

A Fragment:

What if, while I sit here a lone,
A voice I have not heard for years
Should greet me in the low sweet tone
That once was music to my ears;
And I should start from memory's sway,
And, turning, find you sitting there
Unchanged, as though 'twere yesterday
Your feet went tripping down the stairs.
Or if, upon some summer day,
Mid song of birds and hum of bees,
I should go down the woodland way
To our old track beneath the trees;
And, starting back in glad surprise,
I should behold you waiting there,
The old light shining in your eyes—
The sunlight tangled in your hair.

In vain I shall not see the glow
Of wine-brown eyes or catch the smile
Of ruby lips; but yet I know
That you are near me all the while.
For I so loved you in that range
Of sunny years that my poor heart
Would bleed afresh and count it strange
To think God held us far apart.

And so, when evening shadows creep
And night falls softly o'er the lea,
You touch my eyelids and I sleep,
And sleeping, dream of heaven and thee.
And when some summer morn shall break
That finds me chilled by death's cold dew,
You need but kiss me, I shall wake,
And waking be in heaven with you.
—Jean Ingleside.

THE ASTROLOGER'S DUPE

A little old woman, gray-haired and trembling, sat a little while ago in the back office of a Wall-street stock broker. Her gaze was fixed on a wide blackboard, where chalk figures showed the drift of stock market quotations; there was no lustre in her eye; her whole aspect was that of one dumfounded, brokenhearted. She had a sad story to tell were there only spirit enough left to her for a recital. A year ago she came to this same brokerage office. Her purse was fat with bank bills and she gave an order for the purchase of 500 shares of a stock which had been active a long time. The broker advised her against the purchase, and told her plainly that he had what he believed excellent reasons for expecting a heavy decline in the particular stock she had selected to buy. But she persisted in her determination, declaring that she had information which could not be wrong that the stock was bound to go up a good deal very soon. She had her way, despite the counsels that plainly predicted the loss of her money. She left \$5,000 in cash as a 10 per cent. margin to protect her interest and went her way with a calm confidence shown on her countenance. "I shall make a good deal of money," she said as she left, "for the information I have comes from the very highest authority." The stock perseveringly declined forthwith, and each day saw some fraction clipped off of the preceding day's quotation. Within a month the original \$5,000 margin had dwindled down to \$1,000, and the broker was obliged to call for another deposit from his customer to protect her interest. She came down town with the same self-satisfied smile, and with the same expressions of confidence produced her rounded purse again. Four thousand dollars she left in the broker's hands this time. "The advance, I am told, has been unavoidably delayed a little while," she said, with a tone full of assurance and faith, "but it is bound to come soon now, and I feel as sure that my money is safe as if I had it all in bank awaiting my orders."

This was in response to further grave predictions from the broker, who, by much argument tried to convince her that she was being misled. Another short period elapsed; and another enforced call was made upon the sunny faced old lady. Just a bare suspicion of disquiet was beginning to show itself, but there was no backdown in her action. Out came more money. And so a little later did more still follow. Then not long ago she came yet again; now she brought her bank book. She showed to the broker that a year ago it credited her with deposits of \$18,000, of which but \$2,500 remained; and that \$2,500—every penny of it, every penny she possessed in the world—she handed over. She was not yet utterly downcast. "But yesterday," she averred, "I had my information repeated again and the rise which I've waited for so long is to come now right away." Down went the market, lower and lower dropped the price of the expectant woman's 500 shares of stock, till that day a little while ago when for the last time she came into Wall-street again, dropped into an armchair before the quotation board and gazed long and listlessly, as one in a deep dream, confronting the white figures that glared out at her there like the eyes of so many demons. All of her \$18,000 was gone; she had only poverty left. But she was brave still, and when her broker approached her she rose with the grace of a woman young and queenly and thanked him for all his courtesies and the good advice he had wasted on her.

Washington and Banker Hill.

It was on the 15th day of June, 1775, that George Washington was chosen Commander-in-Chief of the American army. The next day he made his answer to Congress in which he declared that he accepted the office, but that he would take no pay. He left Philadelphia on his way to Boston June 21, escorted by a troop of horsemen, and accompanied by Schuyler and Lee, who had just been made major-generals by Congress. They had gone about twenty miles when they saw a man on horseback coming rapidly down the road. It was a messenger riding post haste to Philadelphia, and carrying to Congress news of the battle of Bunker Hill. Everybody was stirred by the news and wanted to know the particulars.

"Why were the Provincials compelled to retreat?" he was asked.

"It was for want of ammunition," he replied.

"Did they stand the fire of the regular troops?" asked Washington anxiously.

"That they did, and held their own fire reserve until the enemy was within eight rods."

"Then the liberties of the country are safe?" exclaimed Washington. He remembered well the scenes under Brad-dock, and he knew what a sight it must have been to those New England farmers when a compact body of uniformed soldiers came marching up from the boats at Charlestown. If they could stand fearlessly, there was stuff in them for soldiers.—*St. Nicholas.*

Room to Rent.

"Had a terrible shock this mornin', Awhaw. Met a low fellow who asked me if I had rooms to rent; actually took me for a beggarly landlord."

"Oh, no, Percy. I daresay he only meant to insinuate that you had an empty head."

"Do you think so? Quite a relief, I assure you. So awful to suspect that I looked like a low landlord."—*Call.*

talked then freely. It was no new thing, she said, for her to seek the advice of this "astrologer," her husband had done the same before her and a score of her friends, she said, had implicit confidence in the revelations of the seer.

"I'll give you \$1,000," said the broker hotly, "if you'll promise me one thing." The old lady's lightening countenance showed that he need have no doubt of the promise. "Never come into Wall street again and have no more to do with this blunked scoundrel whose lies have cost you so dearly."

The promise was gladly exchanged for the money, and the old lady went her way. But this was not the only sequel to this speculation. Three or four days ago a dapper little fellow with a face weakened around a pair of twinkling adder eyes thrust himself into this same brokerage office. He sought the manager and said he wanted to buy some stock on a margin. He had brought a one-thousand-dollar note along to put up as the necessary deposit. He was just ready to hand over his money when of a sudden he looked into the broker's face and ejaculated, "You've got a bright eye; may I draw this bank note across them just for a second?" The broker was astonished, but to humor a customer, whom he supposed to be only in a jovial mood, he consented, and the bill unfolded him momentarily. The customer closed his own eyes, withdrew the bill, and ejaculated as if to himself alone, "Correct; perfectly correct!" He deposited his money, and was about to leave when suddenly the broker, urged by a strange suspicion, called him and said: "Will you tell me why you went through that performance of putting that bill over my eyes?" "Certainly, certainly!" ejaculated the shallow fellow. "Certainly; I was testing the information I had. I am an astrologer, and—"

"Are you the man that sent Mrs. X here to buy stock?"

"Yes, oh yes!" and the adder-eyed customer rubbed his hands ecstatically. "Yes, oh yes! I told her to come here."

"You swindled her, you scoundrel."

The broker's voice wasn't sweet to listen to, and the astrologer looked more than a little scared.

"Why, I believe in the powers myself," he whined, "or, of course, I wouldn't be putting up my own money." It was only because there is a Police Court in this town that the fellow was not summarily kicked into the street. As it was the broker contented himself with saying: "Your account will be closed in this office to-night. If there is anything due you you can have it at 3 o'clock. Get out of here now, quick." At 3 o'clock when the gentleman called he found that something had run afoul of the market during the day and his 200 shares of stock had fallen enough in a couple of hours to wipe out every cent of his \$1,000 margin. And I betray only a little bit of confidence in saying that the fellow wouldn't have been far wrong if he had suspected that his own broker was responsible himself for the sudden decline, having hammered the market and pacified his conscience somewhat in remembrance of the duped old lady whose fortune had gone at the idle dictation of the arrant humbug who now to some extent was doing penance for her sorrow.—*New York Times.*

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THE COMORO ISLES.

Picturesque Scenes in a Remote Region of This Earth.

The Islands, Their Inhabitants and Their Ruler Described.

A correspondent of the *New York Tribune* writing from Jo'anna, Comoro Islands, says: The Comoro Islands are four in number, lying in the Mozambique Channel, between Africa and the northern end of Madagascar. The four islands are the Anzalya, or Green Comoro; Arijonan, or Johanna; Mayotte, and Mohilla. Mayotte was ceded to France in 1842. The other islands belong to Arabia. The inhabitants, about 80,000, are principally Mohametans, but the people of Johanna find their principal employment in connection with the ships calling for provisions. The trade of Comoro and Mohilla is of the same character, but the islands are not so much frequented as in former years.

Upon entering the harbor of Moosa-noodo, the principal settlement of Johanna, one is struck with the picturesque beauty of the hills. From the anchorage the town is also picturesque, with its tall minarets and its two forts—one perched on a commanding hill and the other upon the beach among the shore houses. But the illusion is readily dispelled upon reaching the shore. The landing is upon a beach of rocks and shells and through a considerable surf in the calmest of weather. Along the shore are strewn the washed clothes of the ship's officers and crews; and a set of vagabond-looking natives of all colors, save that of the Caucasian, are lounging about looking carelessly on, and presenting a repulsive contrast to the Arabs. The costumes of the latter are decidedly attractive; white robes with loose jackets, and silken girdles about their waists supporting cimeters, the scabbards and hilts elaborately finished with gold and silver. These cimeters are purchased at Muscat, and cost from \$50 to \$350 each. The men's feet are encased in sandals, and large white turbans adorn their heads. Many of them speak English with fluency, and French as well.

The town is dilapidated and squalid to the last degree; the houses of rough stone, cemented and thatched; the streets not more than five feet wide and exceedingly crooked. The town is enclosed by a stone wall, twenty feet in height, with an entrance at each corner of the inclosure through a gateway scarcely wide enough for two persons to pass at the same time. This wall was built as a sort of defence against the pirates, who were in the habit of visiting the island and stealing everything from the people, even to the slaves. Slavery exists to a large extent, and the Sultan of Johanna owns 700 beings, whom he keeps principally to till his lands on the east side of the island. The other Arabs also own plantations and slaves.

The inhabitants of the islands, a mixture of Arabs and negroes in great part, are intelligent and sprightly. Before the Civil War in the United States they purchased many cotton goods from the American whalers, but their opportunities were disastrously interrupted by the Confederate Cruiser Alabama. Since then they have not fared so well under the oppressions of the English, who, they assert, "are strong enough to interfere in everybody's affairs, and to threaten us with the exercise of their power if we bring over any more slaves from the main."

The highest parts of the islands are densely wooded, and the mountain sides are so steep in some places that the tops of some of the trees touch the trunk and roots of others. The language of the island, a peculiar Arabic dialect, is soft and pleasing to the ear. Prince Abdallah is perhaps one of the best educated men in the Arabic territory, and I was struck with the novelty of the home, and the extreme beauty of face and physical build of this full-blooded Arab. He is a tall, soldierly-looking man, with square shoulders, well-proportioned limbs, olive complexion, finely cut features, and a black moustache and black hair. I was also surprised at the beauty of one of his three wives, whom I chanced to see with her mask raised. The walls of his house are filled with small niches, receptacles for coffee cups, ornaments, etc. Couches are ranged about the reception and dining rooms, and floors are covered with rich and heavy Turkish carpets and rugs. A black houri was set to fan me, and a crowd of children gathered about me, but the harem kept in the background. If any of the harem have occasion to go in the street or appear in public it must be with her face behind a three-cornered mask with her eyes peeping over it. After refreshments—confections and rose syrup—I walked into the Prince's garden, a beautiful wilderness of betelnuts and coconuts, mandarin oranges and mango trees, with heterogeneous patches of rice, sweet potatoes and beans, and here and there a cotton plant. On my departure the Prince treated me with royal honors. A band of music—two drums and a clarinet—played for me, each of the musicians using his instrument regardless of the others. Their music reminded me of what a home for fondlings might be on

Christmas morning after drums and trumpets had been liberally distributed. The body-guard, about twenty native soldiers, was drawn up, the men holding their arms in the most awkward position. But their dress was a feature—white trousers, red coats and red caps, coadedmed uniforms purchased from the English soldiers. Scarcely one of them had a button on his coat, so it was fastened together with pieces of string. The honors, however, were the best the island afforded.

Bird-Housekeeping.

From John Burroughs's paper on Birds' Eggs, in the *Century*, we quote as follows: "The bluebirds early took possession, and in June their first brood had flown. The wrens had been hanging around, evidently with an eye on the place (such little comedies may be witnessed anywhere), and now very naturally thought it was their turn. A day or two after the young bluebirds had flown, I noticed some fine, dry grass clinging to the entrance to the cavity; a circumstance which I understood a few moments later, when the wren rushed by me into the cover of a small Norway spruce, hotly pursued by the male bluebird. It was a brown streak and a blue streak pretty close together. The wren had gone to house-cleaning, and the bluebird had returned to find his bed and bedding being pitched out-of-doors, and had thereupon given the wren to understand in the most emphatic manner that he had no intention of vacating the premises so early in the season. Day after day, for more than two weeks, the male bluebird had to clear his premises of these intruders. It occupied much of his time and not a little of mine, as I sat with a book in a summer-house near by, laughing at his petty fury and spiteful onset. On two occasions the wren rushed under the chair in which I sat, and a streak of the blue lightning almost flashed in my very face. One day, just as I had passed the tree in which the cavity was placed, I heard the wren scream desperately; turning, I saw the little vagabond fall into the grass with the wrathful bluebird fairly upon him; the latter had returned just in time to catch him, and was evidently bent on punishing him well. But in the squabble in the grass, the wren escaped and took refuge in the friendly evergreen. The bluebird paused for a moment with outstretched wings looking for the fugitive, then flew away. A score of times during the month of June did I see the wren taxing every energy to get away from the bluebird. He would dart into the stone wall, under the floor of the summer-house, into the weeds—anywhere to hide his diminished head. The bluebird with his bright coat looked like a policeman in uniform in pursuit of some wicked, rusty little street gamin. Generally the favorite house of refuge of the wren was the little spruce, into which their pursuer made no attempt to follow them. The female would sit concealed amid the branches, chattering in a scolding, fretful way, while the male, with his eye upon his tormentor, would perch on the topmost shoot and sing. Why he sang at such times, whether in triumph and derision, or to keep his courage up and reassure his mate, I could not make out. When his song was suddenly cut short and I glanced to see him dart down into the spruce, my eye usually caught a twinkle of blue wings hovering near. The wren finally gave up the fight, and their enemies reared their second brood in peace."

Vegetation in Mexico.

Somebody, writes a correspondent of the *Boston Transcript*, has aptly described the scenery between Vera Cruz and Cardova as "an ocean of verdure which in the rainy season becomes an ocean of flowers." Plantations of coffee, bananas, pineapples, tobacco and sugar cane stretch away on every side. Gardens are hedged with giant magnolias and tall yuccas, or bordered by mango trees laden with odorous fruit, interspersed by citrons, figs, limes, oranges, pomegranates, olives, papaws and a hundred strange and luscious varieties never seen at the north. Far as the eye can reach are endless fields of heliotrope, mignonette, ageratum, nasturtiums and other dainty favorites that are the pride of our greenhouses—here springing up spontaneously and attaining their perfection. Anon we pass impenetrable thickets of wild bamboo; towering, like Jack's fabled beanstalk; or grooves of enormous live oaks, whose gnarled arms are burdened by floating bunches of air plants. Gigantic cypresses look like venerable druids, with their long gray beards of Spanish moss; and forests of India rubber, mahogany, rose, tulip and cedar trees are twined with innumerable creepers. Every lichen-covered limb is gay with *flor de oro*—golden blossoms spotted with black, smelling like musk; or with purple passion vines, *flor de chocolate*, "all saints' flowers" and innumerable others whose twisted stems flaunt their blossoms at the top of the tallest trees. Here are miles and miles of fuchsias, geraniums and oleanders, grown into trees with good sized trunks; vegetable patches fenced with gorgeous roses; convulvuli in every imaginable color, mimosa guava trees, the precious *majafa* and *alcatraz*, and the *arra parra*, from whose myriad water cups the traveler may quench his thirst.

CLIPPINGS FOR THE CURIOUS.

Before lying down to eat the ancient Roman took off his shoes.

Evil spirits, it was believed in old times often took the form of a fly, and the term "fly" was once a popular synonym for a familiar spirit.

Curious in the statistics of births is the fact that there is always a larger number of boys born than girls. The proportion varies from 102 to 106 boys to 100 girls.

Of the 23,000 acres in the town of Newtown, L. I., 1848 are occupied by cemeteries. A million bodies are now buried in these places, and the annual interments amount to 28,000.

A Chicago writer speaking of the Chinese in that city, says that while the men appear to have a great deal of hair, examination of the pig-tails reveals that nearly two-thirds of that appendage is plaited silk thread.

To obtain money to carry on a war against the Indians, Gov. West of South Carolina, in 1680, offered a price for every Indian captive, and then sold all who were brought in to West-Indian slave dealers, who again disposed of them profitably to West-Indian planters.

Nothing disgraced the humanity of the past like the neglect and cruelty practiced towards the wounded in war. Under modern law, the ambulances and military hospitals for the wounded are held to be neutral property, and are respected and protected by the belligerents.

It is gravely related in an Illinois newspaper that after a peach tree on the farm of James M. Baker of Palmyra, had blown down, the broken trunk was stuck in the fire under a soap kettle. Not a blossom was on the tree, but when the heat of the fire penetrated the branches the tree burst into full bloom.

The great reforms in modern international law, due especially to the spirit of Christianity, begun in great part with the eminent Dutch publicist, Grotius, early in the seventeenth century. He taught humanity towards women, clerks, farmers, merchants and to all in battle who cried quarter or offered to yield.

Making the Alligator Useful.

Says a Florida letter to the *Chicago Times*: A heathen stranger would certainly say that the alligator was the totum of the tribe and the presiding genius of the place, for it is no exaggeration to say that one may see that reptile here in a thousand appearances—dried or stuffed in the shops, highly ornamented in the stores, alive in tanks, big alligators in pens, imitation wooden alligators on the streets, little alligators in tubs, alligators of assorted sizes in the museums, skeletons of alligators in the drug stores, alligator skins tanned in the leather stores and hundreds of different articles of jewelry of alligator teeth mounted on gold, silver or nickel. You can buy a live alligator from six inches to two feet long or a dead, dried and stuffed one fourteen feet long.

A favorite device is thus manufactured: Take an alligator two feet long, the tail as much longer, split it down the front and take out the entrails; then bend the tail up so the creature can be put in a sitting posture, sew up the front and color it to conceal the opening, and dry the thing to solidity. Then, with open mouth and glistening teeth, the cadaver is set upon a stand at the door and smiles a saurian welcome on the customers. The forelegs are often bent around a card-basket or Japan saucer; and if for sale, a placard held in its mouth announces, "I want to go North," or "I smile to see a customer," or the like. One is surprised to find the ugly reptile the source of so much art and wit. When the basket is made of some sea creature's carapace and is filled with assorted shells, the richness of the design is complete.

Man Eaters.

Conscious cannibalism is by no means confined to the Feejee islands. The Rio Virgin tribes of the Arancanos in Liana, on the northern coast of Chili, do not hesitate, in hard winter, to keep the pot boiling by slicing up a few of their superfluous relatives; and Dr. Nachtigal is positive that the country north and east of the Congo is swarming with two-legged man-eaters. The Dyaks of Borneo, who gather skulls as our red men used to gather scalps, now and then eat a personal enemy as a matter of hygienic precaution, on the theory that the wizard spells of the dead man's relatives can thus be rendered ineffectual. Sporadic cases of cannibalism occur in every East Indian famine. The nations of Europe alone are in that respect total abstainers, at present at least, for Roman traditions date back to a time when the Laestrygonians of southern Italy kept special stock-yards for fattening their prisoners of war.—*Dr. Ornsdell.*

The Rabbit as a Speculator.

A sagacious rabbit once bought a young wolf for a trifling sum, and determined to raise him; but when the wolf became big and strong he waited till Thanksgiving Day and then killed the rabbit and dined on the carcass.

Moral.—This fable teaches the insecurity of foreign investments, and intimates that the hen that hatches out a strange egg is liable to obtain an unnatural child.—*Lily.*

Parted.

The silver brook will miss thee,
The breeze that used to kiss thee,
And ruffle with a soft caress thy curls of sunny hair;
When the early dewdrops glisten
On the roses, they will listen
For thy step upon the garden walk, thy laughter in the air.
The meadows gay with flowers,
The summer's leafy bowers,
Will know thy joyous smile no more; the woodlands stand forlorn;
I hear the soft complaining
Of birds, from mirth refraining,
That greeted with their carols sweet thy waking every morn.
Poor mother! hush thy weeping,
Above thy darling sleeping,
Nor fret with aught of earthly grief the stillness where he lies,
Flowers in his little fingers,
Where the rosy flush still lingers,
For the angels are his playmates on the plains of Paradise.

HUMOROUS.

Upside down—A feather bed.
Always pronounced wrong, even by the best scholars—Wrong.
Glaziers take pleasure in the thought that this is a world of pane.
"What is the latest?" was asked of a wit. "Twelve P. M.," was the curt reply.
The unfortunate head of a family who fell into a vat of hot water is said to have been pa boiled.
People hire lawyers in certain cases for two reasons. One is for the settlement of disputes and the other to dispute settlements.
"Shrouds!" exclaimed an old lady who was listening to an old sea-captain's story, "what do you have them at sea for?" "To bury dead calms in."
An original way of answering two questions at a time: "Here, Bid'y, what's the time o' night, and where's the pertaty pudding?" "It's eight sir."

Smith (nervously)—"Are you sure there are no toadstools among these mushrooms?" Mary (guilelessly)—"They wuz bought for the missus' table, but she told me to try 'em first on the boarders."
"Are you going to make a flower-bed here?" said the Brooklyn girl to her father's gardener. "Yes, miss, them's the orders." "Why, it'll spoil our tennis grounds!" "Can't help it miss. Your pa says he's bound to have this plot laid out for horticulture, not husbandry."

Branding Cattle.

The subject of branding cattle at the West can but interest all readers. It is a matter of importance, for it is the only method of establishing title to four-footed property. Every stock-owner has his brand, which is regularly recorded and is well known. It is an immense affair, as large as a fying-pan, and is burned into the shoulder of the animal. When the latter changes owners the seller's brand is rented, i. e., turned upside down and burned on the hip, and the purchaser puts his own brand on the shoulder. Consequently, if an animal is so unlucky as to pass through many hands he begins to look like a newspaper war map.

Every frontiersman always notes the brands upon all the stock that he meets. If you should ask one of them if he had seen a red steer with a white patch on his right eye, branded with a dot in a circle and two notches in his left ear, he would tell you he saw him yesterday forenoon with three other cattle of so-and-so's herd, near such and such a place, and you would probably find him there.

We discovered, however, that there are ways that are dark on the prairie, as well as in cities. It seems to be generally understood that a promising steer or horse that might find its way into the herd of a ranchman, other than the owner, would be apt to be found to have acquired a new brand in some mysterious manner. It was asserted that a hot frying pan, placed over an old brand, would obliterate it so as to render identification impossible. Croton oil, we were told, was also sometimes used for the same purpose by some cat'emmen who did not shrink from stealing another's property.—*American Agriculturist.*

Jugs.

The origin of jugs dates back to antiquity. Yet we have all discovered that the jug, whose appearance is the most antiquated, does not always belong to that rather enigmistic period. The history of "The Little Brown Jug" is quite as ancient as most people care to go back to investigate. Lately there has been a great breeze raised over a jug called "The Peachblow Vase." In artistic circles, its sale for eighteen thousand dollars will mark an era. Yet to most people in this world there are many things better, "by a jugful." The jug is a most singular utensil. A pail, gobbet, or a jar may be rinsed, and you can satisfy yourself by optical proof that the thing is clean; but a jug has a little hole in the top and the interior is all darkness. No eye penetrates it, no eye can move over its surface. You can clean it only by putting water into it, shaking it up, and pouring it out. If the water comes out clean, you judge you have succeeded in purifying the jug. In this the jug is like the human heart; no mortal eye can look into the recesses, and you can only judge of its purity by what comes out of it.