

THE CRICKET'S SONG.

Slowly the shadows have deepened and gathered:
Shorn lie the fields that were waving at morn;
Starlight falls slither on hill-side and meadow;
Far is the cry of the whippoorwill borne:
Lonesome and eerie the note of the owl
Perch some all creatures that hide and that
prowl:
Over the meadows and over the wood,
Over the brooklet and over the brake,
Rising, insistent and vibrant and shrill,
Over the valley and over the hill,
Myriad minstrel to music awakes
Song of the cricket:
From copse and from thicket,
Last word of summer and hint of the frost,
Echo of melodies vanished and lost.

Year after year of the smile and the tear,
Year of the festival, year of the fast,
Still in the note of the cricket we hear
Something we knew in the heart of the past—
Something prophetic that whispers of gladness,
Blended and mingled with memories of sadness.

Story unending,
New cadences sending,
Of it as it comes with its eager repeat,
Baffling and soothing and swelling and dying,
Vibrant, insistent and mournful and sweet.

Slowly the night shadows deepen and gather:
Shorn are the fields that were waving at
morn,
Starlight is faint on the hill and the river,
Dewdrops are gleaming on brier and thorn,
Song of the cricket
From copse and from thicket,
Last word of summer and hint of the frost,
Echo of melodies vanished and lost.
—Harper's Bazar.

SUCCEEDED TOO WELL.

Why the Admiral Was Not Pleased with the Dispatches.

"It's about four years ago," said the skipper, "that I was strolling one evening down the side of the harbor at Cove with my hands in my pocket, having nothing to do, nor any prospects of it, for my last ship had been wrecked off the Bermudas and nearly all the crew lost; and somehow when a man is in misfortune the underwriters won't have him at no price.

"Just before me, when I sat down, there was an old schooner that lay moored in the same place for as long as I could remember; she was there when I was a boy.

"The evening wore on, the moon shone out, and I was just determining to go home again for the night when I saw two men standing on the steps of the wharf below me and looking straight at the Ark. I heard a voice from one of the persons, that I at once knew to be the port admiral's.

"Well, Dawkins," said he to the other, "if you think she'll hold together I'm sure I've no objection. I don't like the job, I confess, but still the admiral must be obeyed."

"O, my lord," said the other, "she's the very thing; she's a rakish-looking craft, and will do admirably; any repair we want a few days will effect; secrecy is the great thing."

"Ho, ho!" thought I, "there's something in the wind here!" so I laid myself out on the anchor stock, to listen better, unobserved.

"We must find a crew for her, give her a few caronades and make her as shipshape as we can."

"As to the crew," said the other, "there are plenty of scoundrels in the fleet here fit for nothing else. Any fellow who has been thrice up for punishment in six months we'll draft on board of her; the fellows who have only been once to the gangway we'll make the officers."

"A pleasant ship's company, thought I, if the devil would only take the command."

"And wish a skipper proportionate to their merit," said Dawkins.

"Begad, I'll wish the French joy of them," said the admiral.

"Ho, ho!" thought I, "I've found you out at last; so this is a secret expedition; I see it all; they're fitting her out as a fire-ship, and going to send her slap in among the French fleet at Brest."

"Now, then," said the admiral, "tomorrow you will look out for the fellow to take the command. He must be a smart seaman; a bold fellow, too; otherwise the ruffianly crew will be too much for him; he may bid high; we'll come to his price."

"Never fear, my lord," said the other, "my care shall be to pitch upon one whose loss no one could feel; some one without friend or home, who, setting his life for naught, cares less for the gain than the very recklessness of the adventure."

"That's me," said I, springing up from the anchor-stock and springing between them; "I'm that man."

"My poor fellow, you know not what you ask; this is no common case of danger."

"I know it all, my lord; I have heard it all."

"We," said the admiral, "must speak together again; be here to-morrow night at this hour; keep your own counsel of what has passed; and now good night."

"This is the plan," said Dawkins, when we met again. "As soon as that old craft can be got ready for sea, or some other if she be not worth it, you will sail from this port with a strong crew, well armed and supplied with ammunition. Your destination is Malta, your object to deliver to the admiral stationed there the dispatches with which you will be intrusted; they contain information of immense importance, which for certain reasons cannot be sent through a ship of war, but must be forwarded by a vessel that may not attract peculiar notice.

"If you be attacked, your orders are to resist; if you be taken, on no account destroy the papers, for the French vessel can scarcely escape capture from our frigates, and it is of great consequence these papers should remain. Such is a brief sketch of our plan; the details can be made known to you hereafter.

"In less than three weeks I weighed anchor, and stood out to sea one beautiful morning in autumn, and got out on my expedition. I have already told you something of the craft. Let me complete the picture by informing you that before twenty-four hours passed over I discovered that so ungainly, so awkward, so unmanageable a vessel never put to sea.

"If the ship was bad the crew was

ten times worse. Every ill-conducted, disorderly fellow who had been up the gangway once a week or so, every unreclaimed landsman of bad character and no seamanship was sent on board of us; and, in fact, except there was scarcely any discipline and no restraint, we appeared like a floating penitentiary of convicted felons.

"So long as we ran down the channel with a slack sea and a fair wind, so long all went on tolerably well; to be sure they only kept watch when they were tired below, when they came up, reeled about the deck, did all just as they pleased, and treated me with no manner of respect.

"On the fourth day from the setting in of the gale as we entered the bay of Biscay, some one aloft descried a strange sail to windward, bearing down as if in pursuit of us. Scarcely did the news reach the deck when, bad as it was before, matters now became ten times worse—every counsel that drunkenness, insanity and crime combined could suggest being offered and decreed on.

"Meanwhile the chase gained rapidly upon us, and before noon we discovered her to be a French letter-of-marque with four guns and a long brass swivel upon the poopdeck.

"As for us, every sheet of canvas we could crowd was crammed on, but in vain; and, as we labored through the heavy sea, our riotous crew grew every moment worse, and sitting down sulkily in groups upon the deck declared that, come what might, they would neither work the ship nor fight her; that they had been sent to sea in a rotten craft merely to effect their destruction, and that they cared little for the disgrace of a flag they detested.

"Half furious, my first impulse was to run among them with my drawn cutlass and take heavy vengeance upon the ringleaders, when suddenly a round shot went flying over our heads.

"Down with the ensign; strike at once!" cried eight or ten voices together, as the ball whizzed through the rigging. Anticipating this, I had made the mate, a staunch-hearted, resolute fellow, make fast the signal halyard aloft, so that it was impossible for any one on deck to lower the bunting.

"Bang went another gun, and, before the smoke cleared away, a third, which, truer in its aim than the rest, went clean through the lower part of our mainsail.

"Steady, then, boys, and clear for action," said the mate. "She's a French smuggling craft that will sheer off when we show fight, so that we must not fire a shot till she comes alongside."

"By this time the Frenchman was close up, and ranging his long gun to sweep our decks; his crew were quite perceptible—about twenty bronzed, stout-looking fellows, stripped to the waist, and carrying pistols in broad, flat belts slung over the shoulder.

"Come, my lads," said I, raising my voice, as I drew a pistol from my side and cocked it, "our time is short now; I may as well tell you that the first shot that strikes us amidship blows up the whole craft and every man on board. We are nothing less than a fireship, destined for Brest harbor to blow up the French fleet. If you are willing to make an effort for your lives, follow me!"

"The men looked aghast. Short as was the time for reflection, they felt that there were many circumstances to encourage the assertion.

"Animated now with the desire for battle, they sprang to the binnacle and seized their arms.

"In an instant the deck became a scene of excited bustle, and scarcely was the ammunition dealt out and the boarding party drawn up when the Frenchman broached-to and lashed his bowsprit to our own.

"One terrific yell burst from our fellows as they sprang from the rigging and the poop upon the astonished Frenchmen, who thought that the victory was already their own; with death and ruin behind, their only hope before, they dashed forward like madmen to the fray.

"The conflict was bloody and terrific, though not a long one; nearly equal in number, but far superior in personal strength, and stimulated by their sense of danger, our fellows rushed forward, carrying all before them to the quarter-deck.

"My story is soon told now. We brought our prize safe into Malta, which we reached in five days. In less than a week our men were drafted into the different men-of-war on the station. I was appointed a warrant officer in the Sheerwater, forty-four guns; and, as the admiral opened the dispatch, the only words he spoke puzzled me for many a day after.

"You have accomplished your orders too well," said he; "that privateer is but a poor compensation for the whole French navy."

"Many years after I found out that our dispatches were false ones, intended to have fallen into the hands of the French, and mislead them as to Lord Nelson's fleet, which at that time was cruising to the southward to catch them. This of course explained what fate was destined for us—a French prison if not death; and, after all, either was fully good enough for the crew that sailed in the old Ark."—From the Works of Charles Lever.

Queen Victoria's Sight Declining.

Her majesty's eyesight is failing, and the royal oculist has frequently to be called into requisition. Her majesty has now to use very powerful spectacles when it is necessary for her to sign state documents. Blindness is hereditary in the family, for George III. suffered from it, but in his case it was supposed to have been brought on by excessive smoking. Shortness of sight seems to have suddenly affected many of the ladies and gentlemen of the court, who are now mostly armed with spectacles and eyeglasses. This is carrying ayeophany to an absurd degree, but such it is, and it is now quite the proper thing for a woman of the bedchamber or a pretty maid of honor to adjust her pincez while conversing with or without the charmed circle.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Dangers of Summer Resort Flirtations and Indiscriminate Introductions.

Well qualified by years of intelligent observation of a wide scope, enhanced by special opportunities for seeing, a very estimable woman—liberal minded, at that—of this city, gave utterance to the following:

"For the month now at hand the chief amusement, not to say occupation, of the young people at the summer resorts will be flirting. Dancing and driving, bathing and boating, croquet and bowling, and cards—all these will have their devotees and receive due attention, but the business of the season to which all these other occupations shall be subservient, is the old-new game of playing at love, forever so pleasing and amusing. Now and then, perhaps, there will be a touch of the real article—a genuine heart, warm and living, among the imitation hearts of ice, which may find its like, or thaw the ice, or, perhaps, be itself frozen—who knows? Few men care to marry the summer resort girl, or the girl they meet at the average summer resort. They see so much froth that it makes them disbelieve in the wine. So much deception causes doubt everywhere.

"On the other hand, men know to what extent maneuvering mammae lead their daughters, season after season, to the sacrifice. Matches made at watering places are seldom safe, and guardians and parents will be wise to keep a watchful eye on their charges and to inquire into the character and antecedents of the nice young men, whom ward or daughter scrapes acquaintance with in the surf. The convenient code which provides that such acquaintances are only for the season allows much latitude, and often, very often, covers doubtful personages with married women or with single ones, wise in the ways of the world. Gamblers and fortune-hunters have no cloven hoof which can not be hidden by the conventional patent-leather boot.

"Because a man waits or swims well, shall he, without other passport, dance or swim with any daughter, any woman? Shall Mr. Smith's introduction suffice for Mr. Jones, when all known of Mr. Smith is that he wears a good coat, boards at a good hotel, and drives a pretty team. It might be convenient if the custom common among some German peasants were introduced with us, the custom of indicating the dowry of each maiden by the stripes on her bodice. But possibly that is too much to ask of congress in a land where heiresses are in the minority. So the desiring young man who wishes to endow a fortune with his heart and hand must take his chances, and when the biter is bit, Mr. and Mrs. Lammie have no cause to complain if they do not receive much sympathy."—Chicago Tribune.

STILL IN THE SWIM.

He Was Not Too Old to Show His Ability.

A lean wiry old fellow from the country walked into a log cabin on the wooded island in Jackson park the other morning, pushed his hat back on his head, and inspected the interior with evident enjoyment.

"This looks like old times," he said, turning to two young men standing near him.

"Seen this kind of thing before, have you?" observed one of them.

"Seen it before? Well, I reckon! Why, I was brought up in a settlement where there wasn't half of the houses as good as this one. I know all about this style of livin' from the word go. And I use to have just as good a time as boys have now, too."

"I don't know about that, Uncle," said the other of the two young men. "You're not up to all the fun the boys have nowadays. Trouble with you is you're not in the procession any more. You're dropped out, you know, just as the band is beginning to play."

"Dropped out, have I?" exclaimed the old man. "Dropped out, hey?" he snorted, running his hand into his pocket and bringing it out again full of gold and silver coins. "Back number, am I? Look here, young fellow! Do you want to bet a few dollars I can't outrun you? Have you got a ten or twenty to put up that I can't throw either of you down? Can you turn a hand-spring and light on your feet still-legged? Bet you fifty dollars I can do it! Bet you one hundred dollars you can't! Want to try me on hop, step and jump? Bet you—hold on!"

A crowd had begun to gather and the two young men were edging away from him.

"I'll go you five to one I can jump further in two jumps than you can in three! I'll ride a mule race with either of you—don't be in a hurry!—I'll chin'a horizontal forty times to your ten, and I'll bet money I can—well, go then, goldyarn you, and don't you ever pick up an old man from Hancock county for a greenhorn again as long as you live!"—Chicago Tribune.

An Humble Beginning.

He—I am so glad that you are willing to begin housekeeping in a simple and economical way, but are you sure you can get along without servants?

She—Yes, indeed; that's easily fixed. We can hire furnished apartments which have been left in charge of a housekeeper, you know; and as for the meals, we can leave our orders with a caterer.—N. Y. Weekly.

Comforting.

Mamma (reprovingly)—If you go on being such a bad boy, you will turn mamma's hair white.

Little Johnny (thoughtfully)—Don't you think real nice, soft white hair would be sort o' becoming to your complexion, mamma?—Good News.

The Umbrella Question.

Jimson—By George, there goes a fellow with my umbrella.

Pottles—Well, why don't you make him give it up?

Jimson—Confound it, the man I got it from is right behind him. Just my infernal luck!—Troy Express.

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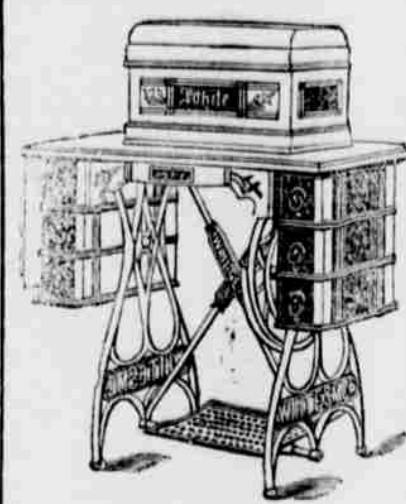
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Side meat " "	.14
Vinegar, per qt.	.08
Dried apples per lb.	.05
Dried cherries, pitted	.18
Raspberries	.18
Cow Hides per lb.	.03
Steer " " "	.05
Calf Skin	.40 to .50
Sheep pelts	.90
Shelled corn per bus.	.65
Corn meal, cwt.	2.00
Bran, " "	1.25
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