national songs, accompanied by accordeons, cymbals and tambourines. After dejeuner we generally went back to our lodgings, and I set to work at my pictures."

A Very Particular Warning.

Miss Austen, in one of her letters recently published, tells this story about Admiral Sir Francis Austen: "He was exceedingly precise, and spoke always with due deliberation, let the occasion be what it might, never having been known to hurry himself in his speech for any conceivable reason. It so fell out then, that while in some foreign seas where sharks and other similar unpleasant creatures abound, a friend or sub-officer of his was bathing from the ship. Presently Sir Francis called out to him in his usual tone and manner: 'Mr. Packenham, you are in danger of a shark—a shark of the blue species! You had better return to the ship.' 'Oh! Sir Francis, you are joking, are you not?' 'Mr. Pakenham, I am not given to joking. If you do not return soon the shark will eat you.' Whereupon Pakenham, becoming alive to his danger acted upon, the advice thus deliberately given, and, says the story, saved himself by the skin of his teeth' from the shark.

A Bonanza King's Enterprises.

In addition to his postal telegraph stock John W. Mackay has but recently acquired a new silver mine where there are $7,000,000 in sight. He has $2,000,000 in a Texas railroad, and together with the Postal Telegraph company and his ocean cable scheme will foot up a total of nearly $25,000,000. He is estimated to be worth $175,000,000.

BY THE HEARTHSTONE.

Sodden and dreary the day on the upland and wold.
Faded the leaves of the trees from their crimson and gold.
Dark are the shadows and harsh blows the wind o'er the hill
Chilled in their nests are the birds, their sweet voices are still.

Fiercely and swiftly the rain falls from day dawn till eve,
Sombre and sad are the thoughts that the rain murmurs leave.
Darkly the clouds hover nearer and shut out the light,
Cheerless and cold come the unbidden dusk and the night.

Draw closer the curtains, shut out the darkness and gloom,
Pile up the logs 'till the firelight steals through the room.
Watch the long shadows that dance in quaint gleo upon the walls,
And the brightness that gladdens each face where the firelight falls.

Away with sad murmurs, away with dullness and care,
Safe by the hearthstone the whole world looks pleasant and fair.
'Twere a happy fate for earth if wanderers to-night,
Could be sure of a home, and a hearth and a firelight.

—*Providence Journal.*

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

A trade scenter—The drummer.

An advance agent—The pawnbroker's clerk.

Woman's sphere—An apple dumpling.—*Judge.*

An extension table—the multiplication table.—*Siftings.*

Clouds come high, but we must have them.—*Merchant-Traveler.*

Song of the deaf mute—"Man Wants but Little Hear Below."—*Hatchet.*

A land slide is the most significant movement in real estate.—*Picayune.*

Motto of the cornet player—An high for an high and a toot for a toot.—*Hatchet.*

Raisins are sometimes like prophets—for instance, when they are stoned.—*Lowell Courier.*

"Man is man's greatest study, and how to get ahead of him his most persistent."—*Boston Globe.*

The evil men do invariably live after them. The inventor of the hand organ is dead.—*Blizzard.*

"Another cut down," remarked the barber, as he shaved the upper lip of a youthful customer.—*Boston Transcript.*

"My Mother-in-Law" is the name of a new novel. We have not read it. We hate war and gore stories.—*Philadelphia Call.*

Irishmen are proverbial for their intense admiration of the fair sex. This is probably because so many of the ladies are home rulers.—*Blizzard.*

The king of Portugal buttons up his coat with diamond buttons, and we still use the same old safety pins to button ours with.—*St. Paul Herald.*

The ancients thought the world was square. The nineteenth century, however, knows there is very little square about it.—*Pittsburg Telegraph.*

Reflection of an inebriate: "It's curious, isn't it? When I'm drunk, everybody knows it; but when I'm thirsty, nobody pays any attention to the fact."

Life is real, and girls are earnest,
If they can't get what they like—
Taffy, cream and kindred goodies—
They will organize a strike.
—*Chicago Sun.*

An exchange says "round waists are still in fashion." We should hope so. What would become of us if it gets to three-cornered or pentagonal waists?—*Boston Post.*

"Have you corns?" blandly asked the corn-plaster peddler at the busy man's elbow. "Yes; I am supplied," answered the busy man, without looking up.—*Boston Transcript.*

A Walnut Hills girl is mad with a downtown drug clerk because when she asked him for something to bang her hair with he told her they didn't keep curry-combs.—*Merchant-Traveler.*

The latest craze in Boston is to teach the children to play the fiddle. The great number of people seen daily registered at the hotels from Boston is now accounted for.—*St. Paul Herald.*

"You want to aim very low when you are hunting the bison," said the old hunter. "How low?" asked the tenderfoot. "Buffalo," replied the old hunter, without a struggle.—*Hawkeye.*

"I like good, solid substantial food," remarked Mrs. Jarphly at the breakfast table. "Is that why you bake such solid bread, mah!" inquired Johnnie, and he held a close communion with his mother's slipper.—*Pittsburg Chronicle.*

There was a young girl in Jamaica,
Ran off with the pastry-cook baker;
But the ague he caught,
And by nature was taught
That the best thing he could do was to shake her.
—*Siftings.*

They had been quarreling about his next summer clothes. She wanted to have his light suit cleaned up for 1885, and he wanted a heavier suit. "What's the use of fighting about this?" he said, finally. "I may be in the cemetery next summer." "I think," she replied, "you will need your summer clothes wherever you may be."—*Graphic.*

A Curious Will.

A French lady recently died at the advanced age of ninety years. Her will contained the following provision: "I leave to my physician, whose enlightened care and wise prescriptions have made me live so long, all that is contained in the old oaken chest in my boudoir. The key of the chest will be found under the mattress of my bed." The heirs were much disturbed, for they foresaw a material diminution in their share of the property. The fortunate and expectant physician at length arrived. The notary delivered to him the key of the chest. It was opened and found to contain solely all the drugs and poisons, still intact, which the worthy physician had given his patient for twenty years back.—*Herald of Health.*

...le is made from banana skins ...

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