

Two Rooms.

A beautiful room with tinted walls,
A bust, where the colored sunshine falls,
A lace hung bed with a satin fold,
A lovely room, all blue and gold
And ennui.

A quaint old room with rafters bare,
A small white bed, a rocking chair,
A book, a stalk where a flower had been,
An open door and all within
Content.

—Good Housekeeping.

LITTLE KATE AND I.

We didn't wait for an income to marry on, little Kate and I. We had no rich relations to leave us legacies or to send pearl necklaces, diamond ornaments, or thousand dollar bonds for wedding presents. I was simply a brakeman on the Eastern Michigan railway, a long and lonely stretch of rails over desolate marshes, steep mountain grades, and solitary sweeps of prairie land; she was the bright-eyed waitress in one of the restaurants along the line. But when I fell from the platform when the great accident happened, you heard of the great accident, I suppose, when there was such a shocking loss of life—it was Katie's care and nothing else that brought me back into the world I had so nearly gutted for good and all!

"I would have done it for anybody, Mark!" said she, when I tried to thank her.

"Would you?" said I. "But it isn't everybody that would have done it for me, Kate!"

So I asked her to marry me, and she said yes. And I took a little cottage on the edge of the Swampscott woods, and furnished it as well as I could, with red carpet, cheesecloth curtains at the windows, a real Connecticut clock, and a set of walnut chairs that I made myself, with seats of rushes, woven in by old Billy, the Indian, who carried his baskets and mats around the country, and Mrs. Perkins, the parson's wife, made us a wedding cake, and so we were married. Pretty soon I found out that Kate was pining a little.

"What is it, sweetheart?" said I. "Remember, it was a contract between us that we were to have no secrets from each other! Are you not perfectly happy?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" cried Kate, hiding her face on my shoulder. "But it's my mother, Mark. She's getting old, and if I could only go East to see her, just once before the Lord takes her away!"

It was then I felt the sting of my poverty most. If I had only been a rich man to have handed her out a check, and said: "Go at once!" I think I could have been quite happy.

"Never mind, sweetheart," said I, stroking down her hair. "We'll lay up a few dollars from month to month, and you shall go out and see her before she dies!"

And with that little Kate was forced to be content. But there was a hungry, homesick look upon her face which went to my heart to see.

One stormy autumn night we were belated on the road, for the wind was terrible, shaking the century old pines and oaks, as if they were nothing more than tall swamp grasses, and driving through the ravines with a shriek and a howl like a whole pack of hungry wolves. And the heavy rains had raised the streams so that we were compelled to go carefully and slowly over the bridges and keep a long look ahead for fear of accidents.

I was standing at my post, in front of the second passenger car, stamping my feet on the platform to keep them warm, and hoping little Kate would not be perturbed at my long absence, when the news agent came chuckling out:

"We've to stop at Stumpville station," said he.

"Nonsense," said I, "I know better. This train never stops short of Waukensha city, least of all when we are running to make up for lost time, as we are to-night."

"Oh, but this is an exceptional occasion," said Johnny Mills (which was the news agent's name). "We're going to put an old woman off. She has lost her ticket, she says. More likely she never had one. Goes on as though she had her pockets full."

"Which is the one?" said I, turning to look at the end window of the car which was at the rear.

"Don't you see? The old party at the back of the two fat women in the red shawls. She's haranguing Jones now."

"I see," said I. It was a little old woman in a black silk poke bonnet, a respectable cloth cloak, bordered with velvet fur, and a long, green veil, who was earnestly talking and gesticulating with the conductor. But he shook his head and passed on, and she sank back in a helpless little heap behind the green veil, and I could see

her take a small handkerchief from a small basket and put it piteously to her eyes.

"It's too bad, said I. "Jones might remember that he once had—if he hasn't now—a mother of his own."

"And lose his place on the road," said Mills. "No, no, old fellow, all that sort of thing does very well to talk about, but it don't work in real life."

So he went into the next car, and the signal to slack up came presently. I turned to Mr. Jones, the conductor, who just then stepped out on the platform.

"Is it for that old lady?" said I. He answered, "Yes." Said I, "How far did she want to go?" "To Swampscott," said he.

"You needn't stop, Mr. Jones," said I, "I'll pay her fare."

"You!" he echoed.

"Yes, I," said I. "I'll take her to my own house until she can telegraph to her friends or something. My wife will be good to her, I know, for the sake of her own old mother out east!"

"Just as you please," said Mr. Jones. We did not stop at Stumpville station after all, but put on more steam and ran as fast as it was safe to drive our engine—and when, a little past midnight, we reached Swampscott, where we were due at 7:30, Pierre Rene, the Frenchman, came on board to relieve me, and I helped my old lady off the train, flat basket, travelling bag and all.

"Am I to be put off, after all?" said she, with a scared look around her.

"Cheer up, ma'am," said I, "You are all right. Now, then—look out for the step! Here we are."

"Where am I?" said the old lady.

"At Swampscott, ma'am," said I.

"And you are the kind man who paid my fare?" said she. "But my daughter and her husband will repay you when—"

"All right, ma'am," said I. "And now, if you'll just take my arm, we'll be home in a quarter of an hour."

"But," said she, "why can't I go directly to my destination?"

"It's middling late, ma'am," said I, "and the houses don't stand shoulder to shoulder in Swampscott. My nearest neighbor is a mile and a-half away. But never fear, ma'am, I've a wife that will be glad to bid you welcome for the sake of her own mother."

She murmured a few words of thanks, but she was old and weary, and the path was rough and uneven, in the very teeth of a keen November blast—and walking wasn't an easy task. Presently, we came to the little cottage on the edge of the Swampscott woods, where the light glowed warmly through the Turkey red curtains.

"Oh, Mark, dearest, how late you are!" cried Kate, making haste to open the door. "Come in quick, out of the wind. Supper is all ready, and—"

—but who is that with you?"

In a hurried whisper I told her all.

"Did I do right, Kate?" said I.

"Right, of course you did," said she. "Ask her to come in at once. And I'll put another cup and saucer on the table."

Tenderly I assisted the chilled and weary old lady across the threshold.

"Here's my wife," said I. "And here's a cup of smoking hot coffee and some of Katie's own biscuits and chicken pie! You'll be all right when the cold is out of your joints a bit!"

"You are very, very welcome," said Kate brightly, as she advanced to untie our visitor's veil and loosen the folds of her cloak. But, all of a sudden, I heard a cry, "Mother, oh, mother!"

"Hold on, Kate!" said I, with the coffee-pot still in my hand, as I had been lifting it from the fire. "This is never—"

"But it is, Mark!" cried out Kate breathlessly. "It's mother; my own mother! Oh, help me dearest, quickly, she has fainted away!"

But she was all right again, presently, sitting by the fire with her feet on one of the warm cushions, which Kate had knit with wooden needles, and drinking hot coffee. It was all true. The unfortunate passenger whose pocket had been picked on the train, and to whose rescue I had come, was no other than my Kate's own mother, who had determined to risk the perils of a journey to the far West to see her child once again.

And she has been with us ever since, the dearest old mother-in-law that ever a man had, the comfort of our household, and the guardian angel of little Kate and the baby, when I am away on my long trips.

And little Kate declares now that she is "perfectly happy!" God bless her—may she never be otherwise.

In Ceylon the natives cover down newly killed venison with honey, in large earthen pots: these are not opened for three years, and the meat so preserved is said to be of exquisite flavor.

Concerning Clover.

Every group of organisms, every genus and every species of plant or animal, has certain strong points which enable it to hold its own in the struggle for existence against its competitors of every kind. Most groups have also their weak points, which lay them open to attack or extinction at the hands of their various enemies. And these weak points are exactly the ones which give rise most of all to further modifications. A species may be regarded in its normal state as an equilibrium between structure and environmental conditions. But the equilibrium is never quite complete; and the points of incompleteness are just those where natural selection has a fair chance of establishing still higher equilibrations. These are somewhat abstract statements in their naked form: let us see how far definiteness and concreteness can be given to them by applying them in detail to the case of a familiar group of agricultural plants—the clovers.

To most people clover is the name of a single thing, or, at most, of two things, purple clover and Dutch clover; but to the botanist it is the name of a vast group of little flowering plants, all closely resembling one another in their main essentials, yet all differing infinitely from one another in two or three strongly marked peculiarities of minor importance, which nevertheless give them great distinctness of habit and appearance. In England alone we have no less than twenty-one recognized species of clover, of which at least seventeen are really distinguished among themselves by true and unmistakable differences, though the other four appear to me to be mere botanical species, of no genuine structural value. If we were to take in the whole world, instead of England alone, the number of clovers must be increased to several hundreds. The question for our present consideration, then, is twofold: first, what gives the clovers as a class, their great success in the struggle for existence, as evidenced by their numerous species and individuals; and, secondly, what has caused them to break up into so large a number of closely allied but divergent groups, each possessing some special peculiarity of its own, which has insured for it an advantage in certain situations over all its nearest congeners?—*Popular Science Monthly.*

An Outdoor Insane Asylum.

The celebrated Belgian colony of the insane at Gheel has nothing in its external appearance suggestive of the ordinary lunatic asylum; its inhabitants give no superficial indication that a large proportion of them are madmen.

If one would conceive what Gheel is, he must imagine a town of five or six thousand souls, in no way different from other towns of like importance, surrounded by a number of hamlets containing altogether, perhaps, about as many more inhabitants. These people have been, from a very remote period, in the habit of taking insane persons to board in their houses. The lunatics live in constant contact with the family of their host. They share in their labors and their pleasures if so inclined and their means permit it. They come and go, in the enjoyment of an almost absolute liberty. It has, however, been found necessary for the good of the patients and of the settled population to organize administrative and medical services, in order to prevent dangerous and improper persons from being sent to the colony, and for the care of the mental and physical affections of the patients, and for securing to them proper accommodation and treatment; and an infirmary has been established for those who need medical care. But the administration makes very little show. The whole of the Gheel district is an asylum; and the streets and the surrounding country are the promenade of the lunatics.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

Whales in the Faroe Islands.

An average whale will yield meat and blubber (which is for the most part melted into oil) in worth about £3 7s. 6d. A herd of only 200 grind, successfully landed, will therefore be worth to the Faroese nearly £700—no small sum, remembering that the whole fund of the Faroe Savings Bank stands at only 106,861 kroner (about £6000). But, in this primitive community, actual money (though well appreciated) is of less consequence to the people than money's worth. The whales supply them with a store of meat; it is on account of this that they are specially jubilant. For months after the capture there will be plenty of feasting in all the houses within the district of the killing. Some of the meat will be roasted and then eaten fresh, though most of it will be pickled. As to the blubber, what is not reduced into oil will be consumed as butter, or dried, salted, and eaten like fat bacon in England.—*Saturday Review.*

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

The champion swimmer of the world is an Englishman, appropriately named Finny.

A California miner has invented what he calls a mechanical mine finder, by which it is claimed metal-bearing veins can be detected with accuracy. He has already directed the attention of several capitalists to deposits of antimony, silver and gold.

Asia possesses the most powerfully equipped hornets. The *Indian Medical Gazette* tells of a man who was bitten on the neck by one of them. Within ten minutes he became cold, pulseless, and unconscious. He was a robust man, but the use of active remedies only brought him to after a couple of hours. The hornet was of medium size, bright yellow and striped with black.

As a horse and cart, apparently with a load of hay, were about to pass the Custom house of Vroenhoven, on the Belgian frontier, the animal suddenly stopped, and either could not or would not budge an inch. Two custom officers came up to lend a hand, whereupon the driver took to his heels. It turned out that the hay concealed about 750 kilos of Dutch tobacco. Conscientiousness must now be added to the other good qualities of the horse.

The last formulated idea in crazes is an international cooking-match. This is to take place in the aquarium in Westminster, London. It means the production of the favorite dishes of each nation. The Briton will present his plum pudding and roast beef, the Spaniard *ola-pod-rida*, the Italian *macaroni a la garlic*, the German his *bratwurst* and *sauerkraut*, the Russian his *kapoosta* soup, the Frenchman his *fricasse*, and the Norwegian will teach how to cook eggs in that variety of ways which astonishes the traveler in his clime.

An ingenious Frenchman has conceived the thoroughly Parisian idea of preserving bodies by covering them with a metal skin. Burying, he says, has been condemned by experience; cremation is bad, as it destroys all evidence of crime in case murder has been committed, and embalming is expensive. But galvanizing is safe and cheap. The poor can be zinc-plated, well-to-do individuals may acquire a copper coat and the millionaire can enjoy the luxury of silver or gold plate. M. Kergovaty, the inventor of this method, says he has already used it successfully eleven times in the case of human beings, and over 100 times for animals.

To deter boys from climbing the telephone poles at Fond du Lac, Wis., the plan of attaching wire to the spikes and connecting them with a battery was conceived, and it worked to perfection. The first day no less than 200 boys attempted to climb the poles, but immediately received such a shock that they retreated in dismay. Later, however, a farmer drove up to the hole and hitched his horses. One of the animals unsuspectingly caught hold of the spike, and immediately there was a start and a jump, and the hitching strap snapped and away went the team. The farmer suffered the fracture of three ribs in attempting to stop the runaways, one or more women were run over and the wagon smashed to atoms.

An American expedition sent out last year by a wealthy New York lady to find the site of the Garden of Eden reports important Geographical discoveries in the region of Chaldea, south of Babylon. The best encouragement, however, was in locating definitely the original city of Sippora, on the bank of the Euphrates. It was here that, according to ancient Chaldean history, Noah was commanded to bury all the records of the antediluvian world before he embarked in the ark, in order that they might be preserved. "We mean to dig up this ground thoroughly," says the leader of the expedition, "and maybe shall find something astonishing."

Whale fishing in small steamers off the coast of New England is getting to be a business of some importance, four steamers (formerly catching men-haden) having been steadily engaged during the past season. They cruise off the Main and Massachusetts shores as far south as Cape Cod. A bomb lance, fired from a gun held at the shoulder is the weapon employed in killing the whales, about fifty of which have been taken this year. They will average sixty feet in length and twenty-five tons in weight. Each one yields about twenty barrels of oil, two barrels of meat, five tons of dry gum and two tons of bone, the value of which amounts to about \$400. As

the men become expert in the capture the whales become shy and keep more in deep water. This will be fatal to the business, as at present conducted, since a dead whale usually sinks, and can hardly be recovered from a depth of more than forty fathoms.

Wall Street Slang.

Stock-brokers have a dialect of their own that is caviare to the crowd. Like the trade-marks and "shop" terms of merchants, it must be explained to be intelligible to the multitude. It is pithy, pungent, scintillating, and sometimes rank. It precisely characterizes every variation and aspect of the market. A broker or operator is "long of stocks" when "carrying" or holding them for a rise; "loads" himself by buying heavily, perhaps in "blocks" composed of any number of shares—say 5,000 or 10,000—bought in a lump, and is therefore a "bull," whose natural action is to lower his horns and give things a hoist. He "forces quotations" when he wishes to keep up the price of a stock; "balloons" it to a height above its intrinsic value by imaginative stories, fictitious sales, and kindred methods; takes "a flier," or small side venture, that does not employ his entire capital; "flies kites" when he expands his credit beyond judicious bounds; "holds the market" when he buys sufficient stock to prevent the price from declining; "milks the street" when he holds certain stock so skillfully that he raises or depresses prices at pleasure, and thus absorbs some of the accessible cash in the street; buys when the "market is sick" from over-speculation; keenly examines "points"—theories or facts—on which to base speculation; "unloads" when he sells what has been carried for some time; has a "swimming market" when all is buoyant; "spills stocks" when he throws great quantities upon the market, either from necessity or to "break," i. e., lower the price. He "saddles the market" by foisting a certain stock upon it, and is "out of" any stock when he has sold what he held of it.—*Harper's Magazine.*

A New England Picture.

The next morning, when the fog that screened the water slowly rolled away, we saw a wonderful gleaming, glowing country, stretches of moor and meadow-land broken into by beltings of trees and ridges green and brown in spots, or lying golden with the cassia plants like English broom upon them. At the water's edge there were marshy bends, whence seemed to flow forth ripples of light that reached on to the bolder waters where the sun gleamed as on a broken mirror, and the white sails of boats went in and out catching sunlight and shadow in swift succession. But away from this strong effect are bits that bring the pencils of Gifford and Sartain quickly to mind; old roadways with orchard trees, and windmills with the jagged outlet of water, or the cone-shaped roofs of the salt-works rising against the sky, and everywhere in form and color suggesting, as nothing else upon our journey had done, the Old World—Holland, perhaps, or some parts of France. A peasant from the Loir-and-Cher would have "come" admirably in one brown field we passed, where the background was of gray sky and pale green foliage; and crossing the stone bridge toward Dartmouth village there was all the setting of a Dutch picture—the sombre tones mingling with vivid green, the broken lands with windmills active in the distance, and the curve of the water with a boat all gray and brown and dingy green anchored in its one strong spot of light.—*Harper's Magazine.*

Great Canals.

The canals of America are larger than those of Europe, but they are not the largest in the world. The Imperial Canal of China is over 1,000 miles long. The Erie Canal is 350½ miles long; the Ohio Canal, Cleveland to Portsmouth, 332; the Wabash and Erie, Evansville to the Ohio line, 374. The greatest canal undertaking on the European continent was completed in 1861. This was the Canal of Languedoc, or the Canal du Midi, to connect the Atlantic with the Mediterranean. Its length is 148 miles, it has more than 100 locks and about fifty aqueducts, and its highest part is no less than 600 feet above the sea; it is navigable for vessels of upwards of 600 tons. The largest ship canal in Europe is the great North Holland Canal, completed in 1825, 125 feet wide at the water surface, thirty-one feet wide at the bottom, and has a depth of twenty feet; it extends from Amsterdam to the Helder, fifty-one miles. The Caledonia Canal, in Scotland, has a total length of sixty miles, including three lakes. The Suez Canal is eighty-eight miles long, of which sixty-six miles are actual canal.—*Boston Budget.*

From Afar.

Sweet, that I see thee when thy dimpled smile,
Breaks fresh across the ever misty morn,
And when thy sunny eyes
Shame all the sunny skies,
And no rose lovely as thy lips is born—
That is enough.

Sweet, that I hear thee when thy mellow voice
Flows down the twilight in half-whispered
song,
While every wren and thrush
And all the robins hush,
And listen like my silent heart, and long—
That is enough.

Sweet, that I dream of thee in holy night,
When the tired world hath rocked itself to
sleep,
And when my yearning heart
Lays day and care depart,
And findeth rest on Love's unbroken deep—
That is enough.

—W. J. Henderson.

HUMOROUS.

There has been a big jump in the frog market.

Teacher—Define "snoring." Small boy—Letting off sleep.

The school ma'am who married a tanner had evidently a glimmering of the fitness of things.

Some malignant slanderer now states that a woman needs no eulogist, for she speaks for herself.

Fond mother—Are you better, my dear? Little Effie—I dunno; is the jelly all gone? "Yes." "Well, I'm well enough to get up, then."

"It seems to me," moaned he, as he fled toward the front gate, with the old man behind him, "that there are more than three feet in a yard."

"My son, how is it that you are always behindhand with your studies?" "Because if I were not behindhand with them, I could not pursue them."

"Did you do nothing to resuscitate the body?" was recently asked of a witness. "Yes, sir; we searched the pockets," was the reply.

A Sunday-school scholar was asked, apropos of Solomon, who was the great Queen that traveled so many miles to see him. The scholar—in fact, the whole school—looked as if a little help.

"Are your domestic relations agreeable?" was the question put to an unhappy-looking specimen of humanity. "O, my domestic relations are all right," was the reply. "it's my wife's relations that are causing the trouble."

The principal of an academy, who had just purchased a new bell to hang on the cupola of the institution, and also married a handsome woman, made an unfortunate orthographical error when he wrote to the president of the board of trustees: "I have succeeded in procuring a fine large-tongued belle."

Schools and Press of Mexico.

It is a lamentable fact that but a small portion of the Mexican people are able to read and write. The total number of illiterate persons is not definitely known, there being no accurate census returns to which reference can be made. The most reliable estimate that can be arrived at places the number at 7,000,000, or fully two-thirds of the entire population.

It is safe to say of all the daily papers published in the City of Mexico no one of them has a circulation of 500 copies outside of the city of publication, while it is more than probable that the combined outside circulation of all the dailies will not exceed that number. I have been in a Mexican city of 12,000 inhabitants, where not a single copy of a daily newspaper was subscribed for by the entire population, and where not fifty newspapers of any kind were received at the post-office, except those addressed to residents and visitors of foreign birth.—*Indianapolis Times.*

Fable of the Jackass and the Dude.

At a meeting of the farm animals the Dude once attempted to prove his relationship to the Jackass.

"Why," he said, vainly, "just look at my ears! We must be nearly related."

"True," returned the Jackass, "you may be a degenerated mule; but though I have often heard men call you a jackass, they have never yet insulted me by calling me a Dude."

At this speech the other animals burst into roars of laughter, and the crestfallen Dude slunk silently away.

MORAL: This Fable teaches us that an ordinary mortal should not attempt to claim the acquaintance of a hotel clerk.—*Life.*

The Kernel of the Argument.

A bushel of corn, when compacted into lard, or cheese, or butter, can find its market anywhere in the world where the cost of sending the corn itself would make a market for it impossible. Besides this, in the making of the lard or butter a manurial residue is left on the land, instead of being carried away to fertilize foreign fields. This is the kernel of the argument for mixed farming, instead of grain farming.—*New Orleans Times-Democrat.*