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The Early Rain.

Down through the misty air,
Down from the gloom above,
Falling, pattering everywhere,
The rain comes quick with love.
Softly the mist-tush
Sings in the golden storm;
The robin under a laurel bush
Waits for to-morrow morn.
Drip, drip, drip from the eaves,
Pit, pit, pit on the pane,
Swish, swish, swish on the drenched leaves,
Lis! 'tis the song of the rain.
Gosses are bending low,
Green is the corn and thick;
You can almost see the nettles grow,
They grow so strong and quick.
Soft is the wind from the west,
Softer the rain's low sigh;
The sparrow washes his smoky breast,
And watches the gloomy sky,
Stirred are the boughs by the breeze,
Scarcely a leaf is still,
Something is moving among the trees,
Like a restless spirit of ill.
Standing watching the rain,
Do you seem to hear
The voice of God on speaking again
To man's ungrateful ear?
Promising plenty and peace,
Garners with treasure heaped,
That seed-time and harvest shall not cease
Till the harvest of earth be reaped.
—The Argosy.

NOT A SUCCESS.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Heatherly, "some folks do have all the luck! I thought when my Cousin Speakwell was appointed assistant bishop of the Cranberry Swamp diocese, that it was quite a social distinction. But here's Helen Jones's uncle been put up for Chinese ambassador! And I suppose she'll get all her tea and chessmen for nothing now, besides the credit of the thing!"

And Mrs. Heatherly actually burst into tears.

From the very first moment of her arrival in Cherry hill, Mrs. Jones had been her rival. If she decorated her parlors in lotus-leaves and cat-tails, Mrs. Jones immediately ordered an artist from Philadelphia to paint her ceilings in peacock-plumes and half-open sunflower buds. If she gave a light tea, Mrs. Jones followed with a full-fledged dinner-party. If she had a fancy masquerade-party, Mrs. Jones issued cards for private theatricals. And now the glories of the assistant bishopric were entirely eclipsed by the ambassador to China.

Mrs. Jones ordered her white ponies and basket-phæton, and drove in state through Cherry hill, to invite all her friends and acquaintances to an evening reception.

"To meet my uncle," she said, graciously, "before he sails for China!"

For Mrs. Jones, albeit she never had seen her Uncle John Jones, was seized, all of a sudden, with the most affectionate devotion for him, and telegraphed him to come at once to Cherry hill. And the letter which followed was full of niece-like devotion.

"I have always felt," she said, "that it was a cruel deprivation to see so little of my husband's relations. And now that we are so soon to lose you, I must insist on at least one visit. We have some charming people in Cherry hill, who would esteem it a privilege to make your acquaintance. We shall meet you, without fail, at the six-thirty train from Philadelphia, on Wednesday next."

Mr. Jones, a blunt, bullet-headed man, who was in the drug business, scratched his nose when he heard of his wife's prowess.

"It's all a puzzle to me," said he. "Uncle John never had any brains."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Jones, "what brains are needed to be a Chinese ambassador? It's all political influence and wire-pulling, don't you see?"

"Well," said Mr. Jones, "there's something in that. I remember Uncle John being president of a Polk and Dallas club, for years ago, or so, in the village. And he manufactured torch-lights for the political processions, and had a very good voice for a hurrah. What puzzles me, however, is what on earth he will think of our getting so very affectionate all of a sudden, after neglecting him for all these years."

"No matter what he thinks," said Mrs. Jones, briskly. "I'll soon bring him around. Only think—ambassador to China! What will Mrs. Heatherly say? You must telegraph at once for plenty of pates de foie gras and cold, potted game. And I'll have the two colored waiters from the hotel. Mary Ann is very well in her way, but she will need additional help on an occasion like this. I shall ask ex-Governor Philipstarbough and his wife—they are visiting the Whites; and an especial card shall be sent to that stupid, old assistant bishop that Charlotte Heatherly boasts so much about. Mr. Chimefield, the poet, is in town also, and I shall beg Miss Bulky to bring her violin and give us one of those sweet Scandinavian Dreams that she improvises so sweetly. Let me see, there will be about sixty people here, unless I receive more regrets than I at present anticipate."

"Sixty people, eh?" repeated Mr. Jones. "Ain't that considerable of a

blow-out, Fanny? We haven't settled Spagnette's bill for that last tea-fight, you must remember."

"Tea-fight! Blow-out!" Mrs. Jones repeated, in infinite disgust. "Peter, I haven't any patience to hear you use those odious, vulgar expressions. How are Ethel and Constantia to get married, I'd like to know, if the dear girls never are to see any society? Are the ponies ready?"

"You can't have the ponies to-day," said Mr. Jones. "The livery-stable man says they don't stir out of their stalls until the whole account is settled—three hundred and odd dollars."

"How absurd of him!" said Mrs. Jones, with a shrug of her plump shoulders. "And now, of all times in the world! But never mind—I shall walk!"

And Mrs. Jones, nothing daunted, put on a rose-bud-trimmed bonnet, a pretty imitation cashmere shawl, and a pair of cream-colored kid gloves, and set forth to the florist's, where she ordered a profusion of flowers; and to the pastry-cook's, where she hesitated between water ices, and Neapolitan cream; and finally went home, wearied, but triumphant.

"I'll show the Chinese ambassador that there is some style about his country cousins," she declared, to Ethel and Constantia, who were remodeling their old dresses, to appear as new as possible.

And really Mrs. Jones's parlors did appear exquisitely tasteful and pretty when the eventful evening arrived.

The chandeliers—new for the occasion—were draped with smilax; the mantels banked with cyclamen and begonia leaves; the angles of the apartment filled with tall palms and stately ferns.

Miss Bulky was there, with her violin, and a package of music nearly as large as a Saratoga trunk; the ex-governor and his lady were on time, and the assistant bishop of the Cranberry swamp diocese appeared, in a red-nosed and pompous manner, with his cousin, Mrs. Heatherly, leaning on his arm. And, as the room began to fill, Mrs. Jones waxed a little nervous.

"I do hope nothing has happened to the train," she thought. "If he shouldn't be here, after all, I should feel myself a social fraud."

But, as the old Antwerp clock in the corner struck ten, there was a little bustle, the sound of retreating carriage-wheels—Uncle Jones had arrived!

And the guests parted right and left, to admit of the entrance of a stout old gentleman in a suit of home-dyed butternut-brown, a pair of silver spectacles, very red hands, entirely innocent of gloves, and a blue-checked shirt.

"Well, Niece Jones," said this remarkable apparition, grasping Mrs. Jones's pretty, little kid-gloved hands, "I'm dreadfully glad to make your acquaintance. And this 'ere's Peter, is it? I ain't seen Peter since he was a boy."

"Uncle," said Mrs. Jones, with a sort of hysterical gasp, "allow me to present to you—"

"Oh, yes, I see," said Uncle Jones. "Company to tea, eh? Your servant, ladies and gentlemen, your servant," bowing comprehensively around the room. "And seein' we're all here together, so nice and friendly," he added, "I'll just ask you all to look at a new kind o' salve as I've took the agency of—the 'Electric Agony Eradicator,' only twenty-five cents a box, and five boxes for a dollar. Business is business, you know, and as I make my living this way, I'm sure my niece and nephew here won't object to my selling off the stock-in-trade to the best advantage before I leave the country. Perhaps the company don't know that I sail as skipper of the Lovely Louise next month—up to the Newfoundland fish-banks, and round by way of Nova Scotia?"

"But," gasped Mrs. Jones, "we thought—that is, we understood—we read in the paper, I would say—that you were to be the ambassador to China."

"Me!" said Uncle Jones. "Not if I know it! Me go to furrin parts, to be eaten up with chopsticks, or burned alive by the coolies? I guess not! P'r'aps it's John J. Jones you're thinking about. He's from the same place as I am—a great friend of the administration—and I've heard as he's got a plump office from the big-bugs at Washington. I'm John J. Jones—old Jacob, you know, arter my great-grandfather, as was in the blacksmithy business." Oh, I ain't no Chinese ambassador! I'm only a salve-manufacturer. I'd dreadful good for frosted feet an' ears, the 'Electric Agony Eradicator' is—and p'r'aps I may have a good chance to sell a few gross of boxes on board the Lovely Louise, if it's a middlin' cold trip."

Poor Mrs. Jones stood aghast as the distinguished guest of the evening circulated around amid the perfumed groups, with his "Agony Eradicator," selling off the precious panacea with great success.

Mrs. Heatherly giggled audibly; the assistant bishop elevated his Roman nose with an air of superciliousness; the fair violinist laid down her bow, and only the instant announcement of supper would have prevented a general dissolution of this social parliament.

Uncle Jones ate as if he were a starved wolf, and then drank as he had been transformed into a fish; and finally fell asleep on a sofa in the corner and snored aloud, with his pocket full of "salve-boxes" and a handkerchief over his face.

He went home the next day. The Cherry hill Jones's did not urge him to stay longer; and Mrs. Heatherly called to condole with Mrs. Jones in person.

"It must have been so mortifying to the poor thing!" said she, with simulated sympathy.

But Mrs. Jones did not see her. She was crying in her own room, and sent down a message of "Not at home."

"I don't care how soon we leave Cherry hill," she sobbed. "I never can look any one in the face again. I never was so ashamed in all my life! And if ever anyone mentions the name 'China,' or the 'Chinese,' in my presence again, I'll commit suicide, that I will!"

For Mrs. Jones's party had not been a success.

GEN. SCOTT'S NARROW ESCAPE.

An Interesting Reminiscence from the Autobiography of Thurlow Weed—How the General's Legs Saved Him.

From the autobiography of Thurlow Weed, the following interesting account of an incident preceding the battle of Chippewa, in 1814, is taken:

One evening after our rubber, I said to the general, "There is one question I have often wished to ask you, but have been restrained by the fear that it might be improper." The general drew himself up and said in his emphatic manner: "Sir, you are incapable of asking an improper question." I said: "You are very kind; but if my inquiry is indiscreet I am sure you will allow it to pass unanswered."

"I hear you, sir," he replied.

"Well, then, general, did anything remarkable happen to you on the morning of the battle of the Chippewas?"

After a brief but impressive silence, he said: "Yes, sir; something did happen to me—something very remarkable, and I will now, for the third time in my life, repeat the story: The 4th day of July, 1814, was one of extreme heat. On that day my brigade skirmished with a British force commanded by General Riall, from an early hour in the morning till late in the afternoon. We had driven the enemy down the river some twelve miles to Street's creek, near Chippewa, where we encamped for the night, our army occupying the west, while that of the enemy was encamped on the east side of the creek. After our tents had been pitched I observed a flag borne by a man in peasant's dress approaching my marquee. He brought a letter from a lady who occupied a large mansion on the opposite side of the creek, informing me that she was the wife of a member of Parliament, who was then at Quebec; that her children, servants and a young lady friend were alone with her in the house; that General Riall had placed a sentinel before her door, and that she ventured, with great doubts of the propriety of the request, to ask that I would place a sentinel upon the bridge to protect her against stragglers from our camp. I assured the messenger that the lady's request should be complied with. Early the next morning the same messenger, bearing a white flag, reappeared with a note from the same lady, thanking me for the protection she had enjoyed, adding that, in acknowledgment of my civilities, she begged that I would, with such members of my staff as I chose to bring with me, accept the hospitalities of her house at a breakfast which had been prepared with considerable attention, and was quite ready. Acting upon an impulse which I have never been able to analyze or comprehend, I called two of my aids, Lieutenants Worth and Watts, and returned to the mansion already indicated. We met our hostess at the door, who ushered us into the dining-room, where breakfast awaited us, and where the young lady previously referred to was already seated by the coffee urn. Our hostess asking to be excused for a few minutes, the young lady immediately served our coffee. Before we had broken our fast, Lieutenant Watts rose from the table to get his bandana (that being before the days of napkins), which he had left in his cap on a side table by the window, glancing through which he saw Indians approaching the house on one side and red-coats approaching it on the other, with an evident purpose of surrounding it and us, and instantly exclaimed: 'General, we are betrayed!' Springing from the table and clearing the house I saw our danger, and, remembering Lord Chesterfield had said: 'Whatever it is proper to do it is proper to do well,' and as we had to run, and my legs were longer than my companions', I soon outstripped them. As we made our escape we were fired at, but got across the bridge in safety.

"I felt so much shame and mortification at having so nearly fallen into a trap that I could scarcely fix my mind upon the duties which now demanded my undivided attention. I knew that I had committed a great indiscretion in accepting the singular invitation, and that if any disaster resulted from it I richly deserved to lose both my commission and character. I constantly found myself wondering whether the lady really intended to betray us, or had been accidentally observed. The question would recur, even amidst the excitement of battle. Fortunately, however, my presence and services in the field were not required until Generals Porter and Ripley had been engaged at intervals for several hours, so that when my brigade, with Towson's artillery, were ordered to cross Street's creek, my nerves and confidence had become measurably quieted and restored.

"I need not describe the battle of Chippewa. That belongs to, and is part of, the history of our country. It is sufficient to say that at the close of

the day we were masters of the position, and that our arms were in no way discredited. The British army had fallen back, leaving their wounded in our possession. The mansion which I had visited in the morning was the largest house near, and to that the wounded officers in both armies were carried for surgical treatment. As soon as I could leave the field I went over to look after my wounded. I found the English officers lying on the first floor and our own on the floor above. I saw in the lower room the young lady whom I had met in the morning at the breakfast table, her white dress all sprinkled with blood. She had been attending to the British wounded. On the second floor, just as I was turning into the room where officers were, I met my hostess. One glance at her was quite sufficient to answer the question which I had been asking myself all day. She had intended to betray me, and nothing but the accident of my aid rising for his handkerchief saved us from capture.

"Years afterward, in reflecting upon this incident, I was led to doubt whether I had not misconstrued her startled manner as I suddenly encountered her. That unexpected meeting would have occasioned embarrassment in either contingency, and it is so difficult to believe a lady of cultivation and refinement capable of such an act, that I am now, nearly half a century after the event, disposed to give my hostess the benefit of that doubt. And now, sir," added the general, "this is the third time in my life I have told this story. I do not remember to have been spoken to before on that subject for many years."

He looked at me and seemed to be considering with himself a few moments, and then said: "Remembering your intimacy with General Worth, I need not inquire how you came to a knowledge of our secret."

"Well, general," I replied, "I have kept the secret faithfully for more than forty years, always hoping to obtain your own version of what struck me as a most remarkable incident in your military life."

Whistling Superstitions.

In whatever way regarded, either as a graceful accomplishment or as the spontaneous expression of light-heartedness, whistling has in our own and foreign countries generally attracted considerable attention. Why it should have been invested with so much superstitious awe it is difficult to say, but it is a curious fact that the same antipathy which it aroused among certain classes of our countrymen is found existing in the most distant parts of the earth, where, as yet, civilization has made little or no imperceptible progress. Thus Captain Burton tells us how the Arabs dislike to hear a person whistle, called by them el sifr. Some maintain that the whistler's mouth is not to be purified for forty days; while, according to the explanation of others, Satan touching a man's body causes him to produce, what they consider, an offensive sound. The natives of the Tonga Islands, Polynesia, hold it to be wrong to whistle, as this act is thought to be disrespectful to God. In Iceland the villagers have the same objection to whistling, and so far do they carry their superstitious dread of it that "if one swings about him a stick, whip, wand, or ought that makes a whistling sound, he scares from him the Holy Ghost"; while other Icelanders, who consider themselves free from superstitions, cautiously give the advice: "Do it not; for who knoweth what is in the air?" However eccentric these phases of superstitious belief may appear to us, yet it must not be forgotten that very similar notions prevail at the present day in this country. A correspondent, of *Notes and Queries* for instance, relates how one day, after attempting in vain to get his dog to obey orders to come into the house, his wife tried to coax it by whistling, when she was suddenly interrupted by a servant, a Roman Catholic, who exclaimed in the most piteous accents, "If you please, ma'am, don't whistle—every time a woman whistles, the heart of the blessed Virgin bleeds!" In some districts of North Germany the villagers say that if one whistles in the evening it makes the angels weep. — *Popular Science Monthly*.

A Fowl Ball.

Scene at the base-ball ground. A ball was knocked sideways and caught on a fly. "Foul and out!" was the cry of the umpire. A charming high school girl looking at the game ejaculates: "Ah, really! How can it be a foul? I don't see any feathers!" And she turned to her attendant with an inquiring look. "Well—oh! Yes, you see," he stammered, "the reason you don't see the feathers is because it belongs to the picked nine." — *Peoria Transcript*.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

Hindoo Children's Dolls.

Once a year, just before the Dasse-rah festival, the little Hindoo girls destroy their dolls. The girls dress themselves in the brightest colors, and march through the busy bazars of the city, and along roads shaded by overhanging mango or sissoo trees, till they come to water—probably a tank built by some pious Hindoo. A crowd of men and women follow them. Round the tank are feathery bamboos, plantains with their broad hanging leaves, and mango trees, and on every side are flights of steps leading down to the water. No Hindoo girl has such a family of dolls as many of our readers have in this country. But her dolls cost very little, and so the last one is easily replaced. They are made of rags, or more generally of mud or clay, dried in the sun or baked in an oven, and rudely daubed with paint. An English doll is a marvel to a Hindoo girl. The fair, blue eyes, pretty face, and the clothes that come off and on, fill her with wonder. In some of the mission schools the scholars get presents at Christmas, and the girls get dolls, to their great delight.

A Field Naturalist.

Forty years ago, or more, a small, brightly spotted turtle was described as living near Philadelphia, and two miserable specimens were sent to Professor Agassiz. It was called Muhlenberg's turtle, and since then not one has been seen until last summer. My friend was always on the lookout, never failing to pick up or turn over every small turtle he met on the meadows or along the creeks, and examine whether the marks on its under shell were those of the lost species. Finally, one of the ditches in the meadows was drained off to be repaired, and there, within a short distance, were picked up six Muhlenberg turtles! If you go to Cambridge, Mass., you can see four of them alive and healthy to-day. They could easily have gone out of that ditch into other ditches, and so into the creek; but, if they ever did, they have succeeded for twenty years in escaping some pretty sharp eyes.

This little incident has a moral for us in two ways. One is, that often the apparent rarity of an animal comes from the fact that we don't know where to look for it; and the other, that it takes a practiced eye to know it when you have found it, and to take care that it does not get lost sight of again. Practice your methods of observation, then, without ceasing. You cannot make discoveries in any other way. And the cultivation of the habit will be of inestimable advantage to you.

This is the merest hint of how, without going away from home, by always keeping his eyes open, a man, or a boy or a girl can study, to the great advantage and enjoyment of himself, or herself, but to the help of all the rest of us. I should like to tell you how patiently this naturalist watches the ways of the wary birds and small game he loves; how those sunfish and shy darters forget that he is looking quietly down through the still water, and go on with their daily life as he wants to witness it; how he drifts silently at midnight, hid in his boat, close to the timid heron, and sees him strike at his prey; or how, concealed in the topmost branches of a lofty tree, he overlooks the water-birds drilling their little ones, and smiles at the play of a pair of rare otters, whose noses would not be in sight an instant did they suppose any one was looking at them. But I cannot recount all his vigils and ingenious experiments, or the entertaining facts they bring to our knowledge, since my object now is simply to give you a suggestion of how much one man may do and learn on a single farm in the most thickly settled part of the United States.—*St. Nicholas*.

Curious Indian Belief.

The Sanpoel tribe number about 400 Indians and they all belong to a sect known as the dreamers. They are looking for another flood, which they expect soon to come upon the earth. In order to be prepared they have secured all the necessary material for the building of an ark, in which to sail off, as Noah did, when the flood comes. Among the material is 50,000 feet of lumber. The ark is to be fifty feet long and about fifty or sixty feet wide. The dreamers have a small following among the Indians of the Palouse, Snake River, Warm Springs, Umatilla and other tribes. They believe that the whites will all be drowned when the flood comes, and that they only will be saved, and will be enabled to live off the fat of the land without having to work at all.—*Seattle (W. T.) Post*.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

A watch like faith, is comparatively worthless without works.
Why are there no female bill-collectors?—Because a woman's work is never "dun."
"There's millions in it," said Smith.
"In what?" asked Brown. "Why in billions, of course, ha! ha! ha!"
Many a man thinks that the world has taken up arms against him when his stomach is struggling hard with a boiled dinner.
"You say your brother is younger than you, yet he looks much older?"
"Yes, he has seen a great deal of trouble; but I never married."
"I am saddest when I write humorous articles," said a "funny man" to an acquaintance. "And I," replied the acquaintance, "am saddest when I read them."
It is wrong to laugh at the crooked legs of the young man in tight trousers, but it is perfectly proper to laugh at the tight trousers upon the man with the crooked legs.
Medical journals continue to inform people "how colds are taken." The Globe gently imitates that a little information upon how to get rid of them promptly would be equally acceptable.
It gives a New York man an awful start to suddenly observe a clipping from the Chinese newspaper which has been left lying on his table by some mischievous friend. His first thought, of course, is that it is a wash bill.
Two young city ladies in the country were standing by the side of a wide ditch, which they didn't know how to cross. They appealed to a boy who was coming along the road for help, whereupon he pointed behind them with a startled air and yelled "Snakes!" The young ladies crossed the ditch at a single bound.
Lill asks her mother: "What do you like best, good dreams or bad ones?"
"Good ones. And you?"
"Oh, I like bad dreams best."
"Why?"
"Because when I have good dreams I find when I wake up that they are not true, and that annoys me; whilst when I have had bad ones I am happy when I wake, because they are not true."
The Japanese have more than twenty fanciful names by which they designate their beautiful country, but the sobriquet which to a foreigner seems most fitting is certainly the land of holidays. No excuse is too trivial for a Japanese to make holidays, and when he does not make them himself, the government politely steps in and makes them for him. Thus, one day in every six, called *ichi roku*, is a statute holiday; so is the third day in every moon, whilst the list of national festivals commemorating great men or of great deeds is simply inexhaustible. If a great man dies in England, they commemorate him by a monument in Westminster Abbey; if a great man dies in Japan, he is remembered by a holiday; so that what with the mythical great men who are thus remembered and the historical great men who have died during the past five thousand years, it is a little difficult to find a day of the Japanese year which has not the name of a celebrity attached to it; just as, in glancing down a Roman Catholic calendar, we find that every day has its particular saint. But the greatest day of the year, the festival par excellence of the people, the festival into which is compressed the essence of the fun and enjoyment and happiness of all the other days put together, is the festival of the new year. We may be familiar with the celebration of the day in Paris or New York, but the proceedings there are tame and lifeless; when compared with the spontaneous outburst of rejoicing which characterizes new year's day in Japan.
Pele's Hair.
A singular product of vitreous lavas is called in Hawaii "Pele's Hair." This silky, filamentous substance is described by Miss Gordon Cumming in her latest book of travels, as of a rich olive-green or yellowish-brown color, and glossy, like the byssus of certain shells, but very brittle to handle." It is said to be produced by the wind catching the fiery spray thrown up from the crater, but the extreme fineness of its texture seems rather to suggest the action of escaping vapors within the lava itself. This view is strengthened by the circumstance that a perfect counterfeit is fabricated at iron-works by passing jets of steam through molten slag, when a material resembling vitreous cotton-wool, admirably adapted for packing fragile articles, results. The chief seat of its natural production is the great Hawaiian crater of Kilauea (personified as the Fire Goddess Pele), and it is found well adapted for nest-building by some inventive Hawaiian birds.