

A DANDELION.

O, golden heart gleaming in the grass On a fair morn'g of May, I stoop to touch you softly as I pass Along the common way...

COMMANDER OF THE DISTRICT.

Behind the coast line of West Africa, from the Gambia, to the Congo lies a wild country of dense forest and dismal swamps...

In British dominions a few district commissioners and other officers in charge of small detachments of haussas, who are Mohammedan black troops, maintain, or struggle to maintain, some kind of order along the frontier...

Now it happened that one morning in April Captain Wayne, in command of a dozen haussas, sat on the veranda of his house, which was situated near the headwaters of a muddy river on the frontier of the Gold Coast and the Shantee country...

At this moment Akoo, sergeant of haussas, came up the stairway leading to the veranda, and saluting the officer, said: "Bushman come in sah, bring little word, say Kasro people chop two men, make Ju Ju."

"Hang the Kasro people," said the captain aside. "I must stop the Ju Ju sacrifice, and yet if there's any blood-shed it will mean the sending up of an expedition and unending trouble. Akoo, get 10 men ready, rifles and 20 rounds of ammunition."

The sergeant saluted as he went away, and shortly afterward a bugle call rang out and Captain Wayne, weak and trembling from fever, marched into the forest at the head of his men. Tall, splendidly developed negroes from the far north, staunch Mussulmans, lighter in color and in every way superior to the coast tribes, the haussas will follow their white officers with a courage and devotion equal to that of any of their majesty's troops.

Meantime in the Shantee town of Kasro, a great Ju Ju feast was being held, at which the chief administered justice, and various rites were performed by the fetish men to propitiate their gods. The mud-built palm-batched huts lay in rows beneath the shade of feathery palm trees around a great open square.

Next morning the captain sent a trooper a hundred miles through the forest to ask that a relief might be sent, then he lay day after day in a canvas chair on the veranda, alternately shivering and burning with fever, and unable to move on account of his injured leg, which obstinately refused to heal. One weary week succeeded another, while the captain watched the white mists roll away at dawn, and the sun rise and shine all day with a pitiless heat out of a cloudless sky.

Then one day a bushman came in by night with a letter from the nearest government station to say that a wounded Haussa with a handful of cast-iron pot-leg shot into his body had one day dragged himself to the compound, and after holding out a death, turned over and died; faithful unto death, for this is the nature of the Mohammedan soldier. The message had been forwarded to headquarters, and the reply now reached the captain.

Calling a trooper to raise him, he broke the seal and read that no relief could be sent for some time, as there was no officer available, but he had full authority to abandon the post for the time being, if his health necessitated such a course.

Now the captain was a simple man, not given to any heroics, but he had lived so long away from white men that he had no thought but the well-being of his district; so he said, for these dwellers in lonely wilds soon to think aloud: "It is a temptation, if I stay here I shall go out before the rains, and if I go there will be war, gorges war, between two or three of the chiefs, and the government will send up an expedition and the district will be broken up forever. No—I must stay and keep them in order—and face the fever and the mortification. The event is with Allah, as Akoo says."

He dispatched another messenger, begging that an officer from a peaceable district should be sent, as the post could not be left. Then the weary waiting commenced again, and the dreary stifling days had to be suffered somehow, with heat and fever, constant sweating from the wound and dreadful loneliness. Still the captain held on, giving the sergeant fresh orders every morning, and listening to his reports of the day's work in the evening, while he daily grew thinner and more haggard; a miserable handful of bones and feeble flickering life, doing his small share in upholding the supremacy of our great empire.

But no reply arrived from head-quarters, and at length Sergeant Akoo paused one morning before he called out his men and said: "No book (letter) come, sah; bushman chop Haussa and 'teal him letter, but captain send more book and Haussa fit to go."

"No," said the captain, "I can't have my men cut off one by one, neither can I purchase relief with the death of my troopers. Did not King David say something of the kind about the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is beside the gate—the price of brave men's blood?"

Then he worried and tried experiments to see if his brain was losing its power, while the black sergeant and his troopers represented her majesty's government and maintained the queen's peace on the frontier.

By and by the rains came, and the captain's couch had to be moved inside: for the whole air was filled with the falling water, the rivers overflowed and every swamp was turned into a lake, while the house was filled with a steam that reeked of fever and dysentery. So the commissioner lay through the weary weeks listening to the constant roar of water on the roof, and the murmur of the flooded river, growing weaker and weaker, yet fighting a grim fight against despair and insanity.

At last the long-expected relief arrived, and the incoming officer found a ghastly, fever worn skeleton that gazed at him with glittering eyes and whispered in a hoarse voice: "That God I've met the station?" then collapsed and lay speechless and silent, a wreck of what had once been a man.

Next morning, under command of Sergeant Akoo, eight bayonet left the station carrying Captain Wayne in a hammock, and for 14 days they stumbled along, through great forests of cottonwood and mahogany trees, wading among dismal swamps, paddling across broad lagoons and down solitary river reaches. Now they journeyed all day by canoe through strange tunnel-like waterways, among the mangrove trees, then by dry land through patches of plumed swamp grass that met above their heads, or through forest glades where the ground lay carpeted by the fragrant African lily.

But the gaunt figure in the hammock saw none of these things, and the glittering eyes opened only when Sergeant Akoo raised the sufferer's head, and poured a few spoonfuls of food or drops of brandy down his throat.

Sixteen days after the captain left his station three men sat in the long bare room of a trader's house, built on high piles, looking over the sea at Axim. The windows were wide open, and through them you could see, beneath the arches of the palm branches, the boundless stretch of the Atlantic, and a long yellow beach, where the great blue rollers broke in sheets of snowy foam; while the roof of the trader's house, with its burning wood, rattling leaves, and much which the breath of the Dark Continent, came in with every passing puff of hot air.

Lying on a canvas couch under the window was the wasted figure of Captain Wayne, who opened his eyes as the doctor leaned over him, and smiled as he murmured: "You are very kind—yes, I'm better already—and I'm going home to-morrow—don't forget to signal for the steamer to call."

"Then lie down and keep quiet," said the doctor. "We'll signal for the steamer"—here he leaned over and called out to the kroobos, "Hoist the 'teamer flag, Frypan, and fire-gun when 'teamer 'live,' then withdraw to a corner, and the three men talked in whispers.

"Has he any chance, doctor?" said the trader. "He cannot live till they reach San Leone, and may die before the steamer arrives here. Think of what the man has gone through: enough to kill 10 men like me."

Here they laughed softly. For the doctor had waged for years a grim fight with fever and dysentery, cholera and guinea-worm, to say nothing of pot-shots from Shantees on the frontier.

"Poor fellow," said the trader, "he did his best—Tom, it's Sunday afternoon; see if you can't get a tune out of the piano, if it's not broken to bits and the kroobos have broken the strings."

The third person arose, and sitting down to the broken instrument struck a few low chords, then after various snatches of topical song which had reached the coast, began slowly an old-fashioned tune to the Magnificat. The doctor and his companion at first laughed; but as the music was new on the lips of the instrument, drew out of the solemn music, the smile died away and they took off their hats. Chord after chord the sweet old tune rang out, while the thoughts of the listeners passed over leagues of ocean, and they saw again the sweet English meadows or the purple Scottish moor, with its glory of gorse and heather. The deep under of the surf seemed not a disturbing element, but a fitting accompaniment, and as the crimson light of the setting sun shone upon his face, the sick man beckoned the faithful sergeant to raise him in his couch. So he lay, gazing westward, with the light bringing a ruddy glow to the ghastly cheeks, listening, while a tear trickled slowly out of the sunken eyes. He was thinking of the distant country he had served so faithfully and loved so well? No one knew, for as the last chord of the "amen" died away the tired head drooped forward and he turned to the wall, and so passed away.

To where beyond these voices there is peace. Then a deep silence fell upon the room, and Sergeant Akoo bent down and drew the sheet over the pallid face, saying as he did so: "Allah akbar—God great—by the head of the prophet, these English he men." Two days later, when the R. M. S. Benguela passed, there was no signal flying for her to stop, and only a low mound and a rough wooden cross showed that another of the brave spirits who daily lay down their lives in lonely forest and fever-haunted swamp had gone to his place. Chamber's Journal.

To Better the Schools.

Both in New York city and Philadelphia there is a healthy agitation in progress that has for its purpose the bettering of the system of instruction in the public schools by lopping off some of the higher branches or luxuries and making the primary education more effective and complete, to meet the wants of the great mass of pupils who leave the schools early in their teens to become breadwinners. We acknowledge the receipt of a very interesting address on the subject by Mr. A. M. Spangler, a school official who has had long experience in educational matters, before the Philadelphia board of education. The point argued by Mr. Spangler is that the common school course is overcrowded, and as a consequence enough time cannot be given to the teaching of the important primary branches. To secure the best results, there is a necessity for the curtailment or modification of the present graded course of study.

Of the 132,000 pupils in the public schools of Philadelphia, 92,000 are in the primary or secondary course, and not many of them go beyond these grades. The great majority leave school before the close of the secondary course. Says Mr. Spangler: "It is not that the parents would not prefer to have them continue their school life, or that the children are weary of it, but because mainly the limited incomes of the parents forbid."

Most of the large boys are put to trades, or employment of some kind is found for them that will pay something in return for the service they render. The girls are either needed at home, or positions are sought for them in stores or factories. Quite a good many become typewriters or bookkeepers, while others engage in some of the various callings which late years have furnished paying situations for so many of the sex.

What is said here of Philadelphia is equally true of the 60,000 pupils in the public schools of Pittsburgh and Allegheny. What Mr. Spangler is concerned about is providing these thousands of boys and girls, most of whom leave school to earn their own livelihood before they have fairly entered their teens, with a rounded system of instruction that will meet the demands of the active life on which they are engaging. "We cannot," he says, "supply them with money capital, but we can, with proper effort, give them a much better education than they have hitherto been getting, and which in many cases may, and no doubt will, prove more beneficial to them than would money. We cannot provide them with situations, but we can give them such strong and influential recommendations as come under the important heads of good reading, correct spelling, rapid and legible penmanship, plain composition, and knowledge of its congenial and the principles of its congenial addition, subtraction and division. These are the qualifications which, coupled with honesty, industry and obedience, are the almost certain guarantees of success. They are the qualifications sought for by employers, and which, when found, are most likely to win the way of their possessors to position, promotion and remunerative pay."

This is the revolution in our public school methods Mr. Spangler aims at, and we have no question it has occupied the thought and attention of all interested in the best methods of education by the state, whether in New York, Pittsburg or Philadelphia. He makes a plea for simplicity in topics and common sense teaching. He opposes the grinding and cramming processes. He ridicules putting through the mill a given quantity of juvenile humanity for the "high school class."

The smattering inflicted on the vast number of pupils, who have but a few years to spend at school at the best, is ridiculed as worse than useless. He would establish in lieu of its simplicity and thoroughness in a few essentials, such as good reading, correct spelling, rapid and legible penmanship and a knowledge of figures. As an illustration of the poor results of the present method the testimony of a professor in a large business college in Philadelphia is cited to the effect that of 1,200 boys and girls, most of whom had attended the Philadelphia public school, not one who admitted to the business college, could correctly write a letter. Their spelling was equally bad, and in this latter respect the children who had been educated in the country school took the lead. Instances of a similar character were cited from other portions of the country.

It is justly noted that the consideration of thoughtful and intelligent educators, and the great body of teachers are pronounced in their opinions. The stuffing process as to pupils at the expense of their real needs in going into the world is what is the matter all along the line.—Post.

Homeopaths Will Meet.

On Tuesday, May 19, the tenth semi-annual meeting of the Homeopathic medical society of Central Pennsylvania will be held at the Bush house, Bellefonte. It is expected that there will be about fifty physicians in attendance, among them being Dr. Smith, of Lock Haven, and Dr. Visher, of Philadelphia, who are both expected to be present; Dr. Carl C. Visher, of Philadelphia, demonstrator on surgery; Dr. Pratt, of Chicago, professor of surgery; Dr. Charles Mohr and Frank Bueh, of Philadelphia, and Dr. Edward M. Evans, of Baltimore.

During the session there will be papers read from the several branches as follows: Clinical medicine—Drs. Locke, Wesmer, Taylor and Schenker. Pathology—Drs. Hall, Reinhold and Burnley. Obstetrics—Drs. Smith, Walters and Maest. Gynecology—Drs. Books, Morrow and Baker. Material medica—Drs. Haag, Bigelow and Piper. Surgery—Drs. Cheney, Sharbaugh, Pringle and Heinbach.

Information.

Traveler (to native)—Can you tell me how far I am from Creamtown? Native—About 24,900 miles. Traveler—Impossible. Native—I mean if you keep on the way you are going. If you turn around and go back it's only about amile.—Tid-Bits.

Hamilton Disston Dead.

Hamilton Disston, the well known political leader and business man, of Philadelphia, was found dead by his wife yesterday morning in a spare room of the Disston mansion, at the northeast corner of Broad and Jefferson streets. On Wednesday he was apparently in fair health, although he had not regained the vigor sapped by an attack of typhoid pneumonia last year. He was, moreover, in very good spirits, and no apprehension of any serious illness was felt, and the possibility of sudden death was not even thought of.

On Tuesday, when he visited his down town office, in the Bullitt building, he complained of a sense of fatigue and some pain in the region of the heart, but attributed both to an unusual press of duties. During that day he communicated with his office, by phone, and on Wednesday fulfilled an out of town engagement, returning during the afternoon. Wednesday night he and his wife went to the theatre, and after the play dined with the Mayor and Mrs. Warwick at the Bellevue. Upon their return he went to bed in one of the spare rooms of the house. Yesterday morning E. F. Steck, his private secretary, called at the house, and Mrs. Disston, accompanied by Mr. Steck, went to his room, and found him dead. A physician who was summoned declared he had been dead for three hours, and gave the cause as heart disease.

A Busy Doctor's Blunder.

Explanations Were in Order, and the Dog Got the Medicine. A small boy appeared at the eye and ear department of a Boston hospital during one of the attending doctor's busiest days. The physician recognized him as a patient who had been coming for some time to be treated for an affection of the ear. "I come to"—began the boy. "Yes, Yes, I know," interrupted the doctor, who was in a hurry. "I see you are better. Sit down there quick and I'll attend to your case."

"But I"—remonstrated the boy, as he rose from the chair into which the doctor had gently thrust him. "There, there, now," commanded the doctor. "No fussing! Sit still there."

Now, the doctor in charge of that clinic has an awe inspiring manner, and the boy, though still attempting to object, was again pushed into the chair, and what seemed like a pint of warm water was injected into his ear. "Very much improved," remarked the doctor. "Here," as he handed him a prescription, "take these pills three times a day and come again next week."

"But there ain't nothing the matter with me," said the boy. "It's my brother. He's gone off to the ball game, and I come to get his medicine."

The Shah of Persia.

A monarch of an almost unique kind is dead. The Shah of Persia was shot Thursday April 30th while entering a shrine in the neighborhood of his capital. Even this comparatively unimportant Asiatic realm seems not to be free from fanatical assassins. There may be no Anarchists in that part of the earth, for they, indeed, seem to be a product of our more intellectual Western world, wherein men become perplexed by the problems of political economy, yet religion, which also shows a certain capacity for disordering the human mind is not absent in the East. The Shah's assassin is said to have been such a fanatic, though no real motive is given for the deed, and we are led to believe that it was a mere outburst of individual craziness. The question of the moment to the rest of the world is the selection of a successor to the murdered monarch. There are rival claimants to the throne, one of whom is accounted to have Russian, the other English sympathies. These two Powers have been at cross purposes to some extent at Teheran for many years, each desiring to strengthen its own influence in the Shah's country. Unfortunately, the heir presumptive according to Persian law is the Russian ally, a most unenlightened man. His rival to the throne, though older than his pro-Russian brother, is the result of a marriage which is reckoned to bemorganatic, and his chances are less good. He is a liberal-minded man, inclined towards things which are English. He has the further advantage, it is said, of being more popular with the Persians than his brother. There are predictions in some quarters that there may be a revolution, and it is possible, of course, that England and Russia may come into diplomatic conflict with each other before the question of succession is satisfactorily settled. Active intervention by either Power is, of course, very improbable, as this would be a violation of international law and at the same time very inexpedient from whatever standpoint the subject may be viewed.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

For very tiny tots, the old-fashioned sun-bonnet is revived; they are much shirred, and have, as of old, the regulation curtain hanging over the neck, thus combining comfort with the quaint and picturesque.

The neat collars and cuffs now being worn by women are certainly attractive and add an air of smartness to the plainest gown.

Green and purple are by far the most fashionable shades of the season.

Pluffy bangs, and even the coquettish waves that so graciously conceal the imperfections of an ugly forehead, are, as well as the girl that wears them, out of date. The mannish girl is at the height of fashion, and she is astounding thousands of her primmer sisters by parting her hair at the side.

Absolute severity and simplicity is the motto of the new hair-dressing. Twist or coil or braid or do whatever you will with your back hair, so long as the result is modest and inconspicuous, but under no circumstances must you venture to impart a feminine curl to the front locks.

Lady Helen Stewart has set the fashion over in England, and her titled friends who are trying to look as well as Lady Helen does are renouncing all connection with the stereotyped frizzes that serve as the badge of English royalty. American women are beginning to take up the fad, and the tailor-made girl of the coming summer promises to be a model of congruity, with the addition of her mannish little hats and her hair newly parted at the side.

The new fashion may not be positively becoming to those who are afflicted with straight locks, but when the hair has a natural wave the effect is rather graceful. The girl who knows the secret of looking well rises superior to the most exacting fashion and even transforms a purely mannish coiffure so as to call forth admiration.

Nut sandwiches. Chop hickory nuts, walnuts and pecans, a cup of each. Mix with half the quantity of hard-boiled eggs mashed to paste. Then mix with mayonaisse dressing. Slice and butter bread, cover each slice with a crisp lettuce leaf and spread with nut paste.

Denim is a material of great possibilities. It is being used this spring in many new ways, and the latest denims are most artistic-looking fabrics. They may be deep in yellow, sage green, deft blue, burnt red, brown, cream color and white. I have a stamped design which is either floral or antique. The mythical Pegasus is the most popular design this season. These denims are known as the art denims, and cost 45 cents a yard.

In decorating country houses they may be used in a variety of effective ways. Denims may take the place of wall paper in many rooms, and as a carpet it is much to be desired. It will wear much better than a filling, and makes an excellent ground for rugs. For portieres it is always in demand.

Some of the new denim tablecloths are things of beauty. The art denims only come a yard wide, and, as the ordinary dining room tablecloth is generally three or four yards wide, it is necessary to have the strips of denim sewed together. One tablecloth seen recently was made of yellow denim. The four yards which were used were fastened together by yellow satin ribbon, embroidered in a conventional design, with heavy black silk fl-s. In each corner a Pegasus, in black, was embroidered, and the cloth was finished with a denim fringe bound with narrow black satin ribbon.

Piazza sofa cushions in denim are seen in many new designs. Sage green and deft blue cushions are the most popular. Many have an embroidered design worked upon them or some appropriate quotation. In the way of wearing apparel denim is useful in making clothespin aprons, and for petticoats for outing wear it is most serviceable.

There are shirt waists for the new woman this year, as well as the summer girl, devoted to frills. For the young person whose tastes are inclined to be gentlemanly there are shirt waists made to order which fit to perfection and have stiff linen collars and cuffs. One of these waists is of a striped silk and linen material. The stripes are used in the sleeves to run around the arm instead of lengthwise. The back is cut with a yoke and three small box plaits are deftly arranged in the front each side of the buttons. With this waist a four-in-hand tie or stock is worn.

There is a fad for white linen collars and cuffs upon all manner of waists. It's a fetching style, too, so wonderfully fresh looking. The collars are built quite high and straight, with an overturning narrow band at the top, to set down over the broad stock of black satin with its bow at both back and front. The cuffs are deep and roll back over the sleeve.

The effect of the white collar and cuffs upon a waist of pink and scarlet plaid, outlined with black, may be imagined. The belts will be of kid, with quite plain kid buckles. Black ones for the black stock, and pale tinted ones for a stock of color.

Quantities of tulle and chiffon are used on everything. All the short spring capes are literally covered with gauzy materials. And the hats are piled high with tulle of all colors, generally a bunch of green and white tucked in among the flowers.

Very natty costumes are made of shepherd's check wools in cream color and sage green, ecrú and chestnut brown, damson and apricot, etc., with short tant jacket of plain cloth matching the dark color in the check or of cream-colored silk bordered with gimp in brown, green, damson, etc. Novelty goods this season show checks and half-inch blocks in a bewildering variety of color mixtures, and these same designs and colorings appear among the high priced Jacquard taffeta silks.

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Hamilton Disston was a son of Henry Disston, who was the largest manufacturer of saws and files in the United States. Since the death of Henry Disston the business has been carried on by his four sons.

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"But there ain't nothing the matter with me," said the boy. "It's my brother. He's gone off to the ball game, and I come to get his medicine."

"Why didn't you say so before?" asked the doctor rather sharply. "Cause I couldn't," replied the small boy with a grin.

And then the doctor, seeing the smiles of the students who were assisting at his clinic joined in the laugh against himself and remarked: "That's a case of mistaken philanthropy."—Youth's Companion.

In the town of Warriors-mark lives James Chamberlain and wife, keepers of probably the most remarkable hostelry in the state. But the history of the keepers is by far more remarkable. Mr. Chamberlain was 85 years of age on St. Patrick's day, and Mrs. Chamberlain was 80 no less than two weeks ago. They are both natives of the State, and for the past 57 years have officiated as host and hostess of the Chamberlain hotel, always kept in the same house, and looking much now as it did when they took charge more than a half century ago.

The Philadelphia Times expresses our sentiments when it says: "Whether the Democrats shall be the victors or vanquished in the Presidential battle of 1896, they could have no clearer, better candidate than Robert E. Pattison. He is for honest money, honest government, honest politics and honest administration. The party that fails with such a candidate and such a platform can fight hopeful battles in the future."

The good citizen should shun the libertine as he would a rattlesnake. The latter is much less dangerous.

If you would always be healthy, keep your blood pure with Hood's Sarsaparilla, the One True Blood Purifier.

Nine thousand maple trees will be cut up this summer on the upper Kennebec River, Maine, to furnish material for filling an order for 1,500,000 blocks for shoe lasts.