

THE FREE CITIZEN.

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AFTER THE BALL.

They sat and talked of the beautiful hair,
The long, bright tresses one by one,
As they laughed and talked in their chamber there,
After the revel was done.

Idly they talked of waltz and quadrille,
Till they laughed, like other girls,
Who over the fire, when all is still,
Comb over their braids and curls.

Robes of satin and Brussels lace,
Knots of flowers, and ribbons too,
Scattered about in every place,
After the revel is through.

And Maud and Madge, in robes of white,
The prettiest night-gowns under the sun,
Stockings, slippers, sit in the night,
After the revel is done.

"Dear Maud," said her beautiful hair,
"These wonderful waves of brown and gold,
Till the fire is out in the chamber there,
And the little bare feet are cold."

When out of the gathering winter chill,
And out of the bitter St. Agnes weather,
While the fire is out and the house is still,
Maud and Madge together—

Maud and Madge, in robes of white,
The prettiest night-gowns under the sun,
Cut away from the chilly night,
After the revel is done.

Flushed along in a splendid dream,
To a golden gittern's tinkling tones,
While a thousand hushed murmuring stream,
In a palace's grand salon.

Flashes of jewels and flutter of lace,
Tropical odors sweeter than musk,
Men and women with beautiful faces,
And eyes of beautiful dusk.

And one face shining like a star,
One face haunting the dreams of each,
And one voice, sweeter than others are,
Breaking in silvery speech.

Telling through lips of bearded bloom:
An old, old story of Araby,
As down the royal banquet room,
To a golden gittern's strain.

Two and two they dreamily walk,
While an unseen spirit walks beside,
And all unheard, in lovers' talk,
Do clasp one to his bride.

Oh, Maud and Madge, dream on together,
With never a pang of jealous fear!
For here the bitter St. Agnes weather
Shall whiten another year.

Robed for the bridal and robed for the tomb,
Braided brown hair and golden tress,
There'll be only one of you left for the bloom
Of the bearded lips to press!

Only one robe for the bridal pearls,
The robe of the slain and Brussels lace—
Only one to bluish through her curls
At sight of a lover's face.

O, beautiful Madge, in your bridal white!
For you the revel has just begun;
But for her who sleeps in your arms to-night,
The revel of life is done!

But robed and crowned with saintly bills,
Queen of Heaven and bride of the sun,
O, beautiful Maud, you'll never miss
The kisses another has won!

ANASTASIA'S GHOST.

November night. Some vague presentiment of evil weighed upon my heart, as I sat alone in the twilight. And yet there was nothing apparently to make me gloomy. On the contrary, I ought to have been more than usually cheerful; had I not received a delicious promise from Katie Nelson that very afternoon?

It seemed to be odd, to be sure, that a gray-haired widow like myself was to marry this girl of eighteen. Her mother had been a housekeeper in our family, but died soon after Katie's birth. So it happened that she was adopted by us, as we had no children of our own. My wife treated her kindly, but without much warmth of feeling. Anastasia was of such a peculiar disposition that I actually believed she was jealous of this infant.

Poor Anastasia! she warned me solemnly on her death-bed never to marry again, and threatened to rise from her grave in case of such an event.

Katie was in her tenth year when my wife died. I sent her away to a boarding school; and, as business called me abroad, did not see her again until my return, eight years afterwards. I was somewhat bewildered to find a lovely woman, instead of the little girl I had left in short dresses. Of course you can guess the sequel. I fell in love with this charming adopted daughter. There was something in the frank tenderness of her manner that completely won my heart.

It was evident that she was deeply attached to me. I could not help seeing how much higher she valued my society than that of my nephew, Charles Raymond, who had accompanied me from abroad. She never addressed him except in monosyllables, and would blush all over with embarrassment if he but entered the room. But with me, she was always self-possessed, and so talkative and sociable that I could not help pitying Charles. He was really quite good-looking, and I used to wonder sometimes at her antipathy. Poor fellow; how I dreaded to tell him of my approaching happiness! It would be a great blow to his hopes, for he had expected to inherit my fortune.

Katie wasn't a bit like other girls that I had ever known anything about. Instead of blushing at my confession that afternoon she turned pale, and shivered as if struck by a sudden chill. I noticed, too, that there was a strange quiver in her voice when she finally consented to be my wife. I was apprehensive that Charlie had told her what Anastasia had said on her death-bed. And yet I couldn't believe her ghost would be so inconsiderate. Somehow, I couldn't forget that warning. Anastasia was a remarkable woman, and would surely keep her word, if ghosts are permitted to walk the earth.

Thinking thus, I began to grow frightened at the shadows in my room, and hastily rang the bell for lights.

"Why are you so late, Bridget?" I asked, sharply, as the servant entered the room.

"Indeed, sir, and it's meself that's been with Miss Katie every blessed minute, and she's almost kilt with a pain in her head."

Could this be the result of our conversation that afternoon? Considerably startled, I questioned Bridget eagerly.

ART OF LISTENING TO MUSIC.

A writer in Scribner's says: "There is no greater delusion than that of supposing that the best music can be enjoyed only by the 'musical.' Ordinary people can derive keen pleasure from a sympathetic listening to great music if they will but believe that they can, and so attend to it accordingly. There is no need of being baffled by a want of knowledge concerning keys; nor by an ignorance of modulation. Your next neighbor may know that the air began in G major, and then passed into B minor, but you can get your own simpler pleasure out of it. What is it to me what Titan's secret of color might have been? He had it, and that is enough for one who cannot even draw. The first rule in listening to music is to listen. We do not want to arouse ourselves to a fever of delight, but we do want to hear what the music is like. A very simple and very good rule for those who are perplexed by an orchestra, and who fancy they are puzzled to know where the tune comes in, is to listen to one instrument, the violins, for instance, alone for a time. These will probably take up the melody and sing it plainly enough, then the movement may become more complicated, and the air seems to have grown more florid, to be broken perhaps into brilliant fragments, but hearken!—the violoncello has taken it up, and over it floats this new and lovely strain of violins, then the flutes catch the melody, the cornets and the bassoon swell the harmony, the drum makes its rhythmic beats, the whole orchestra is alive with the theme, and before you know it you are in the very center of the music, and what was before involved and intricate now becomes plain and beautiful."

"How is your church getting on?" asked a friend of a rigorous Scotchman, who had separated in turn from the Kirk, the Free Church, the United Presbyterian and several lesser bodies. "Pretty well, pretty well. There's nobody belongs to it now but my brother and myself, and I'm no sure of Sandy's soundness."

Tobacco in Connecticut.

At a recent meeting of the Connecticut Valley Agricultural Institute, Prof. Stockbridge is reported, in the New England Homestead, as saying that there was about forty million dollars' worth grown in the United States, in the following order: 1, Virginia; 2, North Carolina; 3, Maryland; 4, Kentucky; 5, Mississippi; 6, Connecticut; 7, Massachusetts, etc. The analysis of tobacco shows it to be a narcotic poison. No other plant is like it in composition. In a small quantity it is a stimulant, in large quantities a deadly poison. It is a rapid grower, and draws from the soil more than any other plant. Clover takes from the mineral element of the soil ten per cent., tobacco twenty per cent., or one ton of tobacco exhausts 400 pounds of mineral substances for every acre. The Connecticut seed-leaf tobacco has a peculiarly, in contradistinction to any other in its fineness and thinness of leaf and texture, and lightness of color. Tobacco is made by its soil. It cannot be heavy clay, heavy loam or alluvial soil. Must be fine, sandy land, having absorbent power, and retaining heat through the night. Taking this poor soil a large quantity of manure must be used. The land is the machine for raising tobacco, and it must be fertilized and not allowed to deteriorate a particle. Tobacco is so exhaustive that no farmer or farm can make it an exclusive crop. Stock must be fed for the manure, and the streams of grain which flow in from the west are to be taken advantage of.

Prof. Stockbridge said if tobacco raising was managed on business prin-

Early Marriages.

Discussion in the British house of commons on the subject brought out information as to the earliest ages at which marriage may be legally solemnized in each of the states of continental Europe. In Austria it is 14 for both sexes; Hungary, 14 for males, 12 for females; Russia, 18 for males, 16 for females; Turkey, as soon as they are able; Italy, 18 for males, 15 for females; Prussia 18 and 14; France and Belgium, 18 and 15; Denmark 20 and 16; Greece, 14 and 12. In Hesse Darmstadt and Baden the consent of parents is necessary in the case of men until they have completed their 25th year; in that of women until they are 21. The completion of 18 years by males and 16 by females is necessary in the Netherlands, and in Saxo-Coburg-Gotha no male is permitted to marry before he has attained his 21st year. In Saxony the legal age for males is 18; for females 16 years. According to the amended paragraph of the new German civil marriage bill, the ages would be respectively 20 and 16 years, instead of 18 and 14, as in the draft bill. In some of the cantons of Switzerland the law as to the ages of the contracting parties is as high as 20 years for males and 17 for females, and in others as low as 14 for males and 12 for females.

APPREHENSIONS OF DROUTH.—Says the Sugar Planter: Our planting friends have serious fears of a long drouth so soon as the present rains pass away, and with some show of reason. As we have stated in previous issues of this paper, the rains have been almost incessant since December last, giving our farmers and planters but little opportunity to get their fields in order for cultivation. Now, it seems to follow, as a rule, that long rainy spells produce drouths of an almost equal duration, and should the rule hold good in the present instance, it would be wise to make preparations to meet it. While every one will use his own judgment in the premises, we desire to offer one word of advice, and that is to plant as deep as possible and hill up well when the shoots are above ground the proper height. Plenty of soil around young plants hold the moisture, and should the anticipations of a drouth be not realized, a little labor will remove any superfluous soil from cane, cotton and corn.

HOME LIFE.—It is the fashion of restless and ambitious women to despise home-life as too tame, too narrow, too uneventful for them. They long for a wider arena, set well in the view of the world, whereon to display their gifts or their acquirements; and they think this claustrophobic home, this unexciting family of which they form a part, unworthy of their efforts. And yet in reality the art of living well at home, and making the family life a success, is just as great in its way, if not so important in its apparent—but only apparent—results, as the finest shades of diplomacy and the largest transactions of business. All sorts of talents, both moral and intellectual, are wanted for the task; and it seems slightly irrational, to despise as futile qualities which so few of us are strong enough to possess, or to rate them as beneath the regard of high-minded people, when not one in a hundred has wit enough to employ them to a satisfactory issue.

YIELD A LITTLE.—It is better to yield a little than to quarrel a great deal. The habit of standing up, as people call it, for their (little) rights is one of the most disagreeable and undignified in the world. Life is too short for the perpetual bickerings which attend such a disposition; and unless a very momentous affair indeed, where other people's claims and interests are involved, it is a question if it is not wiser, happier and more prudent to yield somewhat of precious rights than squabble to maintain them. True wisdom is first pure, then peaceable and gentle.

"Herbert," said a perplexed mother, "Why is it that you're not a better boy?" "Well," said the little fellow, soberly, looking up into her face with his honest blue eyes, "I suppose the real reason is that I don't want to be!" The child gave the real reason why all of us, big as well as little, are not better than we are.

FACTS AND FANCIES.

—Samuel Wilhelm, of Berks county, Pa., eight feet high, has applied for the situation of the late Irish giant.

—The woman who enacted the part of Katie King in the Holmes dramas in Philadelphia is studying for the stage.

—Careful observations have shown that the average temperature of the human body within the tropics is nearly one degree higher than in a temperate climate.

—In a fox-chase in England lately the Rev. C. W. Wilkinson broke his neck and Lady Florence Douglas smashed her collar-bone; but the fox was caught.

—Large apes of naturally intelligent breeds are put to good service in the straits settlements of the east. They are trained to climb the cocoanut palm trees, valuable for their fruit, which, ordinarily, is difficult to reach, and not only harvest the nuts but always select such as are ripe. They twist the nut round and round until it falls down from the stalk, and at each success testify their delight by jumps and chuckles. Apes so trained are hired out by their owners like so many field-hands.

—The coast line of the United States under the supervision of the Light-house board, including the northern lakes, is about 10,000 miles in extent, surpassing that of any other nation on the globe. The number of light-houses and lighted beacons along this coast line is 630; light-ships, 25; fog signals operated by steam or hot-air engines, 40; day or unlighted beacons, 350; total, 1,065, being one beacon for every 10 miles of coast. Besides this, there are 3,000 buoys in position to indicate banks, rocks, and other obstructions in channels of navigation.

—Take a man and pin three or four large tablecloths about him, fastened back with elastic and looped up with ribbons; drag all his own hair to the middle of his head and tie it tight, and hair-pin on about five pounds of other hair and a big bow of ribbon. Keep the front locks on pins all night and let them tickle his eyes all day; pinch his waist into a corset, and give him gloves a size too small, and shoes ditto, and a hat that will not stay on without a torturing elastic, and a frill to tickle his chin, and a little lace veil to blind his eyes, and he will go out to walk, and he will know what woman's dress is.

—The thieves of Spain are gayly pursuing their mad career among pictures and statues. The celebrated cartoons of Goya at Madrid have gone after the Sevillo Murillo—which later, indeed, has been recovered. The Virgin's crown in Saint Ferdinand's chapel at Seville has vanished. So has the "Master Dolorosa" of Alonzo Cano at Granada. The latest exploit of these enterprising fellows has been: "imphantly carried out at Madrid. Their booty is a small statue of the Virgin, most excellent of workmanship, and dating from the end of the sixteenth century. Its material is wood, gilt and painted. The thieves got it safely into Paris, where they borrowed a round sum upon it from MM. Andre and Mercuad, bankers. The Spanish legation has claimed the statue.

—The banishment of lepers is rigorously carried out in the Sandwich isles. There was a recent official search for persons affected with the incurable malady, many having been secreted by their relatives. Hundreds were found and put into a vessel for transportation to the leper village, to be kept until they die. Their families gathered on the beach, and expressed their grief in loud lamentations. A talented half-breed, called Bill Ragsdale, has long held a high place in the regard of Sandwich Islanders. He is an orator of great natural power, and leader in the district of Hilo, and a man of notorious bad morals. He discovered that he was leprous, though the indications were so slight that he had escaped official notice, and at once gave himself up to the authorities. A procession of natives, singing and carrying flowers, escorted him to the vessel which was to take him and the others to their living graves. He made a speech to the assembly, urging submission to the measures for eradicating leprosy by banishment, and expressing his hatred of missionaries.

Wheeler & Wilson's Sewing Machines.

We call attention to the Wheeler & Wilson advertisement in our columns. This well-known Company has the most advantageous facilities for supplying the public with Sewing Machines, on as favorable terms as the business will allow. They warrant all their work, and it is a matter of importance to the purchaser to deal with a Company whose position and permanence give assurance that their guaranty will be fulfilled. They have agencies and offices throughout the civilized world, for furnishing needles, thread and other necessary supplies, and have an established reputation for reliability and fair dealing.

The conspicuous triumph of Messrs. George Steeck & Co., of New York, at the Vienna World's Fair in 1873, at which their pianos obtained the highest award—the only gold medal—has begun to yield them substantial fruits. The increased popularity of the Steeck instruments is noticeable not only in New York, where their excellence has long been acknowledged, but throughout the country, and more especially in those communities that lay special claim to a cultivated musical taste.—*New York Independent.*