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PAT'S CRITICISM.

There's a story that's old,
But good if twice told,
Of a doctor of limited skill,
Who cured beast and man,
On "a new-fangled" plan,
With the help of a strangely-made pill.

On his portal of pine
Hung an elegant sign
Depicting a beautiful rill,
And a lake where a sprite,
With apparent delight,
Was sporting in sweet dishabille.

Pat McCarty one day,
As he sauntered that way,
Stood and gazed at that portal of pine,
When the doctor with pride
Stepped up to his side,
Saying, "Pat," how is that for a sign?"

"There's wan thing," says Pat,
"Ye've lift out o' that,
Which, be jabers, is quite a mistake:
It's trim and it's nate,
But to make it complate,
Ye shud have a foine burd on the lake."

"Ah! indeed! pray, then, tell,
To make it look well,
What bird do you think it may lack?"
Says Pat, "Of the same,
I've forgotten the name,
But the song that he sings is 'quack! quack!'"

THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER!

Spring ruled in earth and air;
The breeze was soft and scented with the flowers;
"Come, let us walk, ere day away doth wear,"
—My friend said suddenly 'mid studious hours—
"Whither, I do not care!"

Together forth we set:
He led me far along the river way
All blue with flowers that whisper "ne'er forget,"
And, when I spoke of turning, answered "Nay,
A little farther yet."

Amid the meadows green
A farm-house nestled: "'Tis not very far"—
My friend persuaded—"if you have not been,
I'll take you; on a farm the chances are
There's something to be seen."

Once there my friend delayed;
And I, half piqued, could see his glance go round
Until it rested on a lingering maid,
Who looked at him, and then upon the ground,
And then retreat essayed.

Homeward our steps we turned:
"And who's the damosel?" quoth I; and he—
"Why, nobody," and looked with eyes that yearned
Towards where, above us in Immensity,
Love's planet faintly burned.

WHO KNOWS?

The birds made such a racket in the honey suckle vine outside my window that I couldn't sleep. The moon was still in the sky, but a veiled yet luminous splendor in the east told that the day was breaking—the day of June that began my twenty-seventh year. When I say that I was a woman, and add that I was unmarried, and, worst of all, that I had lost for good the requisite energy that held forth any promise in that direction, it will naturally be thought that I shall make but a sorry heroine; and it is just because of these discouraging facts that I want to jot down this little experience of a day; as a sort of consolation to that suffering part of my sex who have latent hopes, long lingering, unfulfilled, at times at the last gasp, then flickering up again with a sickly tenacity most painful to contemplate. But who knows what a day may bring forth? Who knows?

I went about on tiptoe, not to awaken mamma; and I took it as a piece of ingratitude that when she came down to breakfast, and began to enjoy the toast I had so nicely browned for her, and the egg I had so nicely poached for her, and to sniff the fragrance of a bunch of honeysuckles that I had scrambled for at the risk of a sprained ankle and the cost of a shower of morning dew upon my clean calico—I thought it mean of mamma to begin about that church festival before the day had fairly begun.

"I'm so glad it's fine weather, Jane," said mamma, with great urbanity of tone and manner. "I thought I'd get up early, so that you could reach the church in good season; and I wouldn't waste any flowers in the house, dear—I'd keep them all for your table."

"You know very well, mamma," I replied, "that I'm not going to have a table. I've served my apprenticeship at tables. Long ago, when I was young and fair, I wore white, with my hair curling about my shoulders, and had the flower table, and enjoyed it. Later on, I put my hair up, and had a fancy table, and endured it with great resignation. Last year I had recourse to a switch to eke out my scanty locks, and was compelled reluctantly to take the post-office. This year I sha'n't have any thing; in fact, mamma, I'm not going to the festival."

Mamma put down her bit of toast, and turned absolutely pale.

"Not going to the festival!" she echoed, mournfully.

"No, mamma," I said, beginning already to plead my case. "Can't I have one birthday to myself? I'm twenty seven years old to-day."

"Oh, hush, Jane," said my poor mother. "You scream so, the Hunters next door will hear you, and blurt it all over the place. I'm not deaf. If you choose to give up all chance of—of society, and neglect your Christian duties, and refuse to help the church along, why, of course, I have nothing to say, only I must in that case go myself."

"You!" I cried. "You'll be sick for a month afterward; you haven't been able to do any thing of that kind for years."

"I know it, Jane; but if you refuse to do these things, I must. I know I shall be prostrated with the heat, and my nerves will be shattered, and you are young and strong, and still attractive enough to compete with any young lady in the place, and might, I verily believe, if you were not so obstinate and headstrong, be surrounded and admired as you used to be, and you might, for my sake, Jane at least attend these little entertainments."

Mamma put her handkerchief to her eyes, and I yielded; I groaned in flesh and in spirit, but I yielded. After I had tidied up the work, and settled mamma in the cool shady sitting-room, upon her favorite lounge, with a nice book at her hand, and a palm-leaf fan close by—for the day was growing hot—I twisted up my hair before the glass, with many a sour mocking grimace at the dark, thin, discontented face therein, put on an ugly brown linen dress, a calabash of a hat, and went off to the church.

My mother looked after me with such misery in her face that I called back to her I would wear something nice in the evening.

"Will you wear your rose-colored crape?" pleaded mamma.

"Will I wear spangles, and jump through a hoop?" I said. "No, mamma; I'll wear my black silk."

"And curl your hair?" she coaxed.

"There's a whole switch already curled in the bureau drawer," I replied.

"It's nice this hot weather to have very little hair of one's own!"

"Don't scream so!" said poor mother, looking toward the Hunters' side windows.

As if the Hunters didn't know all about my failing charms, and no doubt took an inventory of them half yearly to send abroad to the eldest son, who had been away in China these five years and more, and would likely never come back again. At least he had written to me to that effect when he went away. I had the old letter yet in a secret recess of that same old bureau where lay the convenient switch of hair.

Time was when I needed no curls shorn from maidens across the seas or manufactured from home material. I had plenty of my own. Jack Hunter cut one of them off with his penknife that night when we parted.

"I don't know," he said, savagely, "whether I most hate you or love you; but I'll keep this to remember the girl who flirted and fooled away the truest affection a man ever had for a woman."

He hacked the curl from my head with his penknife, and looked at me as if he was half tempted to do me further butchery; and God knows I didn't care then if he had drawn the knife across my throat; I should not have resisted him.

"Don't go, Jack!" I cried out at last, holding the edge of his coat. Don't go, anyway, so far as China; if you do, I shall commence to dig a hole when you get there. They say that China is right under us, and I'll begin with a little pick and shovel as soon as we get news of your arrival. Then you can begin on your side, and we'll meet each other half-way."

He flung me from him with something like an oath. "You would joke and laugh over my grave," he said, and went away, not to come back again.

Who would have believed it possible? That the years could come and go, the sweet summers bloom and fade, the heart of the roses lose strength and fail and fall away, to come again as sweet, as strong, as fresh as ever, and Jack, *my* Jack, never come back to me? Yet he was not dead—not wed. That was one good thing. And he was out there among those women with narrow eyes and stinted feet, and he didn't as yet know a word of the language. He was growing fat, he wrote home to his people next door, and bald, which didn't matter on the top of his head so long as he could keep enough to cultivate a pigtail. This was necessary, as he meant to set up for a Chinese mandarin, and was already embroidering a grown for the purpose on spare nights. And I felt, when they read me the letter, that it was Jack's turn now to make merry, when other hearts were sick and sad.

If he had only sent me one little line! He showered gifts upon other people—chests of tea and parcels of silk, lovely bits of decorated china, big soft beautiful shawls of crape. He sent gew-gaws and gold to so many others: if he had only given me one little word!

They must have told him I had been sorely punished; that my mischievous gayety he had whiffed out like the flame of a candle; that even the beauty of which he had been so proud and fond was gone—every bit of it gone. Sleepless nights and useless repinings, long wearisome days, endless years filled with wild yearning for that which seemed forever hopeless, had robbed me of all. The old bloom of the heart took with it the crimson cheek, the laughing eye, and the light, elastic step. Even my hair fell out. Alas! poor me, the flesh fell from my bones. As I hinted before, it was not a very alluring object that greeted me in the glass on the morning of my twenty-seventh birthday. "Aroint thee, witch!" I cried, and wiped away with the hand-towel some salt tears that fell upon the dimity bureau cover, and upon the grave of sad, sweet memories. Then I put on my ugly brown dress, and the hideous bonnet to match, and went off to the church, pausing at the portal to look longingly over at the cool, quiet graves of some of our old neighbors. A soft wind stirred the long grass there; a few birds hopped lightly and fearlessly about.

"How calmly, calmly smile the dead
Who do not therefore grieve!"

"The Yea of heaven is Yea," I said, and went on into the church, where the ladies were grouped around the strawberries that had just arrived. I took possession of a whole crate of these, sending the young and pretty maidens home to recruit for the evening.

There were a few faint, polite remonstrances when I declined to take any active part in the evening's entertainment. "We must leave that part to the young and attractive," I said, and there was a general buzz of acquiescence. I had the consolation of hearing several remarks upon my extraordinary good sense and practical capability.

I was graciously allowed, after I had hulled a whole crate of strawberries, to hold a step-ladder and some nails for Mrs. Smith, the apothecary's wife, while she hung some gorgeous drapery, and otherwise deformed the cool gray walls of our little chapel, so that I was pretty well tired when I went home at night-fall. Mamma met me at the gate, and looked at me so dolefully that I burst out laughing.

"Never mind, mamma," I said; "I won't look so cadaverous after I'm rested and dressed for the evening."

But I'm afraid I was rather a painful object for the gaze of a doting and once ambitious mother even when I had donned my black silk, and was ready for the evening. My hair was neither crimped nor curled. You see, I had depended upon the switch, which was bought for purposes of that kind, and failed me ignominiously at the last moment. My head ached, and I could not bear many hair-pins thrust into my scalp; in no other way would the obstinate thing be induced to stay on. Mamma was heart-broken, and I was disappointed; but even inanimate articles become perverse at times. I thought perhaps the switch was grieving over a beloved and lost head of which it was once part and parcel, and I forgave it, and left it to its perverseness from that time onward.

When I reached the church I was immediately seized upon for something they called "the grocery counter"—an innovation brought about by the advent of a well-to-do grocer in our midst, a widower, a stock-raiser, and a man afflicted with many maladies, of which he loved to talk. He had generously sent down from the city, in pound packages and tin cans, samples of his available goods, and had proposed this "grocery counter" to the young ladies, which they despised and would have none of. The grocer himself found favor in their sight. They flitted about him, filled his button-holes with bouquets, his pockets with bonbons; they looked up in his face, and tried to talk to him, poor children! as best they could. But they appealed to me to take the ugly counter, with its sordid pound packages for home necessity, and I took it with an ill-concealed avidity. The truth was, a kind of heart-sickness seized me when I thought that the evening must be passed in making myself generally agreeable, and I felt that to wander about this place, distorted out of its sweet savor of godliness and quiet Sabbath rest so dear to a weary soul—to wander about among the flags and wreaths and tents and arbors, with a smile for one, a nod for another—was like the protracted and agonizing pilgrimage of a lost soul beyond the borders of the Styx.

So I speedily put myself behind the counter, which comfortably hid more than half my tall, gaunt figure, and was so glad of the shelter that I found myself becoming interested in these despised parcels piled up before me. I determined, if I could, to make my mission a success, so that I and other poor weary women might have this refuge to fly to in these gala seasons of misery.

The successful grocer, who had not been very well pleased with the open ingratitude for his bequest, took heart and brightened up when he saw me giving an air of smartness to his goods. He extricated himself from a bevy of young and fair ones, and came generously over to help me. In sheer gratitude I began to praise his young colt that was pasturing in a field adjoining our garden, and he remained with me. Shortly after, when he found that a queer feeling in his head agreed with the same discomfort in my own poor cranium, he brought a chair behind the counter, and in a low tender voice he detailed to me the interesting diagnosis of his pet malady.

On the other side of me the minister's son, who was home from college, and suffering from that period of egotism which comes to young men of his kind, remained during the entire evening, to show his contempt for the young, the fair, the frivolous. A few old married friends, whose wives were sick or away, hovered about the grocery counter, so that it really did happen that I was surrounded by men. The evening was passing pleasantly enough. My dark corner was well patronized, and every woman who has to do with church entertainments will understand my gratification and relief when I found it was nearly ten o'clock and all was well. At this time a letter was put into my hand by one of the little post-office messengers—we always made a feature of the post office at our festivals, where pink and parti-colored missives, with doves and other doting designs upon the envelopes, were distributed at extravagant rates of postage. I had just been favored with a liberal offer from a customer, and, elated with my bargain, proceeded to put up my bundles, not giving much heed to the love-letter from the neighboring booth. Truth to say, I felt a little tingling of the blood as the idea of the mockery that might be concealed therein by one of those witty village youths, and the letter lay there for a full half hour, when somebody said, in the most commonplace way.

"So Jack Hunter is back from China."

In a moment every thing was black before me. I dropped my hands and my eyes to the counter, and when this sudden dizziness was gone, I saw upon the little tawdry envelope Jack's scrawling handwriting. Here was the little line I had coveted all these years, and this is what my half-blinded eyes made out:

"I came home because I was mad to see you—because all these years, and your old perfidy, couldn't kill my love for you. I find you just as I expected to, in a space small enough to be filled outside and inside with—men. You are as beautiful and fascinating as ever, and as fond of admiration. I hear that you are about to be married to the grocer at your elbow, who so engrosses your attention that you do not care to look at the passers-by. God help him, and God bless you! I have had my lesson. Now I shall, perhaps, be satisfied. Good-by."

Five minutes after that I was running home, without my hat, and with his note crumbled up in my hand. The people at the festival no doubt thought that mamma was taken suddenly ill. They could not have fancied I was running after Jack, because he had been there at the church for an hour, and I had been totally unconscious of his presence. Dear Heaven how could it be that I didn't know, that something didn't tell me, that I didn't *feel* he was near me?

But I didn't. I went on talking to the grocer about a remarkable operation for an ulcer that he had undergone, when Jack must have been only a few rods away! I ran down the road, my heart in my throat. Fortunately the village street was deserted. Every man, woman, and child were at the festival, except those who could not be out at all; so I ran on unchecked, a dim fear gaining weight with me that Jack had not unpacked his trunk, and was off for China again within the hour. But when I reached his house, which was next door to my own, I saw him sitting out on the balcony smoking a cigar, with his feet perched upon the railing. But his face grew very pale in the moonlight, and his feet clattered quickly down upon the porch when he saw me run in at the gate. The cigar fell from his lips, the ashes tumbling over his broad white waist-coat.

"Why, thank God," he said, "this must be my own dear little girl. Now, see here, Jenny," he began, scolding, a minute after; but he kept tight hold of me, and trembled fully as much with happiness as I did.

Nothing can persuade him that I am not a desperate flirt, as beautiful as an angel, and irresistibly fascinating. I have not the least doubt that half the village are laughing at Jack's ridiculous devotion and jealousy; but the well meant endeavors of his friends and family to convince him that I am a plain, faded, unattractive, and neglected old maid he laughs to scorn as conspiracy of envy or jealousy. And how can I wonder at his delusion? Mamma says Jack has terribly aged during these years of loneliness and exile, and looks older and not so comely as our neighbor the grocer; but to me he is still the handsome, alluring, in every way adorable Jack. He is walking up and down the little balcony next door at this present moment, and, hidden by our odorous honeysuckle vine, I am listening to him trill out the last words of his favorite ballad:

"So girls be true while your lover's away,
For a cloudy morning, for a cloudy m—o—orning
Oft proves a pleasant day."

—Street boys in London get arrested for "playing at Turks and Russians," which seems to involve some hearty fighting.

EDUCATION IN INDIA,

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF TEACHING THE YOUNG IDEA.

The young idea is not very easily taught how to shoot in British India, where the alphabet presents vexations of spirit undreamed of in the philosophy of the European or American school-boy. The immense assortment of simple and conjunct letters requires the use of five hundred distinct types in printing the most ordinary Sanskrit book, while the complicated symbols employed even for the dialects in every day use surround the process of learning to read with a thorn fence, so to speak, bristling with crooked strokes and tortuous lines. The art of reading alone requires the toil and practice of a hoary scholar for its perfect mastery. Writing about the facts of Indian progress in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, Prof. Monier Williams holds that one of the first reforms necessary for the spread of education among the Indian subjects of the British Empress is the application of the Roman alphabet to the Indian vernacular, an experiment which seems feasible enough from the recent successful employment of the Roman letters, supplemented by dots and accents in the printing of Sanskrit books. Since talking is so easy and reading is so hard in that country, it is not strange that the women there have a supreme contempt for learning, and hold a knowledge of reading and writing to be an unwomanly accomplishment. This prejudice, however, has been gradually wearing away under the influence of the British government and of missionaries in the cause of education. Sixty years ago it was estimated that of forty million Hindoo females, only four hundred could read or write. In 1872, out of about 1,100,000 children in government and non-government schools of all kinds, 50,000 were girls. Still the demand for female education is mainly restricted to the lower classes and most of those who attend the schools leave them with very little learning, since they quit school to become wives at ten or twelve years of age. Male education, on the other hand, has, as yet, not extended beyond the aristocratic classes of the population.

THE MONEY OF OUR FATHERS.

The expression of "A bit piece" is often heard in the southwestern section of the United States, where the term is used to indicate the value of twelve and a half cents. For example, a huckster tells you his price for a melon is "two bits" (quarter of a dollar), "four bits" (half dollar), or "six bits" (seventy-five cents). It is seldom used in estimating any other fractional parts of currency; that is, we never hear the term three bits, or five bits, or seven bits; but "a bit apiece," or "a bit a yard" is used constantly in making sales, purchases and estimates.

During many years, the word "bit" was a provincialism, the same as a "York shilling," in New York State, or a "levy" in Pennsylvania. It doubtless originated in the English name of eleven-penny bit, as applied to the Spanish, or old style carolus or pillar shilling, which was once in common use in the States, long after they ceased to be colonies. In many portions of New York State, Pennsylvania, and some of the Western States, the terms, "levenpenny bit," or levy (value twelve and a half cents), and fippenny bit, or fip (value six and a fourth cents), are often used in reckoning. In the southwest eleven-penny bit became contracted into the word bit, and is now more commonly used than the name shilling was in the olden time. The coin, however, to which it refers has almost ceased to circulate, and specimens are seldom seen, except in numismatic collections. The fact that the silver in a perfect bit is worth at least twelve or more cents, but does not pass for more than ten cents, has caused them to be melted and assayed into modern coins and used for other purposes.

There is one form of bit, which was once in common use in the South and West, which has disappeared so completely that my earnest and persistent efforts have not enabled me to secure a specimen, or find one in any of the numerous collections which I have examined.

In the early part of this century, and up to about thirty years ago, the form of bit to which I refer was made by cutting a Carolus silver dollar into eight pieces, or a half dollar into four pieces, which were triangular or wedge shaped, and had a recognized value of twelve and a half cents each, in United States currency. At a later period, American coins were cut and circulated in the same manner.

The use of this kind of coin arose from the scarcity of small change, in frontier countries, and especially about the government agencies. When an Indian or trader wanted change of a smaller denomination than a half dollar, he placed a coin on an anvil or stone, and, with a tomahawk, cut a dollar into eight pieces, with which he met the emergency and the demands made on his exchequer.

These wedge-shaped bits were freely used as a circulating medium, and I saw them in use until about the year 1850, when the decimal currency of ten and five cent pieces hurried them out of sight. Their inconvenient shape, rough edges, ragged points and cutting corners made them very objectionable, and they soon fell out of use.

The method by which these bits were forced into circulation and used as money will be best understood from a description of distribution or pay day at an Indian agency. At such periods the tribes were paid exclusively in silver dollars and half dollars, large quantities of which were sent to the stations and posts for this purpose. I have seen at an agency several wagon loads of silver coins used to make one regular payment.

On these occasions the heads of families made up in regular form schedules of the members, and these were certified to by the chief and the sums paid by the disbursing agent. It often occurred then, as at the present time, that white people made a temporary abode with the Indians, and had the head of the lodge of which they became nominal members certify to their bogus claim, and thus secure a large share of the payments. After the lists were given to the agents, the amounts of money due to each representative were placed in convenient piles on tables. The Indians stood in line, and when the individual name of each was called, he took his pile of shiners, swooped them into a blanket, twisted the corners together, flung the load on his back and retired to distribute the shares to those who were entitled to them.

The bucks (warriors) then gave to each squaw a few dollars, with which they purchased ornaments, gewgaws, and other articles of dress and usefulness that were brought to the agencies for sale by hordes of traders, thieves, gamblers and swindlers of every class, who swarmed about the posts at such times. Many of the shrewdest and most prudent of the squaws, old braves, and children, upon receiving their shares, immediately departed and hid away in the distant fastnesses, where their lodges were located.

After the bucks had received their pay and presents, and had provided the squaws with allowances they deliberately proceeded to indulge in a gaming spree and drunken debauchery, that was concluded only when they were fleeced out of every dollar they had, after which they returned home in a worse condition of degradation than before they came to the agency. Thousands of these cut coins were taken away by the agency thieves and carried to the towns, cities, and countries, far away from their normal scene of circulation.—*I. E. Nagle, in Scribner for July.*

A WESTERN WOMAN'S PLUCK.

HER PROSPEROUS CAREER AS A NEBRASKA HERDER.

A letter from Chicago to the Madison (Wis.,) *Journal* contains the following:

"Six years ago a gentleman who had been a war governor of an upper Mississippi state, was afterward minister to a European court, and subsequently, at the head of one of the most important departments of the government, and a member of the national cabinet, died, leaving a wife from $15,000 to $20,000, and this mainly in an unproductive homestead in southern New York. Through the advice of a supposed friend of her husband, this lady was induced to sell her property and put the proceeds in a herd of cattle in southwest Nebraska. She came out to look after her investment, and finding the condition of the herd unsatisfactory, assumed $13,000 dollars of liabilities, and bought out and took the management into her own hands. In a few months the herd was in a good and thriving condition. But at the same time she found herself suffering from pecuniary embarrassment, and appealed to her eastern friends for aid. They looked upon her venture as a visionary one, and declined to assist her, but advised her to give it up, save what she could from the wreck, and return to them. She did not believe there was any such word as fail, and applied herself all the more diligently to her business. She rode to the herd every day, except Sundays, sometimes in a buggy, but generally on horseback—16 miles each way—and gave the most minute instructions to her men. Her troubles she kept entirely to herself. Her help or her neighbors did not know but she had a bank to draw upon for all the money she needed.

"At the end of the year she sent for the father of her late partner, and they divided the herd equally and settled, with a loss to her of over $3,000, which she paid to get the partnership dissolved. She then borrowed $6,000 to enable her to pay some small debts, and make some improvement in buildings, and start afresh, entirely disembarrassed.

"At the present time her liabilities are only $3,000. She has a herd of over 1,000 head of cattle, has an abundance of conveniences for them, and no stock farm or range within 100 miles is provided with as good barns, sheds, corrals, and ranges, for cattle. Her herd is clearing over $6,000 a year, and constantly increasing in size. At a railway station where she resides, she has a farm of 140 acres, on which are a good dwelling, barns, sheds, cheese factory, corral, etc., in perfect order. The farm is all under fence; she buys all lumber used herself, and has every improvement, large and small, made under her own eye, and as she directs. In truth, she is her own superintendent, and personally looks after everything both on the farm and at the cattle ranche. At the ranch she has a comfortable house, which she occupies when her business confines her there. She visits the ranch about five times a week, generally on horseback, and goes and returns the same day. No business man in Nebraska is a better credit than this enterprising and excellent lady."

A BOY'S HISTORY COMPOSITION.

EDWARD VI.—ENGLAND.

Henry VI. died one day with great success. He left three children who did not care to go with him. Their names were Mary, Elizabeth and Edward. The last was the 'Ed of the family. He was a boy. His sisters were not. Their father also left a Will. His will was stronger than all his children. By will Earl Hertford was to boss the State while Edward was young. Hertford loved the glass so much that he became a tumbler, and was called the Duke of Summerset. He wanted the King to take the Queen (of Scotland), but the trick was lost because the Scotch refused to assist. The Duke was called the Protector because he protected his own family and put everybody else away in the Tower. The border men of England and Scotland were those who boarded on the frontier and bored each other almost to death; so they had a fight about Edward marrying their Queen. The English attacked them by water, which they couldn't stand. History says that the Scotch loss was 10,000 and the English 200. History lies, probably. The Government told the people what to believe. If they did as they were told, they must pay taxes for their belief. If they didn't do so, they were roasted. Things were red hot. Somebody told stories about the Protector, and so he was taken to the Tower and had his head chopped off. It was not much of a head, but he hated to part with it. Then there was a rising of the common people, but they did not know what for. Most of them got raised on to trees with ropes around their necks. Some very fat men were burned, thus making light of their complaints. Now I guess it is time for the little King to die. He was only sixteen when he gave up the crown and the ghost. England is not yet done, so I cannot finish the history yet. Finis.—*Erie Gazette.*

ALFONSO AND MERCEDES.

INCIDENTS OF A CALL BY SOME AMERICAN VISITORS—A CORDIAL WELCOME AND UNCONVENTIONAL TREATMENT.

The following extracts are from a letter from an American in Spain, who paid a visit to King Alfonso and his wife a short time before the sad death of the young Queen:—

"Turning to the right there were two figures standing in the doorway—Alfonso and Mercedes. They both shook hands with us, and he seated Aunt M. by him, while she gave me a chair beside her. At first I did not think her very pretty, but as I watched her talk I changed my mind. She was dressed in an Indian silk, very simple. It was cut square neck, with a muslin tucker inside. Around her neck was a garnet-colored velvet, with gold beads on it. She wore gold ear-rings, and her hair—which is black—was simply braided, and had one or two gold pins in it; white stockings and good comfortable, large slippers; no gloves. He wore a black frock coat, brownish trousers, and a dark blue scarf, with a ring on it of gold, a snake with a tiny diamond head. We talked on various subjects. He speaks English a little, and so does she, but neither of them like to. While he was talking, the Queen sat and looked at him as if his words were diamonds. She was constantly opening and shutting her fan, which is the way all Spanish women do. The room was a small one. I cannot tell what was in it, except some very pretty pictures. We commenced talking about the gallery here. He, it seems, is interested in paintings; in everything, in fact. When Aunt mentioned some Spanish artists whose works she had hoped to see, he jumped up, saying: 'There is one of his;' and then he showed her all the pictures in the room, telling the names of the artists. He found we were interested in porcelain, pictures and tapestry, and so took us from one thing to another, explaining the merits of various tables, chandeliers, pictures, and cabinets. The Queen followed, smiling and anxious to please. It was like calling on some very cordial neighbors in the country. The King explained things to Aunt, and then came back and explained again to us. We went first from the little room we were in into one furnished in blue satin—light. There were all sorts of little knickknacks in all the rooms, and lovely pictures. From the blue room we passed into a music room. There was a grand piano with a cover of black satin. There was a table covered with fresh flowers. As the Queen and I passed she went to it and pulled me a big bunch of Marechal Niel roses. The others had gotten on ahead; but when ——— saw my flowers he asked me to give him one, whereupon she rushed back and got him a pink rose. Next to the music-room came one furnished in tapestry. All along outside these rooms ran a covered terrace, on which were fresh flowers growing. At the tapestry room we turned a corner, and, to my amazement, walked into the Queen's bed-room. The King apologized, but he wanted to show us a chandelier in her bath-room, which opened out of the bed-room. The chamber was furnished in pink cretonne, and the walls were hung with the same. There was a cover on the bed of pink cretonne, and a canopy over it; a sofa by the side of the fire-place, and a rug of fur or feathers in front of it. The bath-room had a marble tub and a big wash-basin. A toilet table stood between the windows, with vases of roses in it. The chandelier which he spoke of was beautiful. It is of glass—Spanish work. The King kept saying, 'I don't show you that, because it is not Spanish,'—pointing to Sevres, or Chinese, or some article. In the tapestry room was the Queen's work-basket. She was knitting something in ugly brown. In order the better to show us some pictures she opened a window and some shutters. We returned to the room we went into first, the King apologizing all the time for leading us about so, and descanting on different objects as they happened to come before his eyes. Then carpets next took his attention. He ushered us out another way, and showed us, with pride, a room he had constructed where there used to be a staircase and two rooms. Everything but the leather on the walls was Spanish. The chairs are of beautifully-carved wood, covered in red velvet, embroidered in gold and dark colors. The curtains are of the same, and there are curtains at all the doors. The carpets were Spanish and very beautiful, and, as the King told me very confidentially, they were very cheap. The carpets in the two rooms we next entered were perfectly exquisite, the colors were so fresh and delicate; the King said they would wear forever. Next to this room was the King's study, a small room, with some lovely little terra cotta figures from Grenada in it, and some amethyst roses and this beautiful carpet. There was a writing table and ever so many books. From this opened another bedroom—and another remarkable carpet. We went back to our starting place and took our leave, having staid nearly an hour.

Varieties.

—The antidote of opium is coffee.

—No base-ball clubs in Germany.

—The magnet possesses the power to kill small insects and plants.

—An unusual amount of flax will this year be raised in the West.

—You should forgive many things in others, but nothing in yourself.

—There is but one thing that is sure here on earth, and that is death.

—The beauty of the emerald is lost by an exposure to strong sunlight.

—He that by the plow would thrive, himself must either hold or drive.

—The weakest spot in every man is where he thinks himself the wisest.

—All sorrows and joys here are but temporary, so aim higher than them.

—He that cannot bear with other people's passions, cannot govern his own.

—Anger is like a full-hot horse, who, being allowed his way, self-mettle tires him.

—Have one settled purpose in life, and if it be honorable it will bring you reward.

—Mommsen is in Italy, completing his historical and archæological investigations

—Think not of faults committed in the past, when one has reformed his conduct.

—Be severe to yourself, and indulgent to others; you thus avoid all resentment.

—Man believes himself always greater than he is, and is esteemed less than he is worth.

—What I desire that others should not do to me, I equally desire not to do to them.

—Wisconsin has 20,000,000 acres of land which have never been broken or felt the plow.

—All nature is but art unknown to thee; all chance direction which thou cans't not see.

—Over 40,000 tulips were in blossom at one time in the Boston public garden the other day.

—If you listen patiently to calumny, you are only a trifle less guilty than the actual calumniator.

—Eleven foreign journals have appeared in Japan, of which ten are English, and one French.

—There are many men whose tongue might govern multitudes, if they could govern their tongues.

—What is necessary to make one forbearing? A great deal of good sense joined to a little piety.

—If anger is not restrained, it is frequently more hurtful to us than the injury that provokes it.

—When the sun of virtue is set, the blush of shame is the twilight. When that dies, all is darkness.

—The manner in which a command is obeyed is of more importance than the mere fulfilment of it.

—Bull fights have just been introduced from Spain to Marseilles, France, and attract immense crowds.

—The silver wedding of the King and Queen of Belgium is to be celebrated on the 22nd of August.

—Of the 41 young girls who were applicants for admission to the Boston Latin School for Girls, but one failed to pass examination.

—A genius in Vermont has a floating saw-mill, which he sails along Lake Champlain, doing a good business with the farmers along the banks.

—Parisians are tired of losing their pocket-handkerchiefs at the wash, and now they have their photographs executed in the centre of each.

—A party of English engineers and mining managers are paying a visit to the coal fields of the North of France, their object being to examine the geological strata and ascertain whether the coal bed is not the continuation of that in Somersetshire.

—It is announced that Mr. Rassam has found at Nineveh, imbedded in a wall of the palace of Assur-Bani-Palo, a round clay cylinder divided into ten compartments, and containing nearly 1,300 lines of fine inscription. What the inscription means has yet to be determined.

—The recent growth of Paris is in remarkable contrast with former years. In the reign of Henry II., during the sixteenth century, it contained about 12,000 houses. About 200 years later, in 1750, the number had only increased to 23,000. In 1878, after a lapse of forty-four years, there are 75,274.

—Goldwin Smith says that it is most probable that the private buildings of Rome under the kings were roofed with nothing better than shingle, and it is very likely that they were mean and dirty, as the private buildings of Athens appear to have been, and as those of most of the great cities of the Middle Ages unquestionably were.

—A curious scene recently occurred during the production of a new piece at a Berlin theatre. The prologue opened in the box at the right of the stage, in which a number of actors quietly ensconced themselves before the performance began. Presently a comic actor appeared and ordered them to vacate; they refused and a fiery war of words followed, which ought to have been ended by another actor, dressed as police officer, coming up and turning them out. On the night in question a green policeman, who had never seen the play, chanced to be in charge of the house, and, hearing the vociferous cries and supposing the whole thing to be in earnest, he valiantly rushed to the box and tumbled the actors out, neck and heels, before the matter could be explained to his comprehension.

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