

BIDE A WEE, AND DINNA FRET.

A little Scotch girl on being asked the definition of "patience," gave her answer in the words, "Bide a wee, and dinna fret," which incident doubtless suggested to the author these lines:
Is the rose very dreary?
Patience yet!
Rest will be sweeter if thou art away,
And after night cometh the morning cheery.
Then bide a wee, and dinna fret.
The clouds have silver lining,
Don't forget!
And though he's hidden, still the sun is shining!
Courage! instead of tears and vain repining,
Just bide a wee, and dinna fret.
With toil and cares unending
Are best?
Bethinks then, how the storm from heaven descending
Snaps the stiff oak, but spares the willow bending.
And bide a wee and dinna fret.
Grief sharper sting doth borrow
From regret;
But yesterday is gone, and shall its sorrow
Unfit us for the present and the morrow?
Nay; bide a wee, and dinna fret.
An over-anxious brooding
Doth beset
A host of fears and fancies deluding;
Then, brother, let these torments be intruding,
Just bide a wee, and dinna fret.

WOMAN INCONSTANT.

Half a dozen men, some decanters, ice, Apollonaris and soda waters, a general atmosphere of tobacco and good fellowship, and you have the Single Man Club. Not an ordinary club by any means. The members cannot be counted in thousands, hundreds or even tens, for there are only six. No lordly marble-fronted premises raises its proud front in Piccadilly or Pall Mall, but the Single Men have six distinct meeting places in London alone—the residences of the six members; and luxurious as these are there is nothing more lordly about them than befits the chambers of a private gentleman. A deer forest in Scotland, salmon fishing in Norway and the sister lake are adjuncts of the club. A steam yacht at Cowes and a racing cutter are also distinguishing features, as is the coach that Dicky Redgate tows down Park lane and out into the country whenever race meetings are held in the vicinity of town. Their house-boat at Henley and their tent at Canterbury are not unpleasing, like those of other clubs, with their name. The faces of the six best known men about town are likelier than all the notices in the world to attract the attention of their crowds of friends at the aquatic and cricket festivals.
The meeting on the night in question was at Charles Quendie's rooms, and the club had been arranging the house parties for the autumn shoot at Driecourt Castle.
"Whatever a blessed thing it is that one is a bachelor!" said some one.
"Someone else laughed and replied:
'I bet there was a time when you thought otherwise.'
To which the other man retorted:
'The wise of to-day are the fools of yesterday.'
No one had the energy to ask him to explain himself, so he gave the explanation without being asked, in the shape of a story.
It was, of course, a tale of an inexperienced boy who happened to fall in love with an experienced girl. Gerald Lardie was the boy and Belle Prinemps the girl; they were about to be married, and the day before the wedding the boy gave the girl a handsome set of diamonds costing about £15,000. Oh! the joy of that girl. Oh! those full red lips. Oh! those passionate kisses.
And what did the girl give the boy? A priceless gift—his freedom. Yes, on the eve of the wedding she ran off with the boy's valet and actually married him. For a little time the boy was desolate, and then he realized her generosity, and to-day he repays her kindness by never calling her Mrs. Lesauge when she is Mme. Duplex or Mme. Morde when she is the Baroness Tre-camps.
"The wise of to-day are the fools of yesterday."
"Whatever a piece of luck!" said a dark man and the others puffed silently with the puff of attention.
"When three healthy men were between me and my title I fell in love," said he. "She was a girl in a thousand; young, beautiful, an American traveling in England."
"And therefore wealthy," added a fair man.
"The spoiled child of fortune," acquiesced the dark man. "We met by chance at a ball held in Oxford during the Summer festivities, discovered that dancing together was the perfection of motion and sat out as many dances as we dared. I told her that I adored her, she lied to me so delightfully that I was in the seventh heaven of delight. We met clandestinely, and while I poured my love she kissed me with those lying but beautiful lips. Ah! well, a remorseless chaperone took her up to town, and as I was the only bowler in the University eleven that year—a wretched year for Oxford cricket—I was perforce obliged to stay up until the Varsity match early in July brought me to Lord's. We had sworn to be true—the old—old swear—and of course I expected a warm welcome—I got it. The meeting was at my—at a near relative's home. My father presented me to my stepmother—the woman who had given me her promise to be my wife.
"'And this is your son, dear Sir George? I allow most folk would take him for your brother,' she said. And then she added as she calmly kissed me on the cheek, 'It will make them hurt when I send his photograph away home—do tell me, Sir George, do I look about forty-nine?'"
The dark man helped himself from a cut-glass decanter, and the five others, wondering how to break the silence, thought that they now knew why there was such a coolness between the dark man and his Countess stepmother.
An awkward pause then followed, and to make matters worse two men simultaneously asked when time it was. Dreadful. Fortunately a small fat man came to their relief. The fat man looked flabby and good for nothing; indeed one would imagine from his appearance

that he did nothing but eat and sleep. Appearances are notoriously deceptive, and they were never more so than in the case of the fat man. His name is Jermyn, and he is famous for having been nearer the North Pole than any other explorer who has attempted to reach it. If his crew had not mutinied and overpowered him I have no doubt but that mysterious polar region would have been conquered ere this.
'I always laugh when I think over my experience with the gentler sex. Somehow I have not the figure to cut much of a dash with them,' and he cheerfully patted himself on his most prominent feature. 'And yet I acted quite like a hero on one occasion. Imagine me in the part!'
He laughed heartily.
'Was going to meet my mother at King's-cross,' he continued, 'and was up and down the platform (the train wasn't late, the Great Northern never are; I was early) when I noticed a lovely girl waiting for the rattler. I was so intent on watching the girl that I did not notice the approaching train, and the girl was so intent on watching the approaching train that she did not notice a porter with a truck coming up behind her, so when the man shouted 'By your leave,' close to her ear, she was naturally so startled that she jumped on one side without looking where she was going. Unfortunately she was standing on the edge of the platform, so when she jumped she went head first over. Remember, boys, she was wearing open-work black stockings and other white garments appertaining to the old—in contradistinction to the new—woman—I naturally fell in love with her at first sight. Well—ha! ha! I of course went after—didn't see the train or probably shouldn't have been such a fool!'"
His listeners grunted incredulously. They knew their man.
'Seized the girl by something—I remember arranging her costume a bit as the engine swept by—and jerked her out off the lines about half a second before the beastly train passed over the place where she was lying. Well, my mother took a fancy to her, and took her up generally, and as she was a governess out of work she was naturally glad enough to go and stay at Ovelmere for a month or two, while the matter recommended her to all her friends, little thinking that her son wished to present her with a daughter-in-law in the shape of that governess. I never got so far as the proposal, as I wasn't quite sure that it was altogether fair, for of course, I knew that she might think herself indebted to me because of the Kings-cross incident, and also because I was well off and she was penniless. Of course at that age I was the kind of idiot who isn't satisfied unless he is loved for himself alone, and I wasn't certain that I was. However, I pretty soon was certain, for one day I took her a drive in a high dog-cart, and just when we had got to a precipice overlooking the lake the wretched horse shied, and we were thrown clean out of the conveyance into a bush below, and when we came to our senses we found ourselves hanging to the same wretched bough with the miserable lake beneath us and neither of us able to swim a little bit.
'It was a sweet predicament.
'Well, I was just going to say something valedictory to the lady and let go (for I knew the sickening branch wouldn't long support the pair of us), when it gave an ominous crack and the dear girl leaning towards me—but she was partially supported by a stone ledge—said, 'Don't you hear it? Let go or it will break and I shall be drowned.'
'I was so taken aback by my divinity being so selfish that I quite forgot myself and murmured, 'I cannot swim.' At which she gave a stab with a pair of scissors she had taken out of her chate-laine—here is the mark still on the back of my hand—and screamed, 'Then drown.'
'I naturally let go, struck the water and very shortly afterwards the bottom of the lake—violently. I don't know how it was that I never thought of the lake being shallow at that place, but one doesn't do much thinking at such a time. I waded ashore and rescued the lady—but my love was killed most effectually. Then I went to Africa and abjured the weaker sex."
The wise of to-day are the fools of yesterday.
A restless man who had been rolling the balls on the deserted billiard table in the darker part of the room, came forward and subsided into a perfect dream of a chair and without any preface started talking.
'I have been back in England about six years,' he began, 'and during that time have been a most devoted bachelor, as you fellows know, but there was a time when I, like you others, was the devoted slave of a woman, but, unlike your divinity, mine did not turn out to be very common clay after all—indeed, I am as fully resolved to go to-morrow to marry any woman but her as I was on the day I became betrothed to her.
'Six years ago I was a prosperous merchant in South America, which was a peculiar position for the younger son of a noble English house. I had been out some four or five years, having found that England was not a suitable climate for the younger son of a peer—a man cut off from the ordinary occupations of a penniless young man by the position of his father and without the wherewithal to live decently at his leisure.
'My name and savoir faire were undoubtedly of great advantage to me in the South American republic that I elected to reside in, and my diligence—for I was most anxious to get back to the old country—was rewarded, so that at the end of four years I found myself a junior partner in one of the richest firms in the Western Hemisphere.
'Now, the senior partner had an only daughter, a lovely girl of about eighteen, and I soon found that without that girl life was not worth living, so I took steps to secure her for my wife. There was nothing romantic about our engagement. I obtained her father's consent before asking her to marry me in the strictly orthodox way, and having done so obtained the daughter's.
'We were devoted to each other, and I was the most envied man in the Republic, for the fashionable young men of the capital had been most persistent in their endeavors to gain the prize which my good fortune had secured to me.
'Of all her suitors the most persevering was the youngest son of the President, a naval officer, who had recently been promoted to the command of a torpedo boat; I will give him credit so

far that I believe he really was devotedly in love with the girl, unlike many others, who were in love with her fortune.
'Well, about a fortnight before we were to be married, a fearful blot nearly sent me out of my mind—my future wife died suddenly.
'Now, I had just given her a wedding gift of a set of valuable jewelry, and nothing would satisfy me but that they should be buried with her. This was done and a few days later, when some one—her father, I think—went to the vault it was discovered that the coffin had been tampered with, and examination elicited the fact that the body and jewelry had been removed. You can imagine how this sacrilege affected me; her father and myself offered enormous rewards for information, but no clue was discovered except that some one had seen a party of sailors carrying something from the direction of the cemetery to the sea, which turned our suspicions towards the President's son, but as the latter's ship was discovered a total wreck, and as none of her crew save one was ever heard of again, the information did not aid us in our quest.
'The man who came back was a lunatic, and as such was confined in an asylum by the President's orders, but there was something in his narrative that gave me some hope. His story was to the effect that he, two other sailors and their officer—the President's son—stole the body of my partner's daughter and carried her on board their vessel.
'That they had not been out to sea long when the lady came out of the trance or deep sleep into which she had been thrown by some powerful drug secretly administered. Then he told a long story which sounds very improbable, but which may still be true. It was that having got on board as much coal as they could carry, the chief officer made a proposal, which as it would make the men—all foreigners used to bribes—dependent for life, was promptly accepted by them.
'All on board with the exception of the girl, swore allegiance and eternal silence to their chief, and then the boat went cruising in the track of the mail steamers.
'It hardly seems possible, but the man asserted that a certain vessel coming in sight, the chief signalled to her (on some pretext) to stop, and that he went on board with one man, leaving the rest of his crew on the torpedo-boat with full steam up. That he threatened the captain of the mail steamer with instant extermination by his engines of war if the latter did not hand over the contents of his strong room, and he told him that he had left word that if he did not return within a certain time a torpedo was to be discharged at the ill-fated vessel. As I said before the President had the man confined as a lunatic, but, all the same, that steamer, when it was discovered wrecked on the Spanish coast, had not a single diamond in the strong room, and when she set out she had a record cargo, but that part of the story has never been verified.
'Some months ago, when traveling in Dalmatia, I met a huge funeral equipage. It was the son of the late President of that South American republic that was being buried, and the chief mourner—save the mark!—was the poor woman he had kept prisoner in that out-of-the-way corner of Europe, his wife—the girl I was to have married.
'Part of the sailor's story is true, but about the piracy she cannot say, as she was drugged at the time. Her husband left her enormously wealthy, and no one knows how he accumulated the money. And now I have only one more thing to say, that I must tender my resignation to this club, as I am about to be married.'
The wise of to-day are the fools of to-morrow," murmured some one under his breath.
A servant brought in a telegram. The restless man tore it open, read and let the tissue paper flutter to the ground.
'I withdraw my resignation,' he said.
No one asked the reason why, but some one poked the fire.—Illustrated Bits.

Selling a Mine.
'It is the easiest thing on earth to sell a mine in London for almost any price, provided you have anything to show an expert,' said Maj. Frank McLaughlin. 'There is also a right way and a wrong way to go about it. Some time ago I went to London to negotiate the sale of some mining property. Of course, the first thing I had to do was to let capital know what I was there for. Then, when inquiries commenced, I simply said: "Gentlemen, I have mining property to sell. If you mean business and want to buy send your expert out to examine the property and make a report on it."
'A company was organized. The expert examined the property and reported favorably, and a meeting was held to discuss terms.
'Now, major,' said the spokesman, 'we have found that the property may be worth something. What is your price?'
'Two hundred and fifty thousand,' said I.
'That is more than we expected to pay. We expected to pay about 200,000. There is not much difference between 200,000 and 250,000. If you will drop the 50,000 we will take it.
'I expected to get about 100,000 for the property, so with a show of reluctance I agreed to accept their offer. When the papers were made out I was surprised to learn that they had been talking about pounds and I about dollars, but I was very careful not to let my surprise leak, and that is the way I got 1,000,000 for the mine. Great people do business with it.'—San Francisco Post.

Absent-Mindedness.
The best instance I know is that of an amiable Irish Judge, now no longer on the bench. Among other amusing tales told of him, it is said that on the occasion of a "bar dinner" he went up stairs to dress, but did not reappear. The company sat patiently for some time, till at length, just as their hunger was getting the better of their manners, and an emissary was being dispatched to hunt up the missing Judge, his lordship appeared, and explained, with many apologies, that, imagining he was retiring for the night, he had undressed and got into bed. After an hour's snooze it suddenly struck him that he had not yet dined, on which he hurried down to his guests.—London Spectator.

Of Interest to Farmers.

A special from State College to the Philadelphia Times says: The question of spontaneous combustion has long been a mooted one so far as its relation to hay or fodder in a stack or mow is concerned. George C. Watson, professor of agriculture at the college, in a bulletin soon to be issued from the experiment station, presents an irrefutable argument in substantiation of the theory in a recent happening at one of the college barns. Sparks of fire were seen dropping from the ceiling of the cow stable, underneath the east wing of the college barn. Investigation soon proved that the fire was confined to a mow of hay. To prevent the mass of hay bursting into flames, every hole was stapped up which might by any possibility admit any draft and the hay was covered with wet blankets, on which water was constantly thrown. Then, to save the barn, a hole was knocked in the side and the entire mow of hay was thrown out, some thirty tons in all.
An examination of the pile of hay showed that the entire mass was so thoroughly charred that it would crumble when handled and the whole of it was rendered unfit for stock food. While positive proof of the origin of the fire may be lacking, the circumstances are such that it seems safe to consider it of spontaneous origin. There was no fire near the barn, nor was there any way by which an incendiary could get in his work. For several days previous to the fire a peculiar odor was noticeable in the vicinity of the barn, which was compared by many to that emitted by burning grain. The bulletin prescribes as the best way to act under such circumstances, to save the building, is to keep the hay as wet as possible and remove the same from the building in the quickest possible time, taking the utmost precaution to at all times exclude all draft or air currents.

Cures, absolute, permanent cures have given Hood's Sarsaparilla the largest sales in the world and the first place among medicines.

Luxury in a Prison Cell.
William A. Sponsler, of New Bloomfield, late president of the wrecked Perry county bank of Sponsler & Junkin, for a number of years the leading member of the local bar, and the local Republican competitor of Judge Lyons in the recent judicial contest, has spent his first week in prison. His relatives have fixed up his cell comfortably. He has his books and a writing table, and, in anticipation of a long imprisonment, it is the intention to have his cell papered.

When the Perry County Bank closed its doors it owed depositors \$120,000. All his property has been sold and less than \$10,000 was realized.
'It strength is what you want, you should study what causes your weakness. It is practically lack of food. But you eat three meals a day, and all you can eat at a time. Yes, but do you digest it? Food undigested, is not food. It is not nourishment. It doesn't create strength. To digest your food take Shaker Digestive Cordial at meals. After a while you will digest your food without it. Then you will get well, and strong and healthy. Shaker Digestive Cordial cures indigestion and all its symptoms, such as nausea, headache, eruptions, pain in the stomach, giddiness, loss of appetite, etc. It makes your food nourish you, and make you strong and fat and hearty. Druggists sell it. Trial bottle 10 cents.

A Mighty Hunter.
George Smith, who resides in the wilds of Elk county, has, during the past sixty years, killed in the wilderness of that and Jefferson counties 14 panthers, 500 bears, 30 elk, 3,000 deer, 500 catamounts, 500 wolves and 600 wild cats. He has killed seven deer in a day and as many as five bears in a day.

An exchange remarks that you can't keep women away from weddings. You don't want to. What would a wedding amount to if there was no women there?

READ THE COLUMBIAN.



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The Largest and Strongest Natural Premium Life Insurance Companies in the World.
\$60,000,000 of New Business in 1895.
\$308,660,000 of Business in Force.
\$4,084,075 of Death Claims paid in 1895.
\$25,000,000 of Death Claims paid since business begun.
1895 SHOWS—AN INCREASE IN GROSS ASSETS, AN INCREASE IN NET SURPLUS, AN INCREASE IN INCOME, AN INCREASE IN BUSINESS IN FORCE, OVER 105,800 MEMBERS INTERESTED.

The Annual Meeting of the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association was held in the Association's Building, corner Broadway & Duane St., New York City, on Wednesday, January 22nd, and was attended by a large and representative gathering of policy holders who listened with keen interest to the masterly Annual Report of President Burnham.
Many policy holders evidently regarded this as a favorable opportunity to meet face to face the new chief executive officer of the Association, President Frederick A. Burnham, the man whose grasp of life insurance, whose keen executive ability and strong individuality have enabled him to take up the work laid down in death by the founder of the institution, the late Edward B. Harper, and make of the administration of his office of President, not an echo or copy of that of his predecessor, but a piece of finished work, characteristic of a man of independent views, and worthy to follow the work which had carried the Association to a position never attained in the same length of time by any life insurance organization in the world. It is rare, indeed, that a great institution like this passes, without check to its prosperity, through a change in the executive chief, for it is rare indeed that a chief like the late Mr. Harper finds so able a successor as President Burnham.
The record of the year 1895 speaks for itself, and shows the following gratifying results.
The GROSS ASSETS have increased during the year from \$5,536,115.99 to \$5,661,707.82.
The NET SURPLUS over liabilities shows a NET GAIN for the year of \$306,329.43, and now amounts to \$3,582,509.32.
The INCOME from all sources shows a gain for the year of \$631,541.97, and amounts to \$5,575,281.56.
DEATH CLAIMS to the amount of \$4,084,074.92 were paid during the year, an increase over the previous year of \$1,013,560.91.
The BUSINESS IN FORCE shows a gain for the year of \$15,293,265, and now amounts to \$308,659,371.
Counting three hundred working days in the year the daily average income for 1895 is \$18,584.27; the daily average payments for death claims, \$13,652.25, and the daily average gain in business in force within a fraction of \$51,000.
Persons desiring insurance, an agency, or any other information concerning the MUTUAL RESERVE FUND LIFE ASSOCIATION may apply to

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