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SHADOWS.

Abrly swing the willows over.
Ailry to and fro;
Dreamily down the quiet water
Over the rocks below.
Flows in many a stumple,
In and out in curve and dim-
Round about the rocks below.
Where the willows bend and quiver,
Long dark shadows shift and shiver,
Shiver to and fro.
Gray-beard Time, his scythe forgoet'ng,
Toys with rosy June,
Loath to part, with step unwilling,
Slowly creeps toward noon;
Humming-bird from blossoms sipping,
Brown bees into clover alighting,
Fill the air with drowsy crou;
But the will we tossing, blowing,
O'er the waters smoothly flowing,
Evermore their shadows throwing,
Break the hush of noon.
Twilight gathering in the valley,
Sunset on the height;
Clouds above the mountain breaking
Into rifts of light.
Darkness now upon the meadows,
Higher, higher climb the shadows,
Nearer comes the night-blossom sipping,
Carrying drowsy flows the river,
With the willows drooping over,
But no shadow's fatal quiver
Sits the hush of night.

Patience and Pride.

It does look strange I'll admit. But, at the same time, I insist that nothing is wrong. Nothing can be wrong where Louis Merivale is concerned.

The gentle, womanly tones were earnest and enthusiastic, and the round smooth cheeks grew flushed while she spoke.

"Please, Millie; you are too innocent yourself to believe that guilt can exist in another. And then your partiality for Mr. Merivale prevents an unprejudiced opinion."

"No; I am not interested in him to a sufficient extent to permit me to regard him as a master piece of perfection; but I do admit that Mr. Merivale is too thoroughly a gentleman and a Christian to do anything absolutely wrong. I, for one, utterly refuse to believe a word of this scandal."

Millie Thorne had dropped the fine work in her lap, but now took it up again, as if to end the subject under discussion. But the tall, handsome woman at the other window was not thus easily silenced.

"But, Millie, admitting that since you ceased to be engaged to Lu Merivale you care nothing for him—and here Isabel Wild's keen black eyes sparkled and flashed as she noted a little spasm of agony flit across the sweet face bent over the work—'and according to you due credit for your feelings, why, in the face of such positive evidence, do you refuse to regard him as others do?'"

"Isabel, you are cruel, you are harsh to me. Still, I will speak on this subject further, as to regard him as others do, others do. Who do you mean by others?"

"Why, everybody, of course. You know as well as I, Millie Thorne, that Lu Merivale's crime is on every person's lips in the town. Go ask that six year old boy out yonder—and she pointed to a little fellow dragging his toy cart after him—and he will tell you that Mr. Merivale stole five hundred dollars in the city, and ran off with it."

A faint rosy tinge suffused Millie's cheeks while Isabel was talking.

"I am aware of that," she returned. "But his friends firmly deny the statement. I am one of them. You ought to be."

"Why, let me ask, should I be?"

"You took him away from me, Isabel; you wear his ring; you have promised to marry him."

"I took his ring off when I heard the news of his heartless response; 'he is nothing to me now, more than to you.'"

"Her cold, bitter words seemed to stab Millie, and she tossed her work on a hassock beside her, as she sprang to her feet, and walked over to Isabel.

"What have you done, then? You came between us, and I made no complaint, because, if Lu Merivale loved you, I never was the woman to desire to be called his wife. Then, Isabel Wild, after you had taken my all from me, you would me afresh by cruelly deserting him in the hour of need—the time when you, of all women, should stand ready to clear his name, and vindicate his honor!"

Pale and tearless she stood before Isabel Wild, in all the commanding glory of her noble womanhood.

Miss Wild's low, metallic laugh came ringing in her ears.

"I am glad to see you do it yourself, Millie. Besides, I accepted George Halliday this morning!"

A cry burst from Millie Thorne's lips.

"Heartless—cruel! Poor Lu!"

Isabel Wild arose, with freezing courtesy.

"After such unparalleled politeness, I could not presume to annoy you longer with my unwelcome presence. Good morning, Miss Thorne."

Millie bowed, as in a waking dream, and Miss Wild departed.

A fortnight before, the inhabitants of the quiet town of Croydon, wherein dwelt the characters mentioned, had been puffed by the news of Louis Merivale's sudden disappearance from the city; horrified and grief-stricken to learn that the sum of five hundred dollars had been simultaneously missed from the safe of Merand & Merand, the great mercantile firm in the city, for whom Louis Merivale was confidential clerk and head bookkeeper. He alone, besides the proprietors, possessed a key to the safe; consequently, he alone could have opened it.

Circumstances thickly combined, went far to prove his guilt, among which the two most telling were, that, first, he had been alone in the counting-house from nine, the evening previous to his departure, until after midnight, which had often been the case before, and had never excited the least suspicion until it was proven as such. Further, a note had been found in his city lodgings that read as follows:

"Tell Messrs. Merand for me that pursuit is useless. Tell them I have served them well for seven years, and they can afford to lose the paltry sum I have taken. Tell I. W. that when it blows over, she may expect to hear from me."

"I. M."

Everybody in Croydon had learned the contents of that note, for it had been published in the papers; everybody, save a few firm friends, had made up their minds that Mr. Merivale was a rogue. One of

the former class was Isabel Wild, who, her pride quickly up in arms, loudly declared she would never marry a man upon whose name even a shadow of a doubt had ever rested.

Two hours later a gentleman called to see her.

He was a fine looking man, this George Halliday, with black eyes, beard, and hair, with a complexion as fair as Isabel's own. And yet, after one had pronounced him handsome, they would steal a second look, and decide that there was something hidden under this mainly exterior that was evil, unprincipled.

He seemed to be well off; and although comparatively a stranger, was known to, and acquainted with, every family of importance in the town.

Isabel Wild had attracted his attentions months before, and when she had noticed his admiration had succored.

"I marry George Halliday! Never, while such a man as Louis Merivale lives!"

But now, after Mr. Halliday had come into the fortune teller's, and the decorations of his new mansion were being completed; now, when her lover had clouded his reputation for ever, Isabel listened to Halliday's overtures; and when he went from her house that morning, and she hastened to Millie Thorne's, she wore a glittering diamond ring that had been placed there as a seal of their betrothal.

Incensed and inflamed by Millie's enthusiasm, Isabel returned to her own home thoroughly satisfied that Millie Thorne still loved Louis Merivale, despite her faithlessness, despite his mysterious conduct.

"And I? Millie spoke truly when she said she needed a friend in this dark hour."

A pale, haggard tinge was on her face as she ascended the steps of her residence, telling of the struggle within.

"But the bridegroom! Can I ever bear a name that has been sung through the country, and published in no honorable way in the papers? Can I bear it, and the cold taunts it will bring me, for love's sake? Can I endure it for his sake?"

She paced the floor in her restless indecision.

"George Halliday is rich; I shall be mistress of his splendid house, envied by half the women in town, and above all, I shall bear a name pure and unsullied."

The gleaming of the diamonds in their shining splendor caught her eye, and on the trifling delight they occasioned she based her decision—a choice she learned to bitterly regret.

"From henceforth I shall give to Louis Merivale no thought, if I can help it. I shall regard myself as belonging to my affianced husband, and let Mildred Thorne scorn or reprove as she will. Perhaps she will turn comforter in chief to her faithless lover."

A bitter, bitter heart pang—one yearning longing for her loved one, then it died; or rather, in a moment, Isabel Wild burned alive the love of her life.

Day after day passed by, bringing their share of joys and heart-achings, and still Louis Merivale never came; the affair had ceased to be a seven days' wonder, and people had forgotten about it, save when they saw his aged mother, bowed and infirm, leaning on Millie Thorne's strong young arm, as they walked through the streets of Croydon.

Millie had grown more beautiful during these weeks of trial; and the aged mother of the missing young man had many an occasion to bless the loving, trusting girl.

The days wore on, bringing to Millie, in her patient waiting and hoping against hope, to Isabel, in her overwhelming pride, the glad autumn days. To one it brought a bridal, and George Halliday took his wife to their handsome home.

The setting October sun was flinging its rosy banner over the brown woodland, when Millie Thorne entered the house where her tender ministrations had made her an angel of sympathy.

Mrs. Merivale met her half-way to the door, her eyes streaming with tears, her face all aghast with an overpowering joy.

"Millie—oh, Millie, my prayers are answered! God has been so merciful to me, and to you, my Millie. See, it's from him!"

She handed a letter from her bosom to Millie, who, in a tremor of agitation, had gained the door, and was leaning against the wall, unable for a moment to speak.

"Come in, child, and let us thank God together! Come, Millie, will I tell you my boy is alive, is well, and—oh, Millie, didn't we say it?—is innocent!"

Millie neither spoke nor moved; she neither laughed nor cried. She only murmured a wordless prayer in her heart.

"Let me tell you, my dear child, all about it, and then let me tell you the message he sent to you."

"A message to me? Tell me, what is it?" said Millie, eagerly.

"He has written it to you on a slip of paper, and in his letter tells me to read it, and then give it to you. Isn't that just my Louis over again?"

She handed Millie the precious treasure, who read, with greedy eyes:

"To-day, for the first time since my recovery—I've been near unto the stream of death, Millie, and I am able to write; first to my mother, then to the only woman in the world besides that I care for—to you, Millie Thorne. To-day I have given up Isabel Wild, because I love you, because I have always loved you; because I care nothing for her, or she for me. I know all, Millie, my precious, patient darling! I have started news when I come back; and then, when I am reinstated in the public confidence, even though I break a proud heart, and uncover a foul one in the act, you will be mine, my own Millie!"

"At last—oh, mother, at last!" exclaimed the overjoyed Millie.

"Shall I read you his letter, or shall I tell you? Or will you read it, Millie?"

"Let me read it. His dear handwriting alone will be a feast."

A week after, Louis Merivale came home, pale, haggard, but handsome as ever.

Then the news came out; then the innocent was righted, the guilty rewarded.

It was a thrilling story. How George Halliday had waylaid Louis Merivale while returning from the counting-house to his city lodgings; how he had stolen the money from his person—money that Merivale had taken, perhaps imprudently, for the purpose of paying a number of bills before he went to the office the following day; how he had previously prepared the forged note; and how, after drugging his victim, he had him conveyed to a sailing vessel, and registered him as a sick friend, who desired to return to his home in the West Indies. Sickness had followed the

drugging; and, in a strange place, among strangers, Louis Merivale had waited till retaining strength brought back memory and the ability to act.

Steps were taken to prove Mr. Merivale's accusation. The bank-notes were finally traced to Halliday. Thus disgraced and dishonored, he left his proud, heart-broken wife to the mercy of an indignant circle of relatives.

The elegant mansion was deserted, and was purchased by Merand & Merand, who insisted on Merivale's acceptance of it as his wedding present; and in that mansion Louis and Millie now reside, as happy as mortals ever can be, while both daily bless the trusting patience that wrought their happiness.

A Princely Boy.

In the palace of a small German capital a German duchess, distinguished for her good sense and kindness of heart, was celebrating her birthday.

The court congratulations were over, and the lady had retired from the scene of festivity to the seclusion of her private room. Presently she heard light foot-steps coming up the stairs.

"Ah," she said, "there are my two little grandsons coming to congratulate me."

The rosy lids of ten or eleven years of age came in, one named Albert and the other Ernest. They affectionately greeted the duchess, who gave them the customary present of ten louis d'or (about forty-eight dollars) and related to them the following suggestive anecdote:

"There once lived an emperor in Rome who used to say that no one should go away sorrowful from an interview with a Prince. He was always doing good and caring for his subjects, and when one came in to support, he remembered that he had not done an act of kindness to any one during the day, he exclaimed, with regret and sorrow, 'My friends, I have lost a day.' My children, take this emperor for your model, and live in a princely way, like him."

The boys went down the stairs delighted. At the palace gate they met a poor woman, wrinkled and old, and bowed down with trouble.

"Ah, my good young gentlemen," said she, "bestow a trifle on an aged creature. My cottage is going to be sold for debt, and I shall not have anywhere to lay my head. My goat, the only means of support I had, has been seized, pity an old woman, and be charitable."

Ernest assured her that he had no changes, and so passed on. But Albert hesitated for a moment, of her pleading situation, was touched by her pleading looks, and tears came to his eyes. The story of the Roman emperor came into his mind. He took from his purse the whole of the ten louis d'or and gave them to the woman. Turning away with a heart light and satisfied, he left the old woman weeping for joy.

The boy was Prince Albert of England, justly called "Albert the Good," and afterwards the husband of the Queen Victoria.

I Was the Man.

"Yes," said the Custom House man reflectively, "we have to exercise a good deal of judgment in these things and soon get to know prices as well as men in the selling business. Invoice the goods too low? Well, mostly everybody invoices the goods low, but they run a risk, of course. We may add ten per cent. to the invoice value and take the goods. So if a person tries to bring in \$2 worth of stuff at \$1 valuation, we can give him \$1.10 and take the article. Chance for speculation! Well, not as much as you would think. One of the younger members of the force some time ago was alone in the office, when a man came in and asked for a word in private. Let's look at that word, said my friend as he looked at a board from the stranger's case and peered inside, "seventeen stops, eh? Rather a cheap organ at \$125."

"Oh, it's all right," said the impatient Ryders. "Here's the invoice you see."

"Well, I'll give you \$137.50 and take the instrument."

"But I won't sell it for that," cried the excited Ryders.

"My friend allowed him the ten per cent. and converted the value of Jacob's prayers. Good bargain! Oh, I don't know. He found afterwards that few of the stops had any effect on the inside of the instrument and that the organ was one of the \$95.73 ones made by Blower & Co. Yes, I must admit he was sold rather. I never found Ryders and have made a respectable wash-out out of that organ. Oh, yes, I was the man."

Old Timer.

Probably the oldest timber in the world which has been subjected to the use of man is that found in the ancient temples of Egypt in connection with the stonework which is known to be at least four thousand years old. This, the only wood used in the construction of the temple, is in the form of ties, holding the end of one stone to another at its upper surface. When two blocks were laid in place, an excavation about an inch deep was made in each block, into which a tie shaped like an hour-glass was driven. It is therefore very difficult to force any stone from its position. The ties appear to have been of the tamarisk or shittim wood, of which the ark was constructed, a sacred tree in ancient Egypt and now very rarely found in the valley of the Nile. The dovetailed ties were just as sound now as on the day of their insertion. Although fuel is extremely scarce in the country, these bits of wood are not large enough to make it an object with the Arabs to leave off layer after layer to obtain them. Had they been of bronze had the old temples would have been destroyed years ago, so precious would they have been for various purposes.

Nicodemus Dodge.

When I was a boy in a printing office in Missouri, a loose-jointed, long-legged tow-headed, jeans-clad, contrived cut of about sixteen lounched in one day, and without removing his hand from the depths of his trousers pockets, or taking off his faded ruin of a slouch hat, whose broken brim hung limp and ragged about his ears like a bug-eaten cabbage leaf, stared indifferently around then leaning his hip against the editor's table, crossed his mighty brows, aimed at a distant fly from a crevice in his upper tooth, laid him low, and said with composure:

"What's the boss?"

"I am the boss," said the editor, following this curious bit of architecture wonderingly along up to its clock face with his eye.

"Don't want anybody fur to learn the business, 'tain't likely?"

"Well, I don't know. Would you like to learn it?"

"Pap's so po' he can't run me no', so I want to git a show some'ers if I can: 'tain't no difference what—I'm strong and hearty, and I don't turn my back on no kind of work, hard nor soft."

"Do you want you would like to learn the printing business?"

"Well, I don't rely k'yer a darn what I do learn, so's I git a chance to make my money, I'd just as soon learn print's anything."

"Can you read?"

"Yes—middlin'."

"Write?"

"Well, I've seed people who could lay over me that."

"Not good enough to keep store, I don't reckon, but as fur as twelve times twelve I ain't no slouch. 'Tother side of that is what gits me."

"Where is your home?"

"I'm from old Shelby."

"What's your father's religious denomination?"

"Um! Oh, he's a blacksmith."

"No, no—I don't mean his trade. What's his religious denomination?"

"Oh—I didn't understand you befo'."

"No, no—you don't get my meaning yet. What I mean is, does he belong to any church?"

"Now you're talkin'. Couldn't make out what you was tryin' to git through 'y head no way. B'long to a church? Why, boss, he's been the pizenest kind of a Free-will Baptist for forty years. They ain't no pizen ones'n he is. Mighty good man pap is. Everybody says that. If they say any different they wouldn't do it where I wuz—not much they wouldn't."

"What is your own religion?"

"Well, boss, you're kind of got me thar—and yet you hain't got me so mighty much nuther. I think 't if a feller be's another when he's in trouble, and don't cuss, and don't do any mean things, nor nubb'n heain't no business to do, and don't sell the Saviour's name with a little g, he ain't runnin' no res'—he's about as saift as if he belonged to church."

"But suppose he did sell it with a little g—what then?"

"Well, if he done it a purpose I reckon he wouldn't stand no chance; he oughtn't have no chance, any way, I'm most rotten certain about that."

"What is your name?"

"Nicodemus Dodge."

"I think maybe you'll do, Nicodemus. We'll give you a trial, anyway."

"All right."

"When would you like to begin?"

"Now."

So, within ten minutes after he had first glimpsed this nondescript, he was one of us, and with his coat off and hard at it.

Beyond that end of our establishment which was furthest from the street, was a deserted garden, pathless, and thickly grown with the gloomy and villainous "jimpson" weed and its common friend the stately sunflower. In the midst of this mournful spot was a decayed and little frame house, with but one room, one window and no ceiling. It had been a smoke-house a generation before. Nicodemus was given this lonely and ghostly den as a bedroom.

The village smarties recognized a treasure in Nicodemus right away—a butt to play jokes on. It was easy to see that he was inconceivably green and confiding.

George Jones had the glory of perpetrating the first joke on him. He gave him a cigar with a fire-cracker in it, and then winked to the crowd to come; the thing exploded presently and swept away the bulk of Nicodemus' eyebrow and eyelashes. He simply said:

"I consider them kind of see'yers dangerous," and he moved to suspect nothing.

The next evening Nicodemus waylaid George and poured a bucket of ice-water over him.

One day, while Nicodemus was in swimming, Tom McElroy "tied" his clothes. Nicodemus made a bonfire of Tom's by way of retaliation.

A third joke was played upon Nicodemus a day or two later—he walked up the middle aisle of the village church Sunday night, with a startling hand bill pinned upon his shoulders. The joker spent the rest of the night, after church, in the cellar of a deserted house, and Nicodemus sat on the cellar-door till toward breakfast time, to make sure that the prisoner remembered that if any noise was made some rough treatment would be the consequence. The cellar had two feet of stagnant water in it, and was bottomed with six inches of soft mud.

But I wander from the point. It was the subject of skeletons that brought this boy back to my recollection. Before a long time had elapsed the village smarties began to feel an uncomfortable consciousness of not having made a very shining success of their attempts on the simperton of "Old Shelby." Experiments grew scarce and chary. The village doctor came to the rescue. There was delight and applause when he proposed to them the plan of frightening Nicodemus to death, and explained how he was going to do it. He had a noble new skeleton—the skeleton of the late and only local celebrity, Jimmy Finn, the village drunkard—a grisly piece of property he had bought of Jimmy Finn himself, at auction, for fifty dollars, under great competition, when Jimmy lay very sick in the tavern a fortnight before his death. The fifty dollars had gone promptly for whiskey, and had considerably hurried up the change of ownership in the skeleton. The doctor would put Jimmy Finn's skeleton in Nicodemus' bed.

This was done—about half-past ten in the evening. About Nicodemus' usual bed-

time—midnight—the village jokers came creeping stealthily through the jimpson woods and sundrows toward the lonely frame den. They reached the window and peeped in. There sat the long-legged pauper on his bed, in a very short shirt and no more. He was dangling his legs contentedly back and forth, and wheezing the music of "Camptown Races" out of a paper-overlaid comb which he was pressing against his mouth; by him lay a new jews-harp, a new top, a solid india-rubber ball, a handful of painted marbles, five pounds of store candy and a well-gnawed slab of gingerbread as big and thick as a volume of sheet music. He had sold the skeleton to a traveling quack for three dollars, and was enjoying the result.

The Sound of Thunder.

A remarkable feature of the storm is the thunder, corresponding, of course, on the large scale, to the snap of an electric spark. Here we are on comparatively sure ground, for sound is very much more thoroughly understood than is electricity. We speak habitually and without exaggeration of the crash of thunder, the rolling of thunder, and of a peal of thunder, and various other terms will suggest themselves to you as being aptly employed in different cases. All of these are easily explained by known properties of sound. The origin of the sound is, in all cases to be looked for in the instantaneous and violent dilatation of the air along the track of the lightning flash, partly, no doubt, due to the disruptive effects of electricity, but mainly due to the excessive rise of temperature which renders the air for a moment so brilliantly incandescent. There is thus an extremely sudden compression of the air all round the track of the spark, and a less sudden, but still rapid, rush of the air into the partial vacuum which it produces. Thus the sound wave produced must at first be of the nature of a bore or a breaker. But as such a state of motion is unstable, and proceeding a moderate distance the sound becomes analogous to other loud but less violent sounds, such as those of the discharge of guns. Were there few clouds, were the air of nearly uniform density, and the flash a short one, this would completely describe the phenomenon, and we should have a thunder crash or thunder clap, according to the greater or less proximity of the seat of discharge. But as has been well known not merely clouds, but surfaces of separation of masses of air of different density, such as constantly occur in thunder storms, reflect vibrations in the air; and thus we may have many successive echoes, prolonging the original sound. But there is another cause often more efficient than these. When the flash is a long one, all its parts being nearly equidistant from the observer, he hears the sound from all these parts simultaneously; but if its parts be at very different distances from him, he hears successively the sounds from portions farther and farther distant from him. If the flash be much zigzagged, long portions of its course may run at one and the same distance from him, and the sound from these arrive simultaneously at his ear. Thus we have no difficulty in accounting for the rolling and pealing of thunder. It is, in fact, a series of sounds, sometimes of the reflection of sound, sometimes of the finite velocity with which it is propagated. The usual rough estimate of five seconds to a mile is near enough to the truth for all ordinary calculation of the distance of a flash from the observer. The extreme distance at which thunder is heard is not great, when we consider the frequent great intensity of the sound. No trustworthy observation has given in general more than about nine or ten miles, though there are cases in which it is possible that it may have been heard fourteen miles off. But the discharge of a single cannon is often heard at fifty miles, and the noise of a siege or naval engagement has certainly been heard at a distance of much more than 100 miles. There are two reasons for this—the first depends upon the extreme suddenness of the production of thunder; the second, and perhaps the more effective, on the excessive variations of density in the atmosphere, which are invariably associated with a thunderstorm. In certain cases thunder has been propagated, for moderate distances from its apparent source, with a velocity far exceeding that of ordinary sounds. This used to be attributed to the extreme suddenness of its production; but it is not easy, if we adopt this hypothesis, to see why it should not occur in all cases. Sir W. Thompson has supplied a very different explanation, which requires no unusual velocity of sound, because it asserts the production of the sound simultaneously at all parts of the air between the ground and the cloud from which the lightning is discharged.

Blue-Tinted Paper.

The origin of blue-tinted paper came about by a mere slip of the hand. The wife of William East an English paper maker, accidentally let a blue-bag fall into one of the vats of pulp. The workmen were astonished when they saw the peculiar color of the paper, while Mr. East was highly displeased, as he considered a grave pecuniary loss. His wife was so much frightened that she would not confess her agency in the matter. After storing the damaged paper for four years, Mr. East sent it to his agent at London, with instructions to sell it for what it would bring. The paper was accepted as a "purposed novelty," and was disposed of at quite an advance over the market price. Mr. East was astonished at receiving an order from his agent for another large invoice of the paper. He was without the secret and found himself in a dilemma. Upon mentioning it to his wife, she told him about the accident. He kept the secret, and the demand for the novel paper far exceeded his ability to supply it.

Why?

Why do women always step off horse cars facing the wrong way?

Why do women always—particularly those who hate each other most—kiss when they meet?

Why do Germans with the most unpronounceable names drink less beer than plain Yankee John Smiths?

Why are the wooden forks one finds in restaurants horse-radish put invariably before at least one time?

Why are blood-curling stories of vice, crime and suffering most eagerly read by people whose sensibilities are so delicate that they couldn't see a fly hurt?

Why do people who know the least about newspapers always shed the most advice for the editor's benefit.

The Choice of Food.

First, as regards butcher's meat, attention to the following simple directions will aid the housewife in deciding upon that all-important point—the freshness. All lean meats, when fresh, show a deep purplish red tinge with a bloom over it on the outside of the muscle, and a paler vermilion red with just a shade of purple in the cut surface. Mutton lean should be quite even in hue, and have no flavor whatever of tallow; beef lean may be a little marbled with fat, but it must have no flavor of suet. The surface of the meat must be quite dry, even a cut scarcely wetting the finger, and the substance moderately soft, but at the same time so elastic that no mark is left after a pressure from the finger. Keeping the meat for a day or two in the larger should make no difference as regards this. Then, there should be very little odor in a single joint of meat; it should not waste much in cooking, and when brought to table roasted, should retain its gravy well until the knife causes it to gush out in a rich, appetizing stream, full of inviting scent and flavor. This is particularly the case with mutton, and for ascertaining its value, is the easiest test we know of. But, generally, for all meat, a good test is to push a clean knife up to the hilt into its substance. In good, fresh meat the resistance is uniform, but when some parts are softer than others we may be quite sure that deterioration has set in. The smell of the knife is also a good aid—and this, by the way, is always useful in choosing a ham; for, by pushing a knife deep in, withdrawing it and smelling it, one can tell whether the flavor is very salt or the contrary. As regards fat, the raw fat of beef should be of a slightly yellow color, like fresh butter; that of mutton should be very white. Lamb and veal should also have very white and translucent fat, whilst the lean of both should be pale, but perfectly evenly tinted.

A young and therefore tender fowl may be known before plucking by the largeness of the feet and the leg joints and after plucking a thin neck and violet thighs may be taken as invariable signs of age and toughness, especially in turkeys and fowls. The age of ducks and geese is tested in a different manner—that is, by their beak, the lower part of which breaks away quite easily when they are young. One of the chief and most objectionable drawbacks to the purchase of fowls is the presence of the gall bladder, which is a rank and disagreeable savor. Young birds of the gallinaceous tribe may be known by their undeveloped spurs, and young partridges by the pointed long wing feathers, which grow rounded at the tip with age. In the case of fish, many people trust to the sense of smell; but this is not always to be depended upon, as it may be deceived by the use of ice. The best test of freshness are the fullness of the eyeballs and the bright pink hue of the gills when raw, and when cooked the firmness of the flesh, which in the case of stale fish is flabby and stringy, even if preserved by cold from visible putrefaction. The cheapest sorts of fish are those of small size; but this is not always to be depended upon, as it may be deceived by the use of ice. The best test of freshness are the fullness of the eyeballs and the bright pink hue of the gills when raw, and when cooked the firmness of the flesh, which in the case of stale fish is flabby and stringy, even if preserved by cold from visible putrefaction. The cheapest sorts of fish are those of small size; but this is not always to be depended upon, as it may be deceived by the use of ice. 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