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AVIS.

I have watched you long, Avis—
Watched you so,
I have found your secret out;
And I know
That the restless ribboned things
Where your slope of shoulder springs,
Are but undeveloped wings
That will grow.
When you enter in a room
It is stirred
With the wayward, flashing light
Of a bird;
And you speak and bring with you
Leaf and sun-ray, bud and blue,
And the wind-breath and the dew,
At a word.
When you left me only now,
In that furred,
Puffed and feathered Polish dress,
I was spured
Just to catch you, oh, my sweet,
By the bodice trim and nest,
Just to feel your heart a-beat,
Like a bird.
Yet, alas, love's light you deluge
But be true
As the dew upon the plumes,
And you care
Not a wit for nest or hush;
But the leaves, the lyric quail,
And the wing-power and the rush
Of the air.
So I dare not woo you, sweet,
For a day,
Lest I love you in a flash,
As I may,
Did I tell you tender things
You would shake your sudden wings—
You would start from him who sings,
And away.

A NEEDED REFORM.

Being Also the Story of a Fire Screen.

"Plague on that screen!"
Standing with Mildred Weyman in the door of her parlor, you would not have thought her language too strong. The room was of fair size, light and lofty; wood-work heavy paneled oak; ceiling white; walls a delicate misty gray, with a green and gilt border; window-shades gray, picked out with gold, overhung with open white drapery; carpet a small pattern in green and oak; table-covers to match, and furniture that harmonized with the prevailing tone. The offending screen showed an impossible dog on a black velvet background, bordered by a more impossible vine of intense green, twining about a crimson column. It had been accounted a masterpiece in its day, twenty years ago, when her eldest sister slowly and painfully wrought it. It had long been an eye-sore to Mildred, but the great, empty fire-place looked even worse, so she was fain to let it stay, in default of anything better. She had thought herself alone when her discontent found vent in the emphatic expression I have recorded, but it reached another ear, for Will Winston put his head inside the hall with—

"What are you swearing about, Milly?"

"I am not swearing, but that horrid old thing is enough to make me do it." Then, her face brightening,

"O! Will! If you will help me, I can get rid of it entirely."

"What is your notion?"

"First you must make me a frame of smooth plank that will just fit inside the mantel. Let it come out over the edges of the fire place and then fit it in a sort of recess about four sizes smaller."

"How much is a size?"

"Something larger than your comprehension. But come out to the work-bench. I'll show you what I want."

They were cousins and great friends, these young folks. Of course the world insisted they were something more, whereat they often laughed heartily. Each liked the other better than any one else; but Will was quite sure that his wife must not flirt an entrance as Milly would do, and Milly thought Will the best fellow in the world, but so dreadfully matter-of-fact. They were quite agreed that they never could be lovers, and I think were sincere, for Milly did not mind his seeing hair in crepe pins, and Will was altogether indifferent to the fact that she knew he waxed his mustache. In all joint enterprises, Milly, in virtue of her quick cleverness, was engineer, and Will, the brawny, muscular machine, was wonderfully obedient to her small hands. She flitted betwixt parlor and workshop with rule and square, measuring, planning, and calculating, and her ideas rapidly grew into tangible shape.

"What is the matter, Will?" she asked, noticing a decidedly serpentine mark that should have been straight.

"I want a chaw of tobacco; and that's what's the matter with me."

"The hateful stuff. It has almost ruined your nerves now. What will you be by the time you are fifty?"

"Don't know. It's awfully comforting now. Couldn't get on without it."

"Awfully discomfoting to the rest of the world. You tobacco-chewers can have no idea how disagreeable it is for the girls to talk to you."

have never seen the least manifestation of such a thing."

"After that modest speech, let's go to work again."

"Well, this affair is ready for the bottom. How must that be?"

"Saw two bits of plank, two by three inches; nail them outside on the lower corners; put a strip three inches wide from one to the other. Put the bottom an inch from the lower edge of this; let it slope to the back to secure drainage."

"Drainage? I don't understand."

"Do as I tell you. You will in time."

"Will you leave this thing its natural color?"

"I'd like to stain it oak. As I can't, I must whitewash it."

"Whitewash rubs off."

"Not my sort," which was this, and I recommend it to all in need of the article, from Credit Mobilierists down, or up: Into one gallon of sweet milk stir powdered lime till a little thicker than cream, add a teaspoonful of turpentine, stir well and apply with a paint brush, almost equal to white lead.

The "thing" was finished, and leaned against the wall, white and staring, in virtue of three coats.

"What will she do with it?" queried Will.

"Wait and see," was the sententious rejoinder.

"Can you get up at day-break tomorrow, and go to the swamp for moss and ferns?"

"I reckon so. If you will go with me. I wouldn't know what you want."

"All sorts—high, long and creeping. Any green thing that lives in shade."

"All right; you shall have them."

And true enough, Milly was wakened before sunrise by the call, "Here is your trash—a whole cart-load," and running down, was soon able to realize her ideal screen. The bed of the frame was filled with earth and small stones. In it were planted all sorts of fern, the tall ones at the back, the low-growing next, and the delicate viny creepers trailing over the edge, then the surface

was covered with ferns, and a couple of luxuriant basket-ivies put, one at each end, and trained to small nails in the outer board, so as to make a lovely living frame for the lovely living picture. Even prosaic Will was delighted with the result, while Milly could have danced with joy. This room was her especial pride. The pictures, brackets etc., were all of her choosing. She had an idea of rooms expressing character, and this day, of all days, wanted hers to show a faultless taste. She was a sensible girl, though I cannot affirm that she "had no nonsense about her." Her weakness for poetry, which she wrote of the desperately sentimental kind, common with people of healthy, highly-nervous organization. Consequently she was shy of having it seen, and few of her nearest friends ever saw it. Will was profoundly ignorant upon the subject. He could not understand, you know. Rural Quill, Esq., was somewhat a celebrity, wrote humorous articles that went the rounds of the state press, and was hailed wherever he went by the same unquestioned authority. "Wit, Scholar, Patriot, Poet," and, indeed, only missed being a great man by so many others having been greater in his peculiar line. He was editor of "The Clarion," published in Lynesville, a live town, some thirty miles away. Some months ago Milly had sent him, with a letter, quaintly apologetic for the "sin of rhyme," a poem, beginning—

"Above the fiftal, moaning sea
The wild winds sigh and shiver,
O! Winds! Blow home my love to me;
I love my love forever,"

and so on, through a dozen stanzas, wherein several most heart-breaking images, and all available rhymes for Ever, Never, Quiver, and Shiver, were completely used up. He had replied assuring her that "The sin of rhyme is one not to be paliated here, nor pardoned in the world to come, but when one can write as you do (and that one a woman) then 'tis sinful to be silent," and published her poem as one "that would do credit to the pages of our best magazines," and the correspondence and contributions had gone on, increasing in vigor and intensity until now. His last letter had said, "In such a case I too 'know no impossible,' so five o'clock Thursday afternoon will find me in presence of the Rose of Brier Wood," and this was the fatal Thursday. It was not without trepidation that she confided all the momentous affair to Will and she was relieved that his only comment was, "Take care that he don't get scratched. No rose without a thorn, you know."

That was a busy day for Milly. She filled the house with flowers till Will

declared "the garden had moved indoors," ransacked the orchard for choicest fruits and helped the cook get up many and various dainty suppers.

At 4 o'clock she went to array herself in the freshest of muslins, and came down a perfect picture, with her white draperies and tea roses and heliotrope crowning her brown braids. She was pardonably proud of her appearance. Even Will thought "there wasn't a girl in the whole country who could hold a candle to Milly in that rig." How he liked to tease her, so now he said: "I know you don't allow spittions in the parlor, Milly, but you'd better have one hunted up. I'll bet my head your editorial friend chews, and, with the eccentricity of genius, he may take your new screen for a substitute."

"Horror! What profanation! It would be unworthy a Feejee Islander. No, sir; whoever else allows it, my face is set against it for all time. But hush; there he comes." And sure enough, punctual to a minute, across the lawn rolled a shining buggy, and from it alighted the dapper and *distingue* Rural Quill.

When Milly recovered from the embarrassed first greeting, she found herself *te-te-tete* with an undersized, middle-aged person, whose noticeable points were a general wrinkled yellowness of complexion and a pair of dark, kindly eyes. He was fluent, courtly, polished, none of your self-made men, but the carefully manufactured article.

Like his letters, he was extremely complimentary. Had he not been a little less than "all her fancy painted him," Milly would have declared him "splendid;" but nothing so disposes to captious criticism as unfulfilled expectations.

Milly breathed more freely. Supper was over, and with it all danger of interruption. Papa Weyman slept the sleep of the tired. Will sat on the porch, whence he could see and hear "The Mutual Admiration Society." I don't know what was in his heart. His month was full of tobacco.

per had been over an hour, and Rural Quill, Esq., was hard beset with the peculiar craving tooth-on-edge sensation born of abstinence and eating, known to all tobacco-chewers. He strove against it valiantly, but who can master the giant, Habit? Milly went for the writing-desk to show him her last poem. She might be away ten minutes. He would quiet his nerves with a chew. But she was not. She recrossed the threshold almost before the precious morrel was settled in place. There was a very becoming tremor in the white hand that held toward him the fairly written sheet. He gave it back with a most superlative bow. She must read it to him. Even its music would be enhanced by her lips. Milly did read it, then wandered on into a discursive review of her favorite poets, which, I am bound to say, abounded more in quotations than common sense—for woman's memory is always ahead of her judgment—but was not wholly destitute of that invaluable article. It was almost a monologue, and her wonder grew and increased over the sudden quenching of editorial brilliance. Perhaps he was bored, but too civil to interrupt her. She would change the subject by a question to which he must make a direct and lengthy reply. She began:

"By the way, Mr. Quill, are you ready to give me that 'critical and exhaustive analysis' of my poetic powers which your letter promised me 'when we met.'"

"Poor Mr. Quill. Just then he was neither critical nor analytical. His chair was on the hearth-rug; between him and the white draped window sat Milly, a seeming embodiment of the pure, cool room, intently regarding him. His mouth was full, yet speak he must. The screen caught his eye. Here was a way out of his dilemma. The next moment tobacco juice went splashing over moss and fern, and Rural Quill was himself again, brimming over with facts, fancies, and compliments. With them we have naught to do. Milly listened with a decent grace, but "the gloss had departed, the magic had flown." Indeed, it were not too much to say that "the trail of the serpent was over them all."

Rural Quill, Esq., never came back to Brier Wood. Milly did ask him to "call again," but so indifferently that he wisely concluded to make himself henceforth "conspicuous by his absence in that region. As they watched him on his winding, moon-lit way, Will said:

"His coming and going have convinced me of two things."

"What are they?"

"First, I must stop chewing tobacco."

"Good! A needed reform. And the other?"

"That I must marry you."

"Milly's answer to this, with the moral of my story, I shall leave to the individual discernment of each reader. —*Louisville Courier Journal.*"

Elaborate Entertainment.

Few things not absolutely essential to happiness add more to the enjoyment of life than social interchange of evening visits among friends and neighbors.

Indeed, we are not quite sure that it is not essential to happiness as it is, for we can live to good purpose and pleasure without many of our luxuries, without fine clothes, costly pictures, splendid jewels, but we cannot live to any use at all without friends and the upbubbling of friendly emotions and the fruition of ideas that they arouse. Our natures would grow dry as husks if our feelings were kindled only for our own immediate home circle, and the very apothecis of selfishness would take place with us isolated from outside interests and love of our kind. Nor would our intellects fare much better than our emotional natures; for if genius itself is an intermittent fountain, as Goethe said, the source of ordinary thought and fancy must be quite as capricious, and our buckets must need all the replenishing from the wells of our neighbors that can be had. If it were not for the perpetual weaving among us of the warp and woof of each other's ideas, the varying views of things when seen from each other's stand-point, we might as well be living solitary in the caves of the desert or on the tops of pillars in the town for all the good we should do to ourselves or the world either. For really no one helps himself without helping the world, too, in its great, onward march toward a civilization that, we may hope, shall be as much higher than this as this is higher than the barbarous old days, before those giant monsters, steam and electricity, were, in the language of the orators, harnessed to the wheels of progress.

Still we do not mean to be understood as advising or encouraging frivolous gadding to the neglect of some duties, but, first assuming that home duties are already discharged, as the greater part of them may well be, leaving the hours of eye-trying lamplight for lesser matters, we urge the cultivation of a social spirit to enliven the evenings and to afford nucleus of harmless enjoyment. We all know how keen that enjoyment can be—the bright discussion that enlightens even the listener who will not take the trouble to think; the latest news, with its gay gossiping; the eager game, the song, the reading, pretty toilets, pleasant manners, cordial words of hosts and friends; the cheery separation; the lying down to sleep at the end of it all, well pleased with the well-rounded day; the sense that such evenings ought to come twice as often as they do and that we mean to have them.

The Cruelty of Monkeys.

An amateur naturalist, writing of the fondness of cruelty for its own sake observable in the human species, says:

"To refer to the striking similarity of this passion in man to that which is manifested by monkeys, is not, of course, to explain its origin; but I am quite sure that it is in the monkey; that this explanation is to be sought. Every one knows that these animals show the keenest delight in wantonly torturing others, but every one does not know how much trouble an average monkey will put himself in order that he may gratify this taste. One example will suffice. A friend who has lived a long time in India tells me that he has not infrequently seen monkeys feigning death, for an hour or two at a time, for the express purpose of inducing crows and other carnivorous birds to approach within grasping distance; and when one of the latter was caught, the delighted monkey would put it to all kinds of agonies, of which plucking alive seemed to be the favorite. As I am not aware that any other animal exhibits this instinct of inflicting pain for its own sake (the case of a cat with a mouse, belonging, I think, to another category), I believe, if its origin is ever to receive a scientific explanation, it will be found in some way connected with monkey life."

ANNA DICKINSON is soon to make her debut as Joan of Arc. She will appear, mounted on a snow-white palfrey, but is much embarrassed by the conflict of historical authorities as to whether Joan used a side-saddle or followed the rule laid down in United States cavalry tactics.

Alfonso in His Palace.

Describing the entry of King Alfonso into the capital a correspondent says:

"All the traveled world knows the saloon of the ambassadors, the gorgeous throne-room of the royal palace at Madrid. Into this noble apartment the procession now swept. The saloon glittered with colossal mirrors, crystal chandeliers, marble statues, and fine pictures. The gorgeous dais of the throne rose from the floor by three broad steps, with golden lions at the corners, the four paws resting proudly on marble globes. The throne was a beautiful structure of crimson velvet, enamel and gold. A brilliant throng gathered round the throne as the king sat on it a few moments, and the scene was very striking. Through the great windows opposite a wide view stretched across the valley to orchards and villas and wooded slopes, and the bare rugged mountains beyond. The reception began by the Marquis de Molines, Senor Canovas del Castillo and General Primo de Rivera standing on the steps of the throne with four of the leading Grandees. The king stood on the edge of the dais, with his hand on the hilt of his sword. He was dressed, as he had been throughout his progress, in an undress general's uniform, with a sash and a few orders. Presentations were made by the grand hereditary chamberlain, attired in a gorgeous court dress. The depositions and persons presented deified past the throne and bowed to the king, receiving his bow in return. Meanwhile the gorgeous suite of state apartments was thrown open to promenaders, and ladies and gentlemen circulated through the rooms, decorated in different styles. This one was hung with cloth of gold, with silver woven into it. Another one was inlaid from ceiling to floor in porcelain with raised figures. A third was lined with great China vases. A fourth was simply furnished as an ordinary room. A fifth was hung with Bourbon portraits. A sixth was devoted to mythological pictures, and so on. The king's state bedroom was also

The Senators.

The "points" of some of the United States senators are pithily summarized by a Washington correspondent. Conkling is the senatorial Adonis. When he was in the house the young ladies used to sit in the galleries and wish they had a lock of the dear little curl that adorns his brow, and, as it is thinner now than it used to be, it is probably even dearer. It is rather singular that the three bachelors of the senate should be the favorite presiding officers—Wilson, *ex officio*; Anthony, *pro tem.*, and Ferry, of Michigan, in default of either. Anthony is the handsomest; still, it is not always beauty that wins. Gordon, the confederate general, is a fine-looking, soldierly fellow. Bayard, of Delaware, is the third generation of senators in his family. Frelinghuysen is something of a swell. Edmunds, his neighbor, is the most quarrelsome of senators. Thurman looks and moves like Beecher. Dorsey is only thirty-three years old, the "baby" of the senate. Cameron is the oldest senator. Dorsey, Allison and Oglesby have young and pretty wives. Stewart and Jones are two poor, impecunious miners, with only a few millions apiece—Jones especially, whose income per month is \$250,000. Tipton is a funny little fellow, Schurz an admirable speaker, but Fenton has the most courtly manners in the senate. Hamlin, of Maine, always wears a dress coat, never an overcoat. Flanagan, of Flanagan's Mills, Texas, is a jolly old fellow, who says "whar" and "thar," and rouses the echoes generally when he speaks. Robertson wears jewelry of fabulous value—emerald sleeve-buttons worth a fortune, and diamond studs that would make the idols of India jealous.

Duke of Wellington and His Majesty.

Greville says in his Memoirs: "When the duke of Wellington was at Brighton, in the winter, he and the king had a dispute about the army (it was at dinner) by the king saying that the Russians or the Prussians (I forgot which) were the best infantry in the world. The duke said, 'Except your majesty's.' The king then said the English cavalry were the best, which the duke denied; then that an inferior number of French regiments would always beat a superior number of English, and in short that they were not half so effective. The king was very angry; the dispute waxed warm, and ended by his majesty rising from the table and saying, 'Well, it is not for me to dispute on such a subject with your grace.' The king does not like the duke, nor does the duke of York. This I know from his self."

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

"MARRY a widower! Not I!" said Matilda. "Babies are like tooth-brushes. Every body wants their own."

SELF GRATIFICATION is the high-pressure power that keeps a man going, and duty is only the donkey-engine that he works at intervals.

DOUGLAS JERROLD used to say of feminine writers, "If you once dip a woman's finger in the ink-pot she will go on writing forever."

SIXTY thousand Japanese in Yedo are studying the English language and tearing their hair over its torturing idioms.

NEVER trust with a secret a married man who loves his wife, for he will tell her, and she will tell her sister, and her sister will tell every body.

ANOTHER London idea has crept into New York—that of having one's door-bell answered by a spruce little boy in uniform and gilt, known as "buttons."

THERE are 24,000 idiots in this country, who are acknowledged as such. The majority of people will regard these figures as being a low estimate.

In three years two rats became 646, 809, and yet the druggists look with suspicion on a man who asks for a dime's worth of strychnine.

WHEN a young man in Patagonia falls in love with a girl he lassoes her, drags her home behind his horse, and that's all the marriage ceremony necessary.

It is time to stop talking about the softening influence of woman. A Massachusetts man who has four wives has just been sent to the penitentiary for stealing horses.

The deputy constable, appointed to look after the children employed in the factories of Massachusetts, reports that fully 60,000 children are growing up in ignorance on account of their being set to work at too early an age.

GLADSTONE'S retirement from public life will be sweetened, it is said, by the admiration of Queen Victoria, who has offered a peerage in her own right to his wife, and will confer a baronetcy upon the young Gladstone. This is London gossip.

A TOTAL eclipse of the sun will occur on April 5. As the king of Siam is the only potentate advantageously situated to see the spectacle, he has kindly invited British, American, and other astronomers to dine with him on that day and bring along their instruments.

ONE of the reasons why a fight frequently occurs in Montana churches is, while the preacher is praying, the congregation sit on the backs of the chairs and frequently ejaculate—"That's right, old hoss!" "Bully for you!" "He's a book sharp!" etc. Sometimes the ministers get riled, and there's where the disturbance comes in.

GAMBLING has reached such a pitch in Nevada that the legislature has at last concluded to legislate on the subject, which is all that ever will be done, probably. The proposed law is particularly severe on faro, monte, roulette, lansquenette, rouge et noire, kenô, rondo, ton fan, red, white and blue, strap game, California dice game, all of which are in full blast in silver barreled Nevada.

ASTRONOMER BARTLETT, of Battle creek, is circulating this bit of gossip about the big dipper: "One hundred thousand years ago the bright stars which at present form this familiar constellation were arranged in the form of a large cross; and one hundred thousand years hence they will assume the appearance of an elongated 'dipper'—different in shape from the one now seen—and stretching over a wide extent of the celestial vault."

The royal baby begins to notice things, and to handle 'em, too! The other day he reached for the paregoric bottle and smashed it on his pa's nice center-table, and then tried to make a canal by running his finger in a circle "all round about." Then Edinburgh went in and borrowed his wife's old kid slipper, and when he came back there was considerable excitement for a few moments. Men do that sort of thing so awkwardly.—*N. Y. Mail.*

SOME curious customs are still extant in the Spreewald villages in Wendish Prussia when the head of the family dies. For instance, if the deceased should have chanced to be a bee-keeper, one of the family will go to the hive, and, striking the comb, will exclaim, "Bee, arise, your master is dead!" On the morning of the funeral, too, the men proceed to the cattle-sheds, and after causing the animals to get upon their legs, and placing cheese before them, will solemnly announce to them that the body is about to be taken away.