

Two Lovers.

Two lovers by a moss grown spring:
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.
O budding time!
O love's best prime!

Two wedded from the portal step:
The bells made happy carolings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.
O pure eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent:
Two hands above the head were locked;
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spine.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two sat still together there,
The red light shone about their knees;
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
And made the space between them wide:
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once
more!"
O memories!
O past that is!

—George Eliot.

FINDING A COMPANION.

"Wanted, a Companion, for an Elderly Lady."

That was the advertisement that appeared in a newspaper of a rainy Monday morning in November, 18—.

Glenville was nothing more than a little country settlement, with a red brick town hall and a labyrinth of narrow streets which seemed to have been laid out with special reference to the bewilderment of any chance passer, who might find himself involved in their maze. A quiet, dreamy, Rip Van Winkle sort of a place—and yet before noon of that Monday morning, a swarm of anxious aspirants for the office of "Companion for an Elderly Lady," had made their appearance in the best parlor of the Glenville House.

Mr. Reginald Chillingfield, who had been out for a walk in the street, was met on the threshold of the hotel by the boot-boy:

"O, please, sir, there's a lot of 'em all a-askin' for you."

"A lot of what?" demanded Mr. Chillingfield.

Reginald Chillingfield was tall and slender and handsome, with bright blue eyes and a straight nose—which latter feature he rubbed as he stood staring at the boot-boy.

"Of ladies, sir. Come to answer the advertisement."

"I recollect now."

And little reckoning of what lay before him he pushed open the door of the hotel best parlor.

Only for half a second, however. The array of feminine faces, all expectantly turned toward him, was enough to awe the stoutest bachelor heart, and Reginald Chillingfield closed it again with a bang.

"Jones," said he to his familiar friend, who had just lighted a cigar in the reading-room, "what shall I do?"

"In respect to what?"

"My Aunt Polly's companion. There's a dozen of 'em there, apparently all ages from sixteen to sixty. My Aunt Polly don't want twelve companions."

"Take the best-looking," suggested Jones, with revolting levity.

"And be scratched by all the rest."

"Take the worst-looking, then. Ten to one she's best fitted for a 'companion' to an old lady."

"My Aunt Polly is an excellent judge of beauty. She'd send me back with the article in less than two hours," retorted Chillingfield.

"In that case," said Jones, meditatively eyeing the end of his cigar. "I don't see how you're to get out of the dilemma."

"Jones, don't prove faithless in such a strait as this. Be a man and a friend! Suppose you had advertised for a companion for your Aunt Polly, and a host had responded, what would you do?"

"I should engage one of 'em and send the rest about their business."

"Yes; but which one? Be practical, there's a good fellow."

"The one whose appearance seems best adapted to the emergency."

"Jones, you're a fool!" cried out Chillingfield. "Am I to go into that room and stare about as if they are a lot of winter apples or prize pumpkins on exhibition?"

"Have 'em admitted one by one," suggested Jones, and on this hint Mr. Chillingfield promptly acted.

"You sit and pretend to be reading the newspaper," whispered Chillingfield, "and if you like the applicant's looks, cough! If you don't, crackle the newspaper! Dear me, my shirt collar is wet already; my face is burning. Why couldn't Aunt Polly have hunted up her own companion? Yes, Mike, all ready. Ask one of the ladies to walk in!"

And with a grin, Mike announced: "Miss Zerinah Hall."

Miss Hall was tall, scant-haired and spectacled, in a robe of gingham and a drab silk hat.

"I am seeking a situation, young man," she said, "not from necessity, but because in middle life one feels the lack of companionship. I hope the elderly lady mentioned in the advertisement is a church member?"

Crackle! crackle! went the newspaper. Chillingfield glanced guiltily at his friend.

"No, she's not; that is—I think, perhaps, a younger person—You did not say how old you were, Miss Hall."

"No, I didn't," said Miss Zerinah. "And I don't mean to. I don't think you'll suit, young man. No gentleman—what is that other person rattling his newspaper so for?—ever thinks of asking impertinent questions about a lady's age. Good morning, sir."

Miss Zerinah went out, closing the door behind her with a bang.

Mrs. Hawkesbury, the next candidate, was a clairvoyant and spiritualist.

"I think I could amuse the old lady with foretelling the future," said she. "That was the way I did at my three last situations."

"Three!" repeated Mr. Chillingfield. "Jones, my dear fellow, don't rustle that paper so vehemently. (An instantaneous silence ensued, and Jones stifled a giggle behind the columns of the *Mercury*.)

"Did you say three? How did you happen to leave those situations?"

"The visitation of Providence, sir," said Mrs. Hawkesbury. "They all died—the respected ladies whom it was once my duty and my pleasure to—"

"Oh," said Mr. Chillingfield, "I am afraid my Aunt Polly might die, too. Clairvoyance and second sight mightn't agree with her."

"Sir," said the lady, "you are spiritually blind."

"Very likely," said Mr. Chillingfield. "But I prefer to remain so."

The next was too deaf, the next too fleshy, the third was unwilling to live with any lady who did not keep a man servant, the fourth wanted too high a salary—so on, *ad infinitum*, until the newspaper was fairly crackled to pieces.

Until, at length, there was, so to speak, a "tie" between the last two candidates.

Ruth Cox was just nineteen; pretty as a sweet pea blossom, and ready to undertake any description of service, to escape from a step-mother and nine turbulent half-brothers and sisters. Helen Howard was a queneen young woman of five and twenty, who read like Mrs. Scott-Siddons, sang delicious Scotch ballads, and frankly owned that she needed a home!

Mr. Jones coughed himself purple in the face over both of them.

"You couldn't do better, Reginald," said he, "than to take—"

"Which one?"

"Both!"

"Do talk common-sense!"

"But they are both splendid girls!"

"Granted—but you must remember that I have only got one Aunt Polly! A choice must be made."

"Toss up a copper."

"You irreverent villain!"

"Draw cuts, then. Look! I write 'Helen' on one, 'Ruth' on the other. Presto! Change! Now draw! Ruth has won the day!"

So Mr. Reginald Chillingfield took Ruth Cox home with him to the domiciliary abode of his Aunt Polly by evening train, leaving Helen Howard very sad and quiet.

"You are disappointed," said he. "I wish I could have engaged you both."

"Yes," said Helen; "I am disappointed, I confess. Life is very hard and stern to me."

Reginald Chillingfield thought over her words. They haunted him—and not only her words, but the garnet-brown shadows of her eyes. And just a week afterward he went back to Glenville.

"Yes, Miss Howard is at home," said the shabby maid-of-all-work, at the third-rate boarding-house where Miss Howard lived. "Walk in."

And Mr. Chillingfield walked in, to find Miss Howard *tele-tele* with Mr. Jones.

"Hallo!" cried Jones. "Who would ever have thought of seeing you?"

"I might say the same," laughingly retorted Chillingfield, as he took Miss Howard's hand. "But I have news for you, Miss Helen."

"I have heard of an excellent situation near my aunt's—an invalid lady, whose husband—"

"Hang the invalid lady and her husband!" interposed Jones, "I was just going to write you about it, old boy. We're engaged. We are to be married to-morrow."

"No!" cried Reginald. "Then I'll stay to the wedding. But—"

"Well?"

"Isn't it rather a sudden arrangement?"

"Life is full of sudden things," said Jones, philosophically. "Helen is willing to run the risk."

And so the troublesome question was settled satisfactorily to all parties.

An Embarrassing Situation.

A little girl whose father had been reading to her a story of a child who has eaten up by a bear, could not seem to forget it, and at night she said:

"Oh papa, wasn't that a dreadful story? And then the poor child couldn't go up to heaven!"

"Why not?"

"Why, there she was inside the bear!"

—*Boston Record.*

Promoted.

One winter, says General Dan Macaulay, in his recent address before the Loyal Legion, we were for many days on a Mississippi River expedition down below Helena, Arkansas, with a fleet of steamers under General Willis A. Gorman. The weather was most inclement, and the men suffered very severely from cold and exposure. Under such conditions, a soldier's bump of reverence for anything he can worry suffers great shrinkage. Sam Erick had taken a violent dislike to General Gorman, because, forsooth, that gallant gentleman had been forced to join in the famous retreat from the first Bull Run battle-field.

Why Sam should have considered that General Gorman had any special monopoly or responsibility in that great national footrace, or that he had developed more speed than was absolutely necessary to keep up with the procession, is hard to understand; but so it was, and several times during this expedition, as I afterward learned, when our steamers were sufficiently near, Sam would electrify the General by howling at him most derisively:

"Hello, Old Bull Run!"

Once he made a mistake. Headquarters steamer was brought alongside of ours and within a few feet, for consultation, and on the upper or hurricane deck stood the General himself.

Sam was on the lower forward deck of our vessel, out near the bow, and, bracing himself, he yelled up into Gorman's very teeth:

"Hello, Old Bull Run!"

The General was too quick for him; leaning over the side, he shouted down to the guard: "Throw that man on my boat here, quick!" And, sure enough, they did. Sam, sprawling through the air like a frog, was pitched headlong onto Gorman's boat, and during the remainder of the day, at various distances, near and far, we could see him, long, and lank, and lean, tied up like a fluttering scarecrow, to the jackstaff of the steamer. It was a cold and gusty day—for Sam—and no especial attention was paid to waffles and quail for him, and so, when along toward night the boats were brought together again, and he was chucked back to us stiff as a wooden Indian, it might reasonably be supposed that for once the great irrepressible was squelched.

No, not the least in the world. He gathered himself together, and, chilled, blue, and starved as he was, came creaking and grunting up stairs to me in the cabin.

"Colonel," he groaned, "I wish you'd please have my discharge made out right away!"

"Your discharge! Your funeral, you mean, if you're not more careful!"

"No, my discharge, Colonel. I've been put on Gorman's staff!"

The Spiders Appetite.

It is not everybody who knows how much a spider can eat. Most of us have derived amusement, and perhaps instruction, from watching the subtle arrangements and devices of the little tactician, with a view to capture some dainty little insect, and many of us would know exactly where to place this interesting creature in the classification of animal life, but probably very few of us have any idea what a voracious gourmand the spider is. A gentleman, scientifically inclined and luxuriating in the rare possession of leisure, has recently given to the world some very curious and startling statements in regard to the archimedean appetite. He captured a spider and kept it in confinement, supplying it liberally with food, and carefully recording his observations. He estimated that the creature ate four times its weight for breakfast, nine times its weight for dinner, thirteen times its weight for supper, finishing up with an ounce of food. In the same proportion, a man of average weight would demolish an ox for breakfast, two more for dinner, a couple of bullocks, eight sheep and four pigs for supper, and then a hundred weight of fish to prepare the way for an aldermanic banquet before retiring to bed.—*Christian Journal.*

Canine Pets in Gay Attire.

"Furnishing decorations and clothing for dogs is developing into a great trade," said a manufacturer to a reporter for the *New York Mail and Express* recently. "In Paris alone nearly 2,000 persons are engaged in this business, and the trade represents nearly \$1,000,000 capital. The rage for dressing canine pets has now reached New York from Paris. Every variety of dog has his peculiar dress and proper toilet and toilet case, with powder, sponge, comb and so forth. It would be a rank breach of dog manners for a bulldog to appear on the street in the dress of another, indeed, the dog would pine away from sheer mortification. Smooth terriers wear bracelets on some of their legs, and bear in mind always put the ring on the left leg. That is the fashion. As to collars, blankets for cool weather, netting for warm weather, the rule holds good—every one to his own and no other. We'll very soon have aristocratic dogs appearing on rainy days in long-legged boots made of doeskin and fastened on with rubber rings. At certain seasons of the year dogs must be muzzled, and this calls for fancy and decorated muzzles."

HORSE "SHARPS."

Swindling Unwary Countrymen in New York.

A Single Worthless Animal that has Changed Owners Many Times.

Everybody admits that prevarication, to put it mildly, is a never absent factor in a horse trade. But there is a limit to sharp play there. A certain combination of individuals, that might very appropriately be called "a gang," are operating just now very successfully on the other side of the limit, and gentlemen who think that mankind is naturally prone to be honest are being seriously affected by it every day.

The victims are generally men who wear soft felt hats. Men of that kind are not indigenous to Manhattan Island. They are the noble sons of agriculture, who are the mainstay of the blithesome bunco man. They come to the city to buy horses, and they go home firmly convinced that there is nothing between the Battery and Harlem River that will ever get into heaven.

The "gang" have stables in two streets. At one it is always announced that seven horses are for sale, while at the other the number is nine. Perhaps these numbers are chosen because they are considered lucky—not because they represent the number of horses, as each stable can boast of but one animal, and that of such a kind that in a good fair count it would be set down as only half a horse.

When the unsuspecting purchaser appears at the stable he is promptly "spotted," and half a dozen gentlemen, who have previously been lounging around the corner with their hands in their pockets suddenly become very deeply interested in the prospective purchase of the one horse. Nobody pays the least attention to the real purchaser at first. He thinks business must be very brisk indeed and his chances of getting a horse at what he begins to believe must be a bargain quite as slim. Finally he edges into the conversation and becomes the central figure.

"Where are the other horses?" he asks.

"Just sold four this morning, and the rest are out on trial. A gentleman is coming around to try this one in an hour, if he is not sold before," replied the dealer.

"All right; let me take him out on trial?"

"I am sorry, but I can't. I promised to hold him for that other fellow unless some one bought outright."

At this point the decoys evince further signs of purchasing, and the result is that the victim makes an offer. After a little haggling the price usually settled on is in the vicinity of \$100. The money is paid and the countryman drives off, happy in the consciousness of having a good bargain. When about two blocks distant his joy wilts down to several degrees below freezing point. The horse begins to wheeze and cough, and finally chokes and falls down. Then the sad faced farmer leads the horse back to the stable and demands his money. At first he gets no satisfaction whatever. The dealer insists that the horse was all right when he left and he can't understand it. At last a compromise is made and the victim thinks himself lucky in getting \$50 of his money back.

"I tell you what," said one of the decoys to a *Herald* reporter, "that old horse is a dandy. He's got that choking ricket down to a fine point, and plays it elegant."

"Has he been sold many times?" asked the reporter.

"Many times? Well, I should cough up a cat. Every day, sure, and sometimes twice. Oh, you can gamble on his knowing his business now. Funny, now, ain't it? That horse, as a horse, ain't worth two cents; but as a piece of property, I'm a gilly if he don't bring the old man in \$50 a day, easy. Yes, sir; he don't look it, but he's one of the most valuable animals in New York."

At both places the same *modus operandi* is pursued and with the same profitable results to the dealers. They have now been carrying on the fraud for some months and as yet have not met with any serious setback. The average man does not like to admit that he has been "played," and prefers to pocket his loss and keep quiet rather than air the affair in court. A few victims, more brave than the rest, have caused the heavy hand of the law to drop on the dealers. The heavy hand clutched savagely enough for a while, and then, after the usual manner, let go and the dealers serenely went back to their business and their faithful old trick horse.—*New York Herald.*

Making Money.

"Hello, Frank! Where have you been? I haven't seen you for a great while!"

"I have been in San Francisco."

"Making any money down there?"

"You bet. I make more money in a day than you do in a year."

"Great Scott! You are foolin', ain't you?"

"No, I'm telling the truth."

"Where do you work?"

"In the San Francisco mint."—*Pacific Jester.*

A wind instrument—The weather vane.

Monitor and Merrimac.

"Lieutenant Jones having occasion to visit the Merrimac's gun deck, saw a division standing at ease, and inquiring of the officer in command why he was not firing that individual replied: 'After firing for two hours I find I can do the enemy about as much damage by snapping my fingers at him every two minutes and a half.'"

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"As Lieutenant Jones found he could make no impression on the Monitor with his shots, he determined to run her down or board her, and for nearly an hour he maneuvered for position, but his ship was too unwieldy for that kind of work. The Monitor danced around her like a yacht around a three-decker, pouring in her shot and endeavoring to find a vulnerable point.

"At last Jones thought he saw a chance of ramming the Monitor, and he gave the order to go ahead at full speed, but before the great vessel could gather headway the agile Monitor turned, and the disabled prow of the Merrimac gave a glancing blow which did no harm whatever.

"Again the Monitor came upon the Merrimac's quarter, her bow actually against the ship's side, and at this distance fired twice. Both shots struck about half way up the Merrimac's armor, abreast of the after pivot, and so severe was the blow that the side was forced in several inches. The crew of the after guns were knocked over by the concussion, bleeding from the nose and ears.

"Thousands of spectators with beating hearts watched the conflict from Fort Monroe, and from the ships. It seemed to them as if the battle would never end, but at length the confederate commander, thinking it useless to try his broadsides on the Monitor any longer, steered off toward the Minnesota, which opened on the Merrimac with all her broadside, guns and the ten-inch pivot."—*Admiral Porter.*

Shark Fishing.

Shark fishing is carried on to a considerable extent especially on the north and west coasts of Iceland, both decked vessels and open boats being used in this fishery. The species of shark caught is the *Squalus carcharias*, and it is pursued solely for the sake of the oil yielded by the liver, the rest of the carcass being usually thrown away, though sometimes the flesh is preserved for food. The sharks vary much in size, running up to eighteen or twenty feet in length, and four to five feet in diameter through the thickest part of the body, the yield of oil from each liver varying from four or five up to fifty gallons. Rich livers yield two-thirds of their bulk of oil, poor ones only about one-half.

The vessels used in shark fishing are for the most part small schooners of thirty to fifty tons burden, manned by eight or ten men. The usual fishing season is from January or February till August. During the winter months the sharks frequent shallower waters, and are found about twenty miles from land, in fifty fathoms of water or thereabouts; in summer they seek deeper waters, and are caught one hundred miles or so off the coast in a depth of two hundred fathoms.

It having been ascertained by sounding that the ship lies in water of a suitable depth, preferable with a sloping soft mud bottom, the vessel is anchored, and fishing commences. The hook used is twelve or eighteen inches long, baited with seal-blubber and horseflesh and attached by a couple of yards of strong chain to an inch and a half line. As a rule the sharks are shy of taking the bait at first, and the fishers may wait long for their first bite; but once the sharks commence to "take," they crowd to the spot, and may be hooked in quick succession; they then take the bait greedily and with little caution.

It Cured Him.

Some years ago a certain Methodist congregation in Chicago was presided over by a minister who had formerly held a pastorate in Springfield, Ill. The preacher was a very good man, but he subjected himself to severe criticism by constantly comparing his surroundings with those in Springfield. Nothing was so nice as it was in Springfield; the church was fine, but not so fine as the Springfield church; the congregation was zealous, but it was not Springfield zeal—and so on, all the time, Springfield being perfected perfection. At last one of the sisters hit upon what she thought might prove a remedy for her pastor, so at the next "class" she gave in her experiences. "I have," said she, "found the path dark and rough, and at times have been on the point of falling by the wayside and giving up in despair; I have felt that my earthly nature was ungenial with that heavenly one I have been taught to seek in the closest association, and there have been seasons when I thought I should never be able to reach that better land lying beyond the Jordan; but brethren and sisters, since our dear new pastor has come among us, I feel to rejoice that although I may fall short of attaining the heavenly kingdom, bless the Lord, I shall at least reach Springfield."

The minister tells the story on himself and acknowledges that it cured him.—*Merchant Traveler.*

My Hero.

What signifies the outward show!
What signifies his wealth or place!
When we the heart have learned to know,
What do we care for form or creed
And what care we for name or creed
That buried ages may unroll,
If under all we clearly read
The record of a dauntless soul!

If loyal to his sense of right,
If prompt and sure at Duty's call,
He walks, as walking in God's sight,
His aim the manliest man of all;
If helpful as the sunbright day,
If pitiful of other's woes,
He follows in the master's way
And bears a blessing where he goes;

If, gaining much, he loses all,
While summer friends go coldly by,
He proves his courage by his fall
Resolved to win the day or die;
With hope alive, in God his trust,
He keeps a spirit kind and true,
And rises bravely from the dust
To fight his weary battle through;

If, working on through pain and loss,
His earnest soul be not cast down;
He beareth patiently his cross,
While winning steadily his crown;
The man's hero! and we give
The meed of love, which is his due,
No idle praise! but while we live,
The wreath of bay! the knot of blue!

—*Helen Keith.*

HUMOROUS.

A pawnbroker is a loanly man.
Always comes out on top.—Your hair.
If you cannot lick a man, be lenient with his faults.

People who wear pepper-and-salt suits are always in season.
The selfish man has most presence of mind. He never forgets himself.

"Buffaloes are bred in Kansas," it is said. They are met elsewhere.

"This is my sphere," said a happy wife, as she patted her bald-headed husband on the pate.

A rule that works both ways—When a fleet goes out on a cruise the crews go out on the fleet.

"Brass bands are on the increase throughout the country." Even the dogs wear them on their necks.

Little Boy—Pa, why does the world move? Pa (thinking of something else)—Because it finds it cheaper than to pay rent.

Thoughtful young lady (to college graduate)—Who, in your opinion, Mr. Muscle, was the noblest Roman of them all? College Graduate—I used to think Hannibal was, but I wouldn't bet a cent on any of 'em now.

A journalist went into a barber shop the other day to get his hair cut, and fell asleep during the operation. The barber, who awoke him when he had finished, said to him: "You are tired. I understand it. It's the same way with me when evening comes. Ah, this head-work is something terrible!"

Apache Characteristics.

The Apaches and kindred tribes are among the most cautious fighters on earth, and also among the most desperate. Near the close of last year a band of Chiricahuas numbering eleven killed twenty-one friendly Apaches living on the reservation, and twenty-five white men, women and children. Their superiors as prowlers in war probably never existed. The army officers in Arizona declare that the Apaches are the ideal scouts of the whole world, with their hawk eyes, stealthy motion and sensitive ears. Though undersized, they have broad, deep chests, muscular limbs, and small, wiry hands and feet. They march about four miles an hour, halting after a few hours' tramp long enough to smoke cigarettes. If no matches are at hand they bring fire in from eight to forty-five seconds by rapidly twirling between the palms a hard, round stick fitted into a circular hole in another stick of softer fiber. They will march forty miles a day on foot across dry plains and precipitous mountains regardless of the fiercest heat. The Apache finds food where the Caucasian would starve. He can catch turkeys, quail, rabbits, doves, field mice and prairie dogs; feast off a dead horse; gather acorns from the stunted mountain oak; roast the Spanish bayonet or century plant, and strip the fruit and seed from the cactus; dig the wild potato or bulb of the tule; raid the nest of the ground-bee; or, if driven to it, keep down the pangs of hunger with the inner bark of the pine or the roots of wild plants. With the rifle and bow he has a life training. "Every track in the trail, mark in the grass and scratch on the bark of a tree explains itself to an Apache. He can tell to an hour almost when the man or animal making them passed by, and, like a hound, will keep on the scent until he catches up with the object of his pursuit."

A Very Successful Case.

First Lawyer—Ah, Dobkins, how did you come out in that case you were just beginning when I went East?

Second Lawyer—Gloriously. It was a perfect success. Created a great sensation. Papers full of it. Got lots of advertising out of it. I think it was the making of my future.

"Good! Glad to hear it, old fellow. I knew you had stuff in you. And by the way, what did they do to your client?"