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On the Threshold.

While I was singing yesterday,
Beneath the lilacs, dear,
A little bird perched overhead
As if it longed to hear.
I cried, "Oh, bird, sing—sing to me!
No song of mine can ever be
So sweet as your wild minstrelsy."

The little bird began to sing:
At every note and sound
It seemed as if strange listeners came,
And softly gathered round.
And still the bird sang loud and clear—
I shut my eyes that I might hear
The voices in the strange world near.

And when at last the bird was still
I opened wide my eyes,
But all around were but the trees
Uplifting to the skies—
The little bird is far away,
But I beneath the lilacs stray
To that sweet world of yesterday.

—*Rea, in Cassell's Family Magazine.*

THE DEACON'S DINNER.

The good housewives of the neighborhood often said that Mrs. Smart ought to be the happiest woman in the world.

"Such a nice house as she lives in!" said Miss Bryce, who, poor soul, taught the district school, and "boarded around," like the scape-goat in the Scripture wildernesses.

"Such a pious man as the dear deacon is!" added Mrs. Hopkins, whose better-half had once been a sea-captain, and was still apt to be profane on fits and starts, when the cattle got into the clover-field, and the midnight weasel marauded on his hen-coops and turkey-roosts.

"With a store-carpet on the best-room floor," put in Mrs. Jones, "and a weekly newspaper, and white sugar in her tea every day of her life, and a horse and wagon to take her to meetin' Sundays!"

Such was the opinion of society as represented in Glen Hollow. Perhaps Mrs. Deacon Smart *was* a happy woman. But we are told, on the very best authority, that "the heart knoweth its own bitterness."

Mrs. Smart was washing up her best china, one morning, preparatory to giving a grand tea-party, and her cousin, Ella Dale, was helping her, while the deacon put his shining bald head in at the door.

"My dear," said he, "here is a paper of pins for you."

Mrs. Smart nearly dropped a gilt-edged saucer, in her consternation.

"More *pins!*" said she.

"Yes, my dear," said the deacon, unctuously. "Pins are always useful."

"Oh, yes, *pins!*" said Mrs. Smart, giving her glass-towel a toss as she wiped the last globule of moisture from a goblet. "But not rows of rusty wire! I do say for it, Ebenezer—"

"I'm going to Glen Depot, my dear," the deacon somewhat hurriedly interrupted, at this juncture; "and perhaps I shan't be home until one o'clock."

He withdrew, and Mrs. Smart turned to Ella Dale with a half laugh.

"There, my dear," said she, throwing down the faded green roll of pin-paper on the dresser, "there you behold the secret of my domestic unhappiness, the skeleton in my closet!"

Ella opened her round hazel eyes very wide.

"I can't think what you mean, Juliana," said she. "*You* unhappy!—and the dear deacon such a truly good man!"

"That's the trouble," said Mrs. Smart; "he's too good."

"I don't see how that can be possible," protested Ella, more perplexed than ever.

"And it's all at my expense," said Mrs. Smart, dolefully. "Do you see that paper of pins?"

"Why, of course I see it," said Ella.

"Well, Mr. Smart has bought that paper of pins of a peddler at the door," said Mrs. Smart. "Peddlers always come here. This house is a Mecca to the race of peddlers. They know that Mr. Smart always buys of them—he's too good-hearted to say no; or rather—let us speak the truth and shame him who shall be nameless between us—he is too indolent to resist their importunities."

Ella burst out laughing.

"But what a very insignificant little trial!" said she.

"Oh, yes, I dare say!" said Mrs. Smart. "The sting of a hornet isn't so very terrible in itself, but when a whole swarm is let loose upon you, what then?"

"A swarm?" repeated innocent Ella.

"My dear," said Mrs. Smart, lowering her voice to a confidential whisper, "up stairs in my bed-room closet I have eighteen papers of just such cheap pins—utterly useless for anything but to bend themselves up double when you try to put them through a single thickness of calico, and to deprive you of your temper just when you need it most; six cards of porcelain buttons—an article which I *never* use; nine packages of stove-blacking; thirteen bottles of sewing-machine oil; five papers of rusty needles; a dozen pairs of shoe-strings; and eight rolls of tape, which is an insult to one's common sense! If I could reconcile it to my conscience, I'd fling the whole collection into the fire; but I was brought up to economize. What do you think, Ella? Would it be a sin to annihilate all these pitfalls to my equanimity?"

"It is rather a problem," said Ella Dale, soberly.

"And with all this," said Mrs. Smart, waxing vehement as she went on, "Ebenezer is unwilling to give me money to buy decent darning-needles and respectable tape. He wonders why I can't make my dresses last a little longer, and thinks I am extravagant in wanting a new feather for my old velvet hat. He announces that I use too many raisins and spices, and asks me why I can't raise eggs and poultry to exchange for groceries at the village store. And yet—oh, the inconsistency of men!—he expects me to give a bowl of coffee and a sandwich, to say nothing of wedges of apple-pie and three-cornered bits of cake, to every able-bodied tramp and stout peddler-woman who comes along."

"Doesn't he make any allowance for it in the housekeeping money?" said Ella.

"Not he! Just look here!" Mrs. Smart opened the drawer of the kitchen-table. "This is where I keep the house-money, which he gives me every week—and he came here twice this morning to get a quarter for a lame beggar, and to hunt up ten pennies for that same outrageous paper of pins!"

And she cast a baleful glance at the article, which still lay on the dresser.

"This is piracy," said Ella, judicially.

"It's highway robbery!" declared Mrs. Smart. "And there comes the butcher's-cart, and I haven't money enough left from my week's allowance to buy a single steak, and here it is only Wednesday."

"Can't you buy on credit?"

"Never!" said Mrs. Smart, with spirit. "It's a thing that I never have done, and that I never will do!"

Ella's brown eyes sparkled, as she shook her head vehemently at the butcher, who was just checking his old horses at the door.

"Nothing to-day," said she. "Go on!"

Mrs. Smart dashed away a tear.

"Give me some of that shelled corn, Ella," said she. "I suppose I can catch a chicken for dinner."

"Do nothing of the sort, my dear," said Ella Dale.

"But what are we to do?"

"Why, have a picked-up dinner, to-be-sure!" answered Ella. "Just leave *me* to manage it."

"But I'm afraid the deacon won't like it."

"Well, and if he doesn't? *You* don't like the peddler business, do you?" retorted Ella Dale.

At one o'clock the table was all spread, with three huge central platters carefully shielded with the covers which were ordinarily brought out only on state occasions, and Mrs. Smart and Ella were peeping out of the window, and wondering what kept the deacon so late.

"There he comes now!" said Mrs. Smart. "Good gracious me! and there is Willis Mildmay with him! We never counted on him bringing company to dinner, Ella."

"What signifies company?" said Ella, stoutly maintaining her composure, although her pretty face had turned pink all over, like a June rose. "Willis Mildmay won't care when he comprehends it all. Willis is a sensible man."

"Come in, Mr. Smart—come in, Mr. Mildmay," said Mrs. Smart. "You're half an hour late, Ebenezer. Ella and I could not imagine what had become of you."

"I hope I am not intruding!" said Mr. Mildmay, looking at Ella Dale as if a glance at her rosy face was all the dinner that he wanted.

"Oh, not in the least!" said Mrs. Smart. "Pray sit down. We have but a plain dinner to-day; but it is all that my housekeeping allowance would admit."

"No apologies, my dear," said Deacon Smart—"no apologies. Hunger is the best sauce, as we well know."

And thereupon they all seated themselves, and the deacon whisked off the big platter-covers, with a countenance of expectation.

"Hello!" said the deacon.

There, upon the centre plate, lay the eighteen pale-green papers of pins. At the right and left, on smaller platters, were arranged the cards of porcelain buttons and the rolls of tape, while the bottles of machine-oil and packages of stove-blacking were arranged like a child's block-house on a side-table, beneath a white napkin, by way of dessert.

Ella Dale burst out laughing. Mrs. Smart joined in. Willis Mildmay, spurred on by this infectious sound, laughed too, although he had not the least idea what he was laughing at. The deacon stared as if he had suddenly become all eyes.

"Juliana," said he, "what is the meaning of this?"

"It means, Ebenezer," his wife responded, "that you have spent my housekeeping money for cheap peddler's wares, and that Ella and I determined to serve them up to you for dinner! And what you don't eat, we are going to burn; and henceforward, whatever is bought has got to be of a good quality, or I won't have it in the house! Because I have come to the conclusion that charity is one thing and justice is another. And if you give me money for housekeeping, it isn't fair for you to spend it in buying articles which no one can use!"

"Certainly it isn't!" said Ella Dale, coming valiantly to the rescue.

The deacon's under jaw dropped; he had half a mind to be angry, but he thought better of it, and broke into a slow chuckle.

"Mildmay," he said, turning to the young man, "be warned in time! You see what tricks these women folks will be up to!"

But Mr. Mildmay, who had somehow got hold of Ella's hand under the folds of the tablecloth, did not seem to heed these words of wisdom as deeply as he should have done.

"Ladies," said he, "there's a bushel of oysters out in the wagon, that I was taking home. If you will build up a good fire, we'll have a roast, and I'll be head cook. I suppose you've got plenty of bread and butter?"

"Yes; and good, hot coffee," said Mrs. Smart. "Make haste, Ella, and start the fire to a blaze. And we'll stimulate it with machine-oil and cheap pins."

The deacon sat by and made no demur.

He only laughed in a sheepish, silent sort of way.

And the family dined off hot roast oysters, bread and butter and coffee.

Towards the close of the repast, a stout, itinerant vender, with a basket on his arm, tapped at the door.

"I hope I see your honor well?" said he, with the regular professional whine. "Will'ee buy something to-day? Pins, needles, shoe-laces, hair-pins or a little—"

But Deacon Smart shut the door in the very midst of his oily orations.

"No!" said he.

And the monosyllable sealed Mrs. Smart's triumph for good and all.—*Helen Forrest Graves.*

The Origin of "Mr." and "Mrs"

The history of those everyday titles of Mr. and Mrs., which are now the common property of every one, is not without interest, though in some of its steps it is a little obscure. In the earlier times of our history the ordinary man was simply William or John; that is to say, he had merely a Christain name, without any kind of "handle" before it, or surname after it. Some means of distinguishing one John or one William from another John or another William became necessary. Nicknames, derived from a man's trade, or from his dwelling-place, or from some personal peculiarity, were tack on to their Christain names, and plain John became plain John Smith. As yet there were no "Misters" in the land. Some John Smith accumulated more wealth than the bulk of his fellows—became perhaps a landed proprietor, or an employer of hired labor. Then he began to be called in the Norman-French of the day, the "Maistre," of this place, or of that, of these workmen or of those. In time the "Maistre," or "Maister," as it soon became, got tacked on before his name, and he became Maister Smith and his wife was Maistress Smith. But gradually the sense of possession was lost sight of, and the title was conferred upon any man who had attained social distinction of any kind, whether by mere possession of wealth, or by holding some position of more or less consideration and importance. It is only within comparatively modern times that the term came to be considered an almost indispensable adjunct to every one's name when mentioned in ordinary conversation or writing. Maistress Smith soon became Mistress Smith. Exactly how and when the term got corrupted cannot be said. Master Smith, however, remained Master Smith long after his wife became Mistress Smith.—*Times-Democrat.*

The First Umbrella in London.

In Red Lyon square lived, in former days, many notable persons. Among these was Jonas Hanway, well known as the benevolent traveler, the founder of Magdalene hospital, and last, but not least, as the introducer of umbrellas into London. Hanway, who died at his house in the square in 1876, was the first man who ventured, after his return from Persia in delicate health, to walk about the streets of the metropolis with an umbrella over his head. It was a bold proceeding; for, although others ultimately followed his example, some time elapsed before the fashion became general, and it was so regarded as a sign of infirmity to use umbrellas that those who carried them were exposed to much "chaff" and unpleasant jeering from the London gamins of the day. Strangely enough, the high position the umbrella has attained in political circles of late is foreshadowed in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, 'Rule a Wife and Have a Wife," where Altea says, as though she were addressing a liberal candidate for parliamentary honors of the present time:

Are you at ease? Now is your heart at rest?
Now you have got a shadow, an umbrella
To keep the scorching world's opinion
From your fair credit.

The umbrella may be glorified by Mr. Gladstone; but it would be unjust to ignore the fact that it is really indebted for its greatness to the grand old man of Red Lyon square.—*St. James's Gazette.*

BEECHER ON BUSINESS.

An Interesting Discourse on Practical Affairs.

The Foundations that are Necessary to Every Man's Success.

In the course of a recent sermon Rev. Henry Ward Beecher said:

"Men who live righteously have all the secular things necessary to happiness. Obedience to divine law and secular prosperity go hand in hand. There is no directory in the world like Solomon's proverb. One would think Solomon had lived in New York, for you will find there all you know and a good deal more. Every man to be successful must have a foundation. He must have health, strength and common sense, which is the most uncommon of all. He must have industry and good management. He must confine his work to his capabilities. A man six feet tall can reach higher than a man only five feet in height no matter how hard the other may try. An unthinking brain cannot be a philosopher and a man without genius cannot produce poetry, of which we have ten thousand instances.

"A man's first aim in life is to build himself up. And the building of one's self is the result of proper industry, frugality and economy. We are not here merely to enjoy ourselves. A right Christain life limits men's desires for pleasure, wealth and preferment. Half of the failures in commercial life are the result of greediness. Men are not content with moderation—with what belongs to their abilities. Seeking to do more than in them lies, they fall to the ground. There are many men whose energy and ambition drive them over all obstacles. They don't stop to consider the rights of others, but rush through the crowd knocking one man down and treading on another's feet. Thousands have no sense of equity between man and man, but by and by they are destroyed by the very impulse that urged them on their haughty, lordly career.

"Moderation prevents over-action and hence prevents reaction. Men eat and are stupid. They drink and are excited. Their reflections are like the reflection of the sun upon the waves. The moral constitution of the world is in agreement with right living, and whatever one seeks he can seek better by conforming to the moral laws of God's kingdom. Moreover the laws which apply to individual life apply to society. If a community fails to heed them the same punishment follows. It makes all the difference in the world what sort of a community a man lives in. If you go down into a community of individuals where fights and quarrels prevail you cannot expect to find peace and happiness. What kind of a place is that for yourself or your children? But if you go into a community of tastefulness, sobriety and godliness you are lifted up. Hence it is that no man or class of men has a right to maintain a nuisance of any kind. When we go forth to drive out the nuisance we are not meddling in what is not our business. It does concern us, and it is our right to interfere. We cannot always accomplish all that we would like to accomplish, it is true. We cannot compel a man to go to church, but we can make him send his children to school. We can come so near to it at any rate. Moral and virtuous men pay the bills of criminals.

"Men who pander to animals instincts are dangerous to humanity. They are dangerous to your children and mine. You remember the old fable about a man selling his soul to the devil—the poorest bargin the devil could make by the way. But while no man probably ever sold himself to the devil at wholesale, many are selling themselves to him at retail. Whenever you violate the great fundamental canons of morality you are selling yourself. There are men in Brooklyn who are seeking prosperity by sacrificing purity and morality, thinking that they will succeed by disregarding divine law. Many believe in the Bible, but not in its contents. The Bible says rectitude is prosperity, but they don't believe it. Do you believe speaking the truth at all times is essential to your prosperity, young man? No, a little evasion now and then is considered smart. You ridicule the blunt country youth, who blurts out the truth at all times. 'He is green.'

"Men say they will first amass fortunes by evasions and deception, and then they will join the church. They can't do it while building up their properties. Oh, no! Why, a business man in New York persuing such a course would bankrupt himself in a week. No mistake should be made in the cases of men who are successful in their wickedness. When such do prosper it is because of some qualities in their natures which are really good. In what is called prosperity there is often not a particle of true enjoyment. There are thousands of men in dingy shops who are happier than others in palaces. I don't believe bloodsuckers of gold are happy. I would rather be a healthy, respected poor man than the richest in the world, whose name is only another for gold, so far as happiness is concerned."

Remarkable Memories.

There was a Corsican boy who could rehearse 40,000 words, whether sense or nonsense, as they were dictated, and then repeat them in the reverse order without making a single mistake. A physician, about sixty years ago, could repeat the whole of "Paradise Lost" without a mistake, although he had not read it for twenty years. Euler, the great mathematician, when he became blind, could repeat the whole of Virgil's "Æneid," and could remember the first line, and the last line in every page of the particular edition which he had been accustomed to read before he became blind. One kind of retentive memory may be considered as the result of sheer work, a determination toward one particular achievement without reference either to cultivation, or to memory on other subjects. This is frequently shown by persons in humble life in regard to the Bible. An old beggarman, at Sterling, known about fifty years ago as "Blind Alick," afforded an instance of this. He knew the whole of the Bible by heart, insomuch that, if a sentence was read to him, he could name the book, chapter, and verse; or, if the book, chapter, and verse were named, he could give the exact words. A gentleman, to test him, repeated a verse, purposely making one verbal inaccuracy. Alick hesitated, named the place where the passage was to be found, but at the same time pointed out the verbal error. The same gentleman asked him to repeat the ninetieth verse of the seventh chapter of the Book of numbers. Alick almost instantly replied: "There is no such verse. That chapter has only eighty-nine verses." Gassendi had acquired by heart 6,000 Latin verses; and, in order to give his memory exercise, he was in the habit of daily reciting 600 verses from different languages.

The World's Telegraphs

Last year there were strung about this mundane sphere 600,000 miles of telegraph line. The United States outranks the world as far as the telegraph is concerned, both as to extent of wire and number of messages sent. Last year there were 65,000,000 messages sent in this country to 32,000,000 in Great Britain, 18,000,000 in Germany, and 19,000,000 in France. Russia sends about 10,000,000 of telegrams a year, Switzerland 2,000,000, Spain 3,000,000, Turkey a little over 1,000,000, Belgium 6,000,000 and Austria 9,000,000. Mexico has 460 telegraph offices, and it sends about 750,000 telegrams a year. Japan has 125 offices and sends nearly 3,000,000 telegrams a year. It is a characteristic fact, showing the progress of the two nations, that the Japanese, with smaller territory and a much less population, send three times as many messages as China.

With the 65,000,000 telegrams sent last year, the United States had 15,000 telegraph offices and 154,650 miles of lines. The mileage is larger to-day than then, and the wires are more generally used. Of these messages the average cost per message of those sent by the Western Union was thirty and nine-tenth cents, and the average profit per message was fifteen and six-tenth cents. In 1868 the Western Union had about one-fifth of its present mileage, and its charge per message was on the average over twice as great. At that time it made a profit of forty-one cents per message. In 1884 the Western Union had 145,000 miles of wire. It sent more than 42,000,000 messages and took in nearly $20,000,000 in receipts.—*Cleveland Leader.*

A Kinsman in the Desert.

F. X. Perrault has received a letter from one of the Canadian boatmen on the Nile. The writer states that wandering a little way from the camp one day he came to an oasis and in this green spot found a man sitting on the ground, and as he drew near the strains of this familiar melody fell on his ear:

"Un Canadien errent,
Banne de ses foyers,
Par courait en pennant
Les pays etrangers."

Which being literally translated means that a Canadian was tearfully wandering far from his home in the land of the stranger. Surprised at hearing the late Mr. Cremayies' song, so popular with the exiles of 1837 in a distant and semi-savage land, he made inquiries and found that the Arab was a French-Canadian in disguise who had once been a sailor. He happened years ago to be left in Alexandria, and joining a caravan, was captured by a tribe of Arabs. He got so accustomed to their ways and habituated to that mode of life that he preferred to remain with them though many opportunities had occurred to return to civilization.—*Montreal Gossip.*

It Wouldn't Take So Long.

Colonel Lubbock and Jones were walking home from the office.

"Wait awhile," said Colonel Lubbock, halting in front of a grocery. "I want to step in here and get some tea."

"I don't believe I'll have time," said Jones. "I'm in something of hurry."

"You won't have to wait long, I'm only going to get a quarter of a pound."—*Traveler's Magazine.*

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

Few persons who adorn their hats in the Alps with edelweiss are aware of its fragrance, which, however, is exceedingly evanescent; it rarely lasts more than an hour after the flower has been plucked.

Less than four out of each hundred Americans lived in cities in 1790. The city population had increased in 1840 to eight per cent., and is now twenty-two. There are only seventeen States with more people than New York city.

The growth of American public libraries since the revolution has been something phenomenal. There were in the country in 1776 but twenty of these institutions, with an aggregate of 45,623 volumes. At the present time there are nearly 4200, containing more than 13,000,000 volumes.

Paper is made in France from hop vines, and it is claimed that the fibre secured is the best substitute for rags yet obtained, as it possesses great length, strength, flexibility and delicacy. Papermakers near hop-growing districts should investigate this matter, for the vines are now a waste product.

The boundary between Massachusetts and New Hampshire has been in dispute 160 years. No strictly legal line exists. In 1741 the King of England directed representatives of both provinces to jointly make a map, in accord with some general directions, but Massachusetts did not obey, and New Hampshire did the work alone. A strip of Merrimac valley is the doubtful ground.

The center of population is moving rapidly westward. It is now a little to the south of Cincinnati, having long since crossed the Alleghenies. The movement has been about 44.5 miles west for every mile south. In 1890 the movement westward will probably be even greater, and, so rapid has been the settlement of the Northwest, the center of population will be farther north than at present.

One of the most interesting features of the big cranberry marshes of Wisconsin are the pumps used to flood the ground. The Sacket marsh near Berlin has two that draw their supply from the Fox river and throw 80,000 gallons a minute. The stream is 20 feet wide, 4 deep and moves at the rate of 160 feet a minute, flooding the 1000-acre marsh to a depth of 12 to 15 inches in 10 hours. The water is depended on as a protection against frost, also to drown the insects which infest the cranberry blossoms in May.

The British colonies include the richest and largest forests in the world, extending over millions of square acres. In India alone about 60,000 square miles are afforested, and the forests of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Cape Colony are second to none in size and the variety and value of their productions. But there is no knowledge of forestry and no school of the art in France and Germany. Consequently the acreage under timber there and in Great Britain itself is small and constantly decreasing. Of the 20,000,000 square acres of Scotland, only about 700,000 to 800,000 acres are woodland.

M. Delaunay of Paris predicts that earthquakes on a grand scale will occur next year either when the earth is under the influence of a planet of the first rank, like Jupiter, or under that of a group of asteroids, or at a time when the sun and moon are nearest to our planet simultaneously. This specialist in earthquakes foretold the frightful catastrophes which occurred in South America in 1877. He announced a vast seizmic disturbance in 1883, and the appalling disasters in the Indian Archipelago followed He raised his voice of warning also before the late extensive shaking of the earth in Spain. It is no wonder that his latest utterances have caused considerable attention in various countries.

An Englishwoman just home from America sends to the *Pall Mall Gazette* her opinion that an influx of highly cultured Englishwomen into Canada and the United States would be as great a boon to those countries as it would be a relief to Great Britain. "Although the ladies in the older cities of the North American continent are," she says, "with scarcely any exceptions, superior to English gentlewomen in brain power, in clearness of mental vision, in common sense, in practical, sound judgment, and in general intelligence, yet we miss in them that indefinable charm which always clings to a cultivated European." She has been assured by the government officials in Canada that if superior women, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, would come there from England, and submit to the position of domestic service, they would almost be sure to marry well within a short time of their arrival, especially if they go far West. She gravely adds that in a newly-settled country

The New England Primer.

In speaking of the inhabitants of "Down East" fishing villages John B. McMasters an author of a history of the American people, the second volume of which has recently appeared, thus alludes to an old national "institution:" All he knew of theology and much of his knowledge of reading and spelling was gained with the help of the New-England Primer. There is not, and there never was a text book so richly deserving a history as the primer. The earliest mention of it in print now known is to be found in an almanac for the year 1691. The public are there informed that a second impression is 'in press and will suddenly be extant,' and will contain, among much else that is new, the verses 'John Rogers the Martyr,' made and left as a legacy to his children. When the second impression became extant, a rude cut of Rogers lashed to the stake and, while the flames burned fiercely, discoursing to his wife and nine small children, embellished the verses, as it has done in every one of the innumerable editions since struck off. The tone of the primer is deeply religious. Two-thirds of the four-and-twenty pictures placed before the couplets and triplets in rhyme, from

"'In Adam's fall
We sinned all,'

to

"'Zacchæus, he
Did climb a tree
Our Lord to see,'

represents biblical incidents. Twelve words of 'six syllables' are given in the spelling lesson. Five of them are abomination, edification, humiliation, mortification, purification. More than half the book is made up of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, some of Watt's hymns, and the whole of that great Catechism which 120 divines spent five years in preparing. There, too, are Mr. Rogers's verses, and John Cotton's 'Spiritual Milk for American Babes;' exhortations not to call ill names, not to be a dunce, and to love school. The primer ends with the famous dialogue between Christ, Youth, and the Devil."

The Maelstrom.

The maelstrom, which means, literally translated, "grinding stream," is the most remarkable whirlpool in the world. It is situated on the Norwegian coast, just southwest of the Loffoden Isles. It runs between the islands of Moskenes and a large solitary rock in the middle of the straits. The strong currents rushing between the Great West Fjord and the outer ocean through the channels of the Loffoden Isles produces a number of whirlpools, of which the maelstrom is by far the most dangerous. Such extravagant stories have been told of this great eddy—how everything that enters the border of its current is instantly sucked down into a bottomless abyss—that its very existence has been doubted. However, an examination was made of it in 1859 by the Norwegian hydrographic survey, and an official report made. From this report we learn that in summer the current is comparatively calm for a short time at flood or ebb tide, when boats may venture upon it. In calm weather steamers can cross it at any state of the tide, or large ships, if a steady wind is blowing. But in winter or in storms it is highly dangerous for any vessel to try to pass the whirlpool. During a storm from the west, for instance, the current runs continually to the east at a rate of six knots an hour, without changing its directions for rising or falling tide, and the stream will boil and eddy in such mighty whirls that the largest steamer could hardly contend successfully with the waters. Of course, the danger is not of suction into the heart of the whirlpool, as legends have supposed, but of being dashed to pieces against the rocks. Dead whales are sometimes thrown upon the neighboring coast which have evidently been killed in this way. The depth of the whirlpool is only twenty fathoms, but just outside the straits soundings reach from 100 to 200 fathoms.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

Captain and Mate.

A New England skipper was in the habit of attending to the helm of his schooner, and steering the craft to suit himself. One day the mate who had charge of the front part of the vessel thought he perceived breakers ahead. He walked back to the end of the vessel and said to the captain:

"I say, Cap, do you know you are going to run this craft high and dry on the rocks?"

"Guess not."

The mate went forward and took another look. Once more he returned to the stern, and said sternly:

"Captain, there are breakers ahead."

"Mr. Mate, I am attending to this end of the vessel, and I wish you would attend to your end."

The mate went forward again, and dropped the anchor, and there was the schooner anchored securely with all sails set.

Returning once more to the captain, the mate said:

"I wish to report that my end of the schooner is at anchor.—*Siftings.*

He is a p[illegible]

In the Firelight.

The fire upon the hearth is low—
And there is stillness everywhere—
Like troubled spirits, here and there
The firelight shadows flittering go.
And as the shadows round me creep,
A childish treble breaks the gloom
And softly from a further room
Comes: "Now I lay me down to sleep."

And, somehow, with that little pray'r
And that sweet treble in my ears,
My thought goes back to distant years
And lingers with a dear one there;
And as I hear my child's amen,
My mother's face comes back to me—
Crouched at her side I seem to be,
And mother holds my hands again.

Oh, for an hour in that dear place;
Oh, for the peace of that dear time;
Oh, for that childish trust sublime;
Oh, for a glimpse of mother's face!
Yet, as the shadows round me creep,
I do not seem to be alone—
Sweet magic of that treble tone
And "Now I lay me down to sleep!"

—*Eugene Field.*

HUMOROUS.

Society gossip is only chin-deep.

A coat of paint has no buttons on it.

The character of the Chinaman is apt to be wish-he-washy.

An onion is very aromatic, but wouldn't carry it in your pocket for cent.

"Love is blind," but it gets along remarkably well without the aid of a guide.

Fresh oysters and roller skates are much alike, because they both go down rapidly.

Little Jack: "My mamma's new fan is hand-painted." Little Dick: "Pooh! who cares? Our whole fence is."

The reason a miser can find no interest in poor people is because they have no principal.

A minister, having some of his old sermons, was asked what he had in his package. "Dried tongue," was the reply.

Nine hundred and fifty-five farms in Iowa are owned by women. The rest of the Iowa farms are only bessed by women.

The man whose wife woke him up in church by sticking a pin in him says he doesn't like such pointed suggestions.

A Russian proverb—Before you go to war, pray once; before you go to sea, pray twice; before you take a wife, pray thrice.

Eliza Mathilda—Have you ever read any of Holmes' works? Charles Augustus—Oh, yes, I have read Holmes' Sweet Home.

Bald-headed gentleman in the parquet to young lady in dress-circle during an affectionate passage in the play. "I respect your emotion, ma'am, but you are shedding tears on my head."

Seven hundred and fifty-dollar fans are very common in New York, but sensible girls don't look for such presents. They take a fifty-cent fan and $749.50 in oysters and and theatre tickets.

"Smith, did you see my wife go down this street?" "Yes, she passed about an hour ago." Wonder what my chances are for overtaking her?" "Good. The sidewalk is just lined with show-windows."

A celebrated tragedian had a broken nose. A lady once remarked to him: "I like your acting, but to be frank with you, I can't get over your nose." "No wonder, madam," replied the tragedian. "The bridge is gone."

One hundred and fifty inventions relating to roller skates have been patented since January 1, and yet it is safe to predict that when a skater unexpectedly sits down with a dull, sickening thud, the language used on the occasion will be the same as that employed last year.

HOW TO EAT AN OYSTER.

Don't drown him deep in vinegar
Or season him at all:
Don't cover up his shining form
With pepper, like a pall;
But gently lift him from his shell
And firmly hold your breath,
Then with your eager tongue and teeth,
Just tickle him to death.

Evidence of Insanity.

"They say Carping is a little off his base."

"What's that?"

"People say the old man is getting flighty."

"Flighty?"

"Yes; kind o' shaky in the head."

"I'm afraid its true."

"What do you know about it?"

"I took dinner with him the other day and before we left the house he did something that staggered me."

"What was that?"

"He gave his wife some money without her asking for it."—*Chicago Ledger.*

The Languages of the World.

It is said that the nations of the earth speak about ninety different dialects. But these dialects can be traced to a much smaller number of languages. All these languages are divided into three classes—namely, the Indo-Germanic, which embraces the ancient classical languages and those of modern Europe; the Sanscrit, which embraces all the

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