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Opportunity.

In harvest-time, when fields and woods
Out-dazzle sunset's glow,
And scythes clang music through the land,
It is too late to sow.
Too late! too late!
It is too late to sow.

In wintry days, when weary earth
Lies cold in pulseless sleep,
With not a blossom on her shroud,
It is too late to reap.
Too late! too late!
It is too late to reap.

When blue-eyed violets are astir,
And new-born grasses creep,
And young birds chirp, then sow, betimes,
And thou, betimes, shalt reap.
Then sow! then sow!
And thou betimes shalt reap.

The Foreclosure of the Mortgage.

Walk right in the settin'-room, Deacon; it's all in a muddle, you see,
But I hadn't no heart to right it, so I've jest let everything be.
Besides, I'm going to-morrer—I calk'late to start with the dawn—
And the house won't seem so home-like if it's all upsot and forlorn.
I sent off the children this mornin': they both on 'em begged to stay,
But I thought 'twould be easier, mebbe, if I was alone to-day.
For this was the very day, Deacon, jest twenty year ago,
That Caleb and me moved in; so I couldn't forgit it, you know.
We was so busy and happy!—we'd been married a month before—
And Caleb would clear the table and brush up the kitchen floor.
He said I was tired, and he'd help me; but law! that was always his way—
Always handy and helpful, and kind, to the very last day.
Don't you remember, Deacon, that winter I broke my arm?
Why, Caleb skursely left me, not even to 'tend to the farm.
There night and mornin' I saw him, a-settin' so close to my bed,
And I knew him in spite of the fever that made me so wild in my head.
He never did nothin' to grieve me, until he left me behind—
Yes, I know, there's no use in talkin', but somehow it eases my mind.
And he jest such store by you, Deacon, I needn't tell you now,
But unless he had your judgment, he never would buy a cow.
Well, our cows is gone, and the horse too—poor Caleb was fond of Jack.
And I cried like a fool this mornin' when I looked at the empty rack.
I hope he'll be kindly treated: 'twould worry poor Caleb so
If them Joneses should whip the cretur—but I s'pose he ain't like to know.
I've thinkin' it over lately, that when Mary sickened and died,
Her father's spirit was broken, for she was allus his pride.
He wasn't never so cheery; he'd smile, but the smile wa'n't bright,
And he didn't care for the caittle, though once they'd been his delight.
The neighbors all said he was ailin', and they tried to hint it to me;
They'd talked of a church-yard cough; but, oh! the blind are those who won't see.
I never believed he was goin' till I saw him a-laylin' here dead.
There, there! don't be anxious, Deacon; I haven't no tears to shed.
I've tried to keep things together—I've been slavin' early and late—
But I couldn't pay the int'rest, nor git the farm-work straight.
So of course I've gone behindhand, and if the farm should sell
For enough to pay the mortgage, I s'pose 'twill be doing well.
I've prayed ag'inst all hard feelin's, and to walk as a Christian ought,
But it's hard to see Caleb's children turned out of the place he bought;
And readin' that text in the Bible 'bout widows and orphans, you know,
I can't think the folks will prosper who are willing to see us go.
But there! I'm keepin' you, Deacon, and it's nigh your time for tea.
"Won't I come over?" No, thank you; I feel better alone, you see.
Besides, I couldn't eat nothin'; whenever I've tried it to-day
There's somethin' here that chokes me. I'm narvous, I s'pose you'll say.
"I've worked too hard?" No, I haven't. Why, it's work that keeps me strong;
If I sot here thinkin' I'm sartin my heart would break before long.
Not that I care about livin'. I'd rather be laid away
In the place I've marked beside Caleb, to rest till the jedgment-day.
But there's the children to think of—that makes my dooty clear,
And I'll try to follow it, Deacon, though I'm tired of this earthly speer,
Good-by, then. I shan't forgit you, nor all the kindness you've showed;
Twill help to cheer me to-morrow, as I go on my lonely road,
For—What are you sayin', Deacon. I needn't—I needn't go?
You've bought the mortgage, and I can stay? Stop! say it over slow.—
Jest wait now—jest wait a minute—I'll take it in bime-by.
That I can stay. Why, Deacon, I don't see what makes me cry!
I haven't no words to thank you. If Caleb was only here,
He'd sech a head for speakin', he'd make my feelin's clear.
There's a picter in our old Bible of an angel from the skies,
And though he hasn't no great coat, and no spectacles on his eyes,
He looks jest like you, Deacon, with your smile so good and trew,
And whenever I see that picter, 'twill make me think of you.
The children will be so happy! Why, Debby will 'most go wild:
She fretted so much at leavin' her garding behind, poor child!
And, law! I'm as glad as Debby, ef only for jest one thing—
Now I can tend the posies I planted there last spring
On Caleb's grave: he loved the flowers, and it seems as ef he'll know
They're a-bloomin' all around him while he's sleepin' there below.

—*Mrs. E. T. Corbett, in Harper's Magazine.*

AFTER MANY YEARS.

"It's always the same thing,—cutting wood, fetching water, and running errands for mother's boarders. It's 'Here Tom!' 'There Tom!' 'Look sharp, boy!' from morning until night, till I'm fairly discouraged. Most of them are civil enough, but that detestable Col. Monkton speaks to me as if I was a dog. I'm as much a gentleman born as he, though mother does take lodgers now. It's hard for her, brought up as she was in wealth and luxury; and if it wasn't that she needs so much, I'd leave here tomorrow."

The lad's bright, handsome face grew dark and sullen. He was half reclining under a tree, gazing out over a vast expanse of rippling waves; for Fairview, where his mother lived, was a seaboard village. It was not a fashionable resort, by any means, but a kind of fishing hamlet, where persons of small means and quiet tastes came for their summer holiday.

"I'm full seventeen, and am just rusting away here," he continued. "I could do better for mother and myself anywhere else. But I'm nothing here but a waiting-boy for that tippling, red-faced Monkton. What a drunken beast he is, with his bottle of whiskey every day! And I'm to fetch it to him, and be sworn at if he's out of temper! Mother's always talking to me about my furious temper, and it is violent, I know; but somehow old Monkton makes me bad all over whenever I go near him."

"What are you doing there, you lazy rascal?" shouted a horse, cracked voice from an upper window which overlooked the tree under which Tom Courtney was lying. "I sent you after my whiskey an hour ago, and there you are yet. Better be off, or I'll make the place warm for you!"

The boy sprang up, his face crimson with rage and mortification. The furious temper his mother deplored had mastered him.

"Go after your liquor yourself!" he cried. "I'm ashamed to be packing your drinks through the street. It's a disgrace to mother's house to have a tippler like you in it, and I won't be your lackey any longer."

Col. Monkton for a few minutes seemed dumb with astonishment. But his first impulses when he recovered his senses, was to hurl a large water-pitcher at the boy's head.

It missed him, but, striking against the trunk of the tree, was shivered.

At the noise, two gentlemen who were boarding at the house put their heads out of their windows, and Mrs. Courtney, hastening through the front yard, endeavored to lead her son into the house.

"For my sake, my boy!" she cried, in an agony.

He unclasped her hands, and shook his fist at his antagonist, his eyes blazing with rage.

"Yes, I repeat, you're a disgrace to any decent house—with your oaths and vulgar words, and drunken ways. If you were not an old man, I'd horsewhip you out of it!

"I'll go in now, mother. I've said what I had to say.

"Yes, mother," he repeated, when they were in her room, "he is a disgrace, and you know it, if he is the only one who pays liberally for his board."

"Couldn't we have got rid of him without all this trouble?" said the mother, still trembling and unnerved by the scene. "O Tom, Tom! after all the pains I have taken to teach you self-control, is that ungovernable temper of yours always to master you?"

Tom hung his head.

"But, mother," he said, "I couldn't stand the names he called me. I suppose the Courtney blood is not quite out of my veins, if we do keep boarders. You see now it's best for me to leave here. I'm nothing but a servant, and an ill-used one at that. Any stout, strong boy can do all I have to do. It will be best for you, too, mother, in every way, if you'd only think so. I'll make money for you; and then you won't be always dreading that I shall get you into trouble by my temper."

Mrs. Courtney shook her head sadly.

"You won't leave your temper behind, my boy, I'm afraid. But perhaps you are right. I may have kept you here too long. But oh, Tom, it's so hard to give up all I have in the world."

She was a widow, and he was her only child. In his delight at his mother's consent, Tom was utterly unconscious of the pain it cost her to give it. He was serious in his expression of delight. He clasped his arms around her neck and kissed her careworn face.

"Mammy mine," he cried, "you've made a man of me! Look upon our fortune as made. You shall play the lady once more, and wear velvet and lace as in the old times—that is, when my ships come in.

"Oh, you needn't smile! They're bound to come in some day, for I've made up my mind to succeed, and you say yourself I never fail when I try. Yes, you've saved me, for there was murder in my heart when that old ruffian abused me. I don't think anything he could say now could move me."

"You don't eh, you young vagabond!" cried the well-known hoarse voice; and turning, Mrs. Courtney and her son saw Col. Monkton standing on the threshold, with a large horse-whip in his hand, and his red face purple and swollen with passion.

"Can't be moved by anything I say, eh?" And the colonel advanced into the room. "Perhaps, young sir, something I can do will move you. I'll teach you to insult gentlemen!"

And before Tom Courtney fairly took in his meaning, a cutting lash descended upon his shoulder.

With a cry like that of a furious animal, Tom threw himself upon his antagonist. Col. Monkton was an old man, but tall, and being still powerful, the struggle was a violent one.

The screams of the widow brought the other gentlemen from their rooms; but when they entered, Tom had freed himself from Col. Monkton's grasp, and pushed him violently against the wall, upon striking which, he had fallen heavily on the floor, where he was now lying in an unconscious condition, breathing with a strange sound.

"You've killed him, I believe," said one of the gentlemen who had been examining the fallen man. "At least, I think he's dying. Here, Miles, run for the doctor. He's at the next cottage."

"O my boy! my boy!" moaned Mrs. Courtney, wild with terror.

Bewildered, and hardly knowing what he was doing, Tom fled from the room.

"You've killed him!" rang in his ears as he ran towards the beach. Was he indeed a murderer, he kept asking himself as he hurried on.

Some distance from the shore a schooner was preparing to sail.

"It's the Minnie," he muttered, "bound for Galveston. I heard yesterday she was short of hands. I'll ship on her."

As in a dream, he hastened down to his own little skiff, looking around with terror to see if he was pursued. He loosened the rope, jumped in, and in a few minutes was on board the Minnie, and soon out of sight of Fairview.

Then for the first time he realized his situation and his mother's desolation. At thought of his mother's tears, he would have returned at any hazard; but it was too late.

In the meantime, the physician who had been summoned hastily entered the room where Colonel Monkton still lay, everyone being afraid to move him.

"Just what I expected," said Dr. Lyle, bending over the purple swollen face. "These choleric men, drinking old men generally end in this way. Apoplexy, madam, and not the first attack. This one, I fear, is going to be fatal.

"Then it's not—oh! it's not——" And Mrs. Courtney, unable to finish her sentence, gasped for breath.

"What does she mean?" asked Dr. Lyle of one of the gentlemen present.

"Her son Tom had a scuffle with the colonel when he fell, and she was afraid he had hurt him."

Dr. Lyle turned again to the prostrate body and examined it carefully.

"Not a bit of it, madam," he said. "I dare say his fit of passion and the exertion hastened the old man's end. But it was bound to come. I told him yesterday, when he complained of his head, that unless he threw his liquor out of the window, and held his temper in check, he wouldn't live six months. True prophet, you see!"

Mrs. Courtney tottered to her room, and there on her knees offered up a fervent prayer of thanksgiving that from blood-guilt, at least, her son was free.

But now, alarmed at his absence, she searched for him,—in the house, the garden,—and then, with swift steps, she went through the village, asking every one she met if they had seen Tom.

No, he had not been seen that morning.

Old Nathan, a weather-beaten sailor, who had just brought in a load of fish, heard her question, and answered it.

"Lookin' for Tom, mistress? I seed him, about an hour ago, goin' aboard the Minnie, jest as she was gettin' under way. She's jest started on a cruise. But I wouldn't take on, mistress. Tom's a bright boy, and a handy one. He'll most like come back twice the man he was when he started."

So he had gone, and with a fancied load of guilt on his poor young shoulders! Mrs. Courtney felt as if her burden was more than she could bear.

She had a faint hope he would write to her, and for days, weeks and months she haunted the post-office. At last she went as if mechanically, and without asking a question would look at the postmaster. He understood the look, and would answer,—

"Nothing to day, ma'am."

But about six months after Tom's departure, she had no sooner entered the office than a letter was placed in her hand.

"Come at last, ma'am," said the cheery postmaster, "and it's Tom's handwriting. Sit right down here and read it. You're all in a tremble, and you can't walk home yet."

Yes, it was from Tom. He was in Galveston, and had made several trips on the Minnie to different ports.

"Do you know, mother," he wrote, "I've been afraid to write to you, fearing it might give the clew to my whereabouts. But I've a friend here, a young lawyer, and he tells me I was a simpleton to run away as I did. Col. Monkton made the first attack on me, and no law could bring me in guilty of murder.

"I've often wondered how the one blow which knocked him up against the wall could have killed him. It was the first I gave him after I got away from his grasp. I know I'm really guilty. I wanted to kill him, and his blood is on my hands.

"I'm going for a long cruise on the coast of Africa, in the Albatross, and when I return I'll come back to Fairview. For I feel that I must see you, whatever the consequences may be.

"I will write when I can; but as I do not know the course we are to take, or the ports we are to touch at, I cannot tell you where to address your letters. In two years I will be at home."

Thankful for the letter, Mrs. Courtney took up the broken threads of her life, and tried to fill it with the old interests and the old duties.

But the two years spread to four, and no further tidings came from Tom. The mother's hair turned gray, and her eyes lost their light. It was such a weary work waiting and watching for what never came!

She knew by heart all the shipwrecks on the African coast, and the plagues which desolated it. Where so many lost their lives, how could she expect her boy would escape? Had he been alive, he would surely have written.

"I shall never seen my boy in this world," she would think in her hours of despondency.

The seventh Christmas after Tom's departure found Mrs. Courtney not only sick, but without means to defray the necessary expenses of her illness. It was raining and blowing without, and the invalid shivered over her wretched fire of drift-wood, just brought in by a kind neighbor.

"It's come at last," she murmured, with her sad, patient smile—"the poverty I've fought against so hard and so long. I had hoped to die and be with my boy before this hour came upon me. But why should I murmur? He doeth all things well? I will trust Him even if He"—

As she spoke, the door was thrown open, and a figure sprang forward. It was muffled up, and the face was bronzed and changed, but the mother knew her son, and lay sobbing in his arms.

No questions were asked or answered. It was enough for them both that they were together once more. But after a long time he told of the loss of his vessel, and of a long tedious sickness on the coast. He had written and sent money when he could, though the letters never reached her.

"But I've risen, mother, till I am now first mate of the Vampire, and your bad days are over. Yes, I heard in the village that old Monkton died of apoplexy, and I thank God that I did not kill him. I thank Him, too, that I am cured of my terrible temper; or, at least, that it never quite masters me now."

"It has been a cruel lesson to both of us." And Mrs. Courtney shuddered.

"But why to you, mother?" he cried, vehemently. "You, innocent and good, should not have suffered for my wrongdoing. That does not seem to me right or just."

"Hush, hush, my boy!" she answered, solemnly.

"O my son! my pride in you and my weak over-indulgence deserved chastisement. But all my sorrow is forgotten now; and God is indeed good to us both."

Wealth and Science.

There lived in England, in the last century, a man of science, named Henry Cavendish, who was born in 1731, and died in 1810. He was a gentleman of fine cultivation, an excellent mathematician, a profound electrician, and a most acute and ingenious chemist. He published many papers, containing results of recondite investigations and the most important discoveries. He was not only a great original thinker, but a most indefatigable and accurate experimenter, and one of his main lines of research was the chemical constitution of the atmosphere. He made no less than 500 analyses of the air, and it is to him that we owe our chief knowledge of the composition of the breathing medium. Now, there is not an American that will not commend all this as most proper and admirable. But there is another side to the case. Henry Cavendish was a man of enormous wealth, for which he cared absolutely nothing. He was one of the greatest proprietors of stock in the Bank of England, and when on one occasion his balance had accumulated to $350,000, and the directors thinking it too much capital to be unproductive, asked him if they should not invest it, he simply replied: "Lay it out, if you please." That small portion of his wealth which he could make use of in his investigations was so used, but he did not allow the remainder of it to divert his thoughts in the slightest degree from the unremitting prosecution of his scientific labors. He died worth $7,000,000, which was an immense sum of money at the beginning of this century, but he had not the slightest interest in those objects for which wealth is generally prized. Now, the whole case being given, to the eye of the typical American, Henry Cavendish will be regarded as a fool. "With all that money," the representative American would say, "I could keep a yacht, and a stud of fast horses, and build a church, and endow a college, and send a dozen missionaries to the heathen, and run a whole political campaign at my own expense; and you say this old creature actually spent his life in the smudge and stenches of a chemical laboratory, puttering with gases, and worried about the composition of the air!"—*Popular Science Monthly.*

A Dr. George Dutton, of Springfield, Mass., has arranged with fifty patients to keep them well at $3 a year each, providing they call for advice at his office. If he visits them he charges half the usual fees. This arrangement has existed two years.

A FAMOUS MURDER CASE.

Recollections of the Crime of Dr. Webster—The Most Remarkable Murder Case in New England.

A correspondent of the Brooklyn *Eagle* revives the story of a murder in Boston twenty-nine years ago that was one of the most famous cases of the day. The correspondent says: Except the murder of the child, Mabel Young, in the Warren avenue Baptist church by the sexton, Piper, a few years since, nothing of a criminal and bloody nature has so stirred the citizens of Boston as did the murder of Dr. George Parkman by Dr. John W. Webster, on November 29, 1849, at the Massachusetts Medical College, in North Grove street. Dr. Parkman was a wealthy man, who devoted most of his time to looking after his property. Dr. Webster was the Professor of Chemistry in the institution, and owed Parkman $470, which sum of money the latter called at the college to collect on the day above indicated. The last seen of Parkman alive by any one who knew him, except his murderer, was when about two o'clock in the day he entered a provision store in the neighborhood of the college and purchased a few articles, saying that he had an engagement, but would soon return and himself carry the articles home. Dr. Webster had finished his lecture for the day, and all the medical students had left the building when Dr. Parkman entered it. The latter passed rapidly to the chemical room in the rear of the lecture hall, where he found Dr. Webster arranging the apparatus that had been used in his lecture. Parkman was a hard and grasping man, and Webster was a man of science, poor, but proud, with a high temper. Webster's inability to pay a note that Parkman held led to a quarrel, and the former struck the latter over the head with a heavy piece of grape vine and killed him. Webster then locked the doors, dragged his victim down stairs, removed the clothing, and having placed the body in a sink, deliberately proceeded to cut it up. The room in which he worked was a laboratory on the ground floor, having a furnace, into which he put Parkman's head and all his clothing and attempted to burn them up. The thorax he placed in a tea chest. Some parts of the body he attached to fish lines and lowered into a privy vault that was washed by the Charles river. Some parts of the limbs were never found. Webster worked several days, and most of the time for one or two nights in trying to cover up all traces of his victim.

The disappearance of Dr. Parkman was the talk of the town, and his family issued posters containing a full description of his person, together with a large reward—$3,000, if my memory serves me—for his return if alive, or for his body if dead. As soon as Webster learned that Parkman had an appointment with some one on the day of his disappearance, he called on Mrs. Parkman, offered his condolence, and said he was the one with whom the doctor had an engagement on the unfortunate day. He said he had paid the doctor $470, who, on receiving the money, had run out of the college, seeming to be in great haste. Search was made in the vicinity of the college, in many of the tenement houses owned by Dr. Parkman, who, it was feared, had been murdered for the money he might have had while collecting rents. The reward was a large one, or so considered in those days, and great efforts were made to gain it. The earth in the cellars of all Dr. Parkman's houses was dragged, but the man could not be found. Reports came that Parkman had been seen in far away places and had been spoken to by those who knew him; but there was no truth in these statements.

The crime was traced to Webster in this way: Dr. Parkman had been seen the last time alive in the medical college. This fact, coupled with the strange actions of Dr. Webster, led the janitor of the college, Littlefield by name, to suspect that Dr. Parkman had been killed and his body secreted within the college building. The janitor had always had the run of the building, but since the disappearance Dr. Webster had kept the laboratory locked. Littlefield made up his mind to examine the vault above mentioned, and in order to do so he was obliged to enter the cellar and dig through a heavy stone wall. Whenever Dr. Webster left the building, which was seldom, Littlefield stationed his wife at the front window, in order to inform him of the doctor's return, and made the best of his opportunities to penetrate the dense masonry. At last he made a hole in the wall, and placing a light in the vault he saw suspended, by means of fish hooks and lines, parts of a human body. His suspicions being confirmed, Littlefield communicated with the police, and the matter was very rapidly thereafter worked up. After the murder Dr. Webster was much of the time at the college, an unusual thing with him, and Littlefield noticed that a hot fire was kept in the laboratory furnace for several days and nights that he could feel the heat in an adjoining passage-way, by placing his hand on a wall that was near the furnace.

One evening, after Dr. Webster went to his home in Cambridge, the laboratory was opened and during a long search more of the remains of Dr. Parkman's body were found.

Dr. Webster was arrested in a very neat way. Two officers in a hack went to his house at about ten o'clock in the evening and informed him that friends of the Parkman family wanted to search the college, but did not want to act without his presence. The doctor put on his boots and said he would go with them and help in the search. He then informed his family that he was going out for a short time, and that he should soon return; but he never saw his home again. In the confession that he made in the last hours of that bloody tragedy Webster described the agony of that dreadful night. As he rode in the carriage with the two officers he tried to appear free and easy in conversation, but he was unable to decide whether he was under arrest or really required for the purpose indicated. When the carriage stopped at the Leverett street jail, he knew it was an arrest. He had made up his mind that he would die rather than submit to an arrest. So he had prepared and placed in his vest pocket a pill of strichnine containing enough of the poison to kill five men. As he stepped out of the carriage he slipped the pill into his mouth and expected soon to be a dead man. But his agony of mind was so great and his system so wrought upon by the catastrophe that the poison, though it caused horrible suffering, did not destroy life. Dr. Webster was brought to trial and the excitement in the community was intense. He was a professor in the medical school of Harvard University and moved in the very best society. There was a powerful influence brought to clear him, not only for his own sake, but for that of his family, and, most of all, for the honor of the University. An attempt was made to fasten suspicion on Littlefield, but the doctor had entangled himself in many ways, and one link after another was made at the trial that formed a chain of evidence which was so strong that the victim could not escape. With a stick, in a disguised hand, Dr. Webster wrote to the police about Dr. Parkman. One letter stated that Dr. Parkman had been murdered and thrown off Cambridge bridge. Dr. Webster had one peculiarity about his writing he never closed the top of his a's, but made them like the letter u, and in his letters, trying to throw the officers off the scent, he forgot to change the peculiarity of his writing. The defense tried to show that the body might have been taken from the dissecting room, but it was fairly defeated at every point. In the ashes of the furnace the false teeth of Dr. Parkman were found, and some of his natural teeth, which were identified by a dentist who had filled them. Lastly the fish hook lines were identified by the shop keeper in Dock square, from whom they were purchased. Dr. Webster was convicted and suffered the extreme penalty of the law, that of being hanged by the neck till he was dead. He had a fine family, consisting of a wife and several daughters. At the time of her father's arrest, one of the young ladies was about to be married. The family during the whole period of the trouble visited the prison but refrained from reading the newspapers, and did not know the date of the execution. The day preceding the one which Webster knew was to be his last on earth, he bade his family good by as usual without indicating to the members of it that he should never see them again. In this case the barbarous law punished the innocent more than the guilty, for shortly after the execution Mrs. Webster and her daughters left the country, and some years after died broken hearted. Dr. Webster had strong men working for his pardon, but failing to obtain executive clemency, he made a full confession of the crime, which course of action established his guilt beyond question, and decided the governor to allow the law to do its full mischief. Such is the record of the most remarkably mercenary murder ever recorded in New England annals.

Superstition About Precious Stones.

The moonstone, was, as its name implies, venerated from its supposed lunar attraction. It is one of the prettiest, though most common of precious stones in Ceylon. Pliny describes it as containing an image of the moon, "which, if the story be true," he observes, "daily wanes or wanes, according to the state of that luminary." Chalcedony hung about the neck dispersed sadness, and if a person carried one perforated, with the hairs of an ass run through it, he would overcome all disasters. Crystal dispelled witchcraft. The chrysoprasus gladdened the heart: the chrysolyte expelled phantoms, and, what was more serviceable, rid people of their follies. The onyx in the Middle Ages was believed to prevent ugly dreams by night, and law-suits by day. The jasper was a charmer of scorpions and spiders, was worn as a talisman by the Roman athelete; Burton, in the Anatomy of Melancholy, tells us that, "if hung about the neck, or taken in drink, it much resisteth sorrow and recreates the heart." The same qualities were attributed to the hyacinth and topaz. The crystal has been the most popular of all oracular stones; a favorite stone was the beryl, "which," says Aubrey, in his Miscellanies, "is a kind of crystal that has a weak tincture of red; in this magicians see visions." The custom was to consecrate, or "charge" them, as the modern term is, for which purpose set forms were used, which are described in Reginald Scott's Discovery of Witchcraft. The famous crystal of that prince of quackery, Dr. Dee, is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The properties of the rubies were endless; bruised in water it was a panacea for all complaints; it had the peculiarity, whenever worn, of discovering its presence by its luster, which would shine through the thickest clothes. Powered agate was an infallible remedy for "all the ills that life is heir to." Pliny quotes the Magii, as teaching in Persir that storms could be averted by burning agates. The amethyst would prove a boon to modern tipplers, if, as the ancients asserted, it prevented intoxication. The sapphire and the emerald strengthened the sight, a property said to have been also possessed by the turquoise; but it could confer a still more wonderful gift on its wearer: "Whoever," says Van Helmont, "wears a turquoise, so that it, or its gold setting, touches the skin, may fall from any height, and the stone attracts to itself the whole force of the blow, so that it cracks, and the person is safe. The Romans regarded the diamond with superstitious reverence, and Pliny tells us that it baffles poison, keeps off insanity, and dispels vain fears. Ben Mausur, alluding to the electric properties of the diamond, says: "It has affinity for gold, small particles of which fly towards it. It is also wonderfully sought after by ants, who crowd over it as though they would swallow it up." A marvelous curative power was supposed to exist in a diamond belonging to the Rajah of Matara, in the Island of Borneo, the Malays believing that a draught of water in which it had been placed would cure every disease.

A Graphic Death Sentence.

In the district court at San Buenaventura, F. A. Sprague was called up for sentence. After the court had overruled a motion for a new trial, Judge Fawcett said, after directing the prisoner to stand up: "F. A. Sprague, you have been convicted of the highest crime known to the law. You were skillfully defended at the trial. Every device was exhausted to save you, but a jury of your fellow-citizens has pronounced you guilty of the crime with which you are charged. In the dead hours of night you, the leader of a band of masked assassins, applied the torch to the premises of your victim, and as he rushed, startled and half naked, into the light of the flames, you closed up on him and shot him near to death. He attempted flight; you pursued; he fell before you with a pleading voice that should have wrung pity from a heart of iron, but you remorselessly riddled him with bullets as you would a carcass of a dog. There is no language strong enough to depict the atrocity of such a deed. Your guilt is as clear as evidence can make it. You probably though, you would be upheld by the community in which you lived. Thank God, you were mistaken. There are but few monsters to applaud your act. The result of your trial proves that we are yet governed by law; that we are a community of enlightened human beings, and not a society of savages. The law has seized you, and the voices of twelve good men held you in its inexorable grasp to pay the dreadful penalty of your crime. Let your fate be a warning that justice is sure to follow crime, sometimes traveling slowly with leaden heel, but striking with an iron hand. I will not affect for you a sympathy I do not feel. There is no point in your case for sympathy to grasp at so far as you are concerned. I deeply feel for your faithful wife and children. They are the ones who need and deserve pity and sympathy of kind hearts. It only remains to formally conclude this painful duty. The judgment of the court is that on Friday, the 27th day of September next, between the hours of 10 A. M. and 1 P. M., you are to be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and may God Almighty have mercy upon your soul."

Sprague presented a stolid indifference and perfect calmness while sentence was being passed. His wife and daughters were present, and were calm and unmoved.—*San Francisco Post.*

TIMELY TOPICS.

A Western hail insurance company recently paid $19,000 for damages to crops in one Minnesota county.

France and Switzerland exhibit more clocks and watches at the Paris Exposition than all the other countries put together.

The entrails of cattle are now manufactured into cord, rope, round and flat belting, and other material where extraordinary strength is required.

Rena Willis, a colored girl, died a few minutes after being baptized in Wilkes county, Georgia. She was overheated when she went into the water.

An Illinois lawyer, who charged a widow $25 for making out a bill of sale, reduced his bill to $3 after the widow's brother had taken off his coat.

On one day recently there were sixty-four steamers, fifty ships, seventy six brigs, 223 barks, and 142 schooners, lying at the port of New York waiting for cargoes.

A woman of Steele County, Minn. had her husband and son killed by lightning five years ago. She married again, and her second lord was killed by lightning last week.

A man recently died in his bed at Peckham, England, from suffocation produced by eating a hearty supper. The undigested food had risen and choked him to death in his sleep.

The longest daily mail and stage line in the United States, 1,500 miles from Fort Worth, in Texas, to Fort Yuma, on the Colorado river, has been formally inaugurated with a procession of Concord stages drawn by 200 horses.

Figures founded on the nominations made indicate that there will be 800 regular candidates in the field for the 293 seats in the Forty-sixth United States Congress, although in many Southern districts there is no opposition to the Democratic candidates.

It is a very remarkable circumstance in the native country of wheat that oats, barley and rye should be entirely unknown. This has led to the opinion by some naturalists that all our cereal plants are artificial productions, obtained accidentally, but retaining their habits, which have become fixed in the course of ages.

According to the best authorities, the entire population of the earth is now 1,439,145,300, broadly divided as follows: Europe, 312,398,480; Asia, 831,000,000; Africa, 205,219,500; Australia and Polynesia, 4 411,300; North and South America, 86,116,000. The human race as a whole is increasing slowly in numbers.

The publisher of an esteemed contemporary on Mount Washington prints the names of the young men at the hotels who work off on a hand press the greatest number of copies of his paper in a given time; muscular summer boarders covetous of fame flock to the office, and thus he saves the cost of a steam engine or a mule.—*New York World.*

A discussion of the question, "What is Inspiration?" appears in the September-October number of the *North American Review.* The writers will be the Rev. Dr. F. H. Hedge (Unitarian), the Rev. Dr. E. A. Washburn (Episcopalian), the Rev. Chauncey Giles (Swedenborgian), the Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman (Methodist), Most Rev. Dr. James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, (Roman Catholic), and John Fiske (Independent.)

Forty-five millions of pairs of sewed shoes and 55,000,000 of pairs of pegged shoes were made and sold by the manufacturers of the United States in 1877, and eighty-five per cent. of the work done on these shoes was done by machinery. The uppers are cut out by hand, simply because of the variableness of the quality of the leather in the same skin. The soles are cut out by machinery, and the binding, pasting, closing, crimping, stitching, heeling and polishing are all done by machinery, without the aid of human hands.

"Well, the deuce!" remarked Mr. R. Townsend, of Newport, Ky., when, having asked for supper at a Cincinnati hotel he received no change back out of a one dollar bill. Then, as if in a dream, he went to the dining-room and consumed two cups of coffee, three plates plain bread, two plates fried mush, one plate corn beef, one plate chicken, one plate cold ham, two plates loin of veal, two plates broiled beef, three plates broiled ham, four plates fresh fish, three plates fried eggs, two plates fried potatoes and one plate of baked potatoes. The clerk figured it out that, at restaurant prices, Mr. R. Townsend was $3.05 ahead.

Foreign Bodies in the Nose and Ears.

Dr. Mason, in a lecture on the Surgery of the Face, published in the *Lancet*, says that foreign bodies, such as cherry stones, locust beans, brass rings, slate pencils, screws, buttons, pieces of wood, peas, etc., are not unfrequently met with in the aural and nasal cavities of children, and even of adults. Such substances have been known to remain in one or other of these cavities for nearly a lifetime, causing little or no inconvenience. Thus a case is related of a lady from whose nostril a foreign body was dislodged during the act of sneezing. It was found to be a button which had belonged to her little brother when they were both infants. Another case is recorded in which a piece of slate pencil was removed from the lady's ear, and which had been put there when she was at school forty years before. And a third instance, in which a cherry stone had been in an ear for sixty years. A case is recorded of a gentleman, aged forty-one, from whose ear a piece of cedar wood was removed by syringing. The patient remembered distinctly the fact of an introduction when he was a boy at school, at least thirty years previous. No attempt had been made to extract it, and it had not troubled him until now. It occasionally happens, however, that a good deal of inflammatory action is set up by the foreign body, as in the case of a girl who was under the author's care in the hospital, to which she had been admitted on account of a small stone in her ear. She subsequently had paralysis of the facial nerve. A case is reported of a child who not only had facial palsy, but died of meningitis, caused by the presence of a lacred bean in the ear. Living larvæ have been found in the meatus of the ear. Dr. Routh publishes such a case. The patient was a gentleman who three years before was tormented by a fly near his ear. Convulsions followed the presence of the larvæ, but the patient recovered, although he remained deaf. Dr. Blake of Boston, has seen four such cases. A case is reported which shows the curious course taken by a pin that had been introduced into the external meatus. It passed through the middle ear, probably along the Eustachian tube, and was extracted by the patient from her throat by hooking it with her finger.

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.

A Farmer's Soliloquy.

Let others seek the cares of state,
And rack their brains with tricks of trade;
Thank God, it is my happier fate
To pass my days in rural shade.

While wrangling senates fume and glower,
And compass with strategic pain,
'Tis mine to pass the quiet hour,
And cultivate the teeming plain.

Casting my eyes ahead, I see
My ruminating flocks and herds,
And list, from each umbrageous tree
The mellow music of the birds.

With teeming barns and fertile fields,
And healthful wafts of summer air,
Kind Heaven a pure contentment yields
To one whose lot's so passing fair,

Then be it mine to heed the bliss
That God has meted out to man—
And while we feel our work is His,
Strive to eventuate His plan.

—*Cincinnati Gazette.*

Fall Plowing.

Now that the small grain crops are out of the way, it is a question what should be done with the ground intended for spring planting. This cannot be decided in a general way. No other question in agriculture depends more upon circumstances than this, and each case must be decided upon its merits and the contingencies affecting it. No absolute rule can be given; but if it were possible, it would most frequently be that bare stubbles should be fall plowed, and sods left until the spring. Yet there would be so many exceptions that the rule would be about as much honored in the breach as in the observance. For instance, the character of the soil is of the greatest importance to be considered; then, if it is a piece of sod ground, the condition of the sod should be taken into account; lastly, the spring crop itself complicates the question.

Clay soils that break up in clods should by all means, be plowed in the fall, and left as rough as possible, that the frosts of winter may break down and mellow it. If such soil is full of weeds, early plowing and frequent working with a cultivator would be very beneficial. Soils that are wet in the spring should be thoroughly plowed as soon as possible, while they are dry; and should be left in condition to be sown with oats or barley as early as possible in the spring. This may be done by throwing the ground into ridges; plowing narrow or wider lands; by making deep back furrows and plowing to these in such a manner as to form rounded beds with open furrows between them. These open furrows should be finished clean, so as to give an easy passage to the surface water, and, of course, should be plowed in such a direction as to prevent this from remaining upon the ground. If weeds spring up, the ridges may be cultivated or harrowed; and, if it is needed, a final shallow plowing may be given as late as possible, again plowing to the middle of the ridge. The ground, thus treated will be dry early in the spring, and may be sown to oats or spring wheat, while the sub-soil is still frozen hard. This has been done successfully by farmers who are forehanded and therefore prepared to take advantage of favorable accidents of weather and season.

Sod ground, as a rule, should be fall plowed if the growth is heavy and the land at all clayey. In cold clay soils the vegetable matter does not decompose so rapidly as in warmer loams and sandy soils, and for early potatoes especially heavy sod ground should be fall plowed. For corn it is not so needful, but it is well that it should be done, for the reason mentioned, as well as that the work may not be delayed by wet weather in the spring. Thousands of acres of corn would have been advanced the present season two or three weeks had the ground been fall plowed and ridged as above mentioned. So with corn stubbles intended for oats. These may be plowed in the fall with benefit, unless the soil is very light and dry. For early potatoes upon stubbles the land should not only be plowed in the fall, but should also be manured on the surface after the plowing. No other treatment will give so good a crop or will bring such large and smooth potatoes.

Spring plowing should be practiced upon all light soils, except those which are infested with weeds and need fall fallowing. In that case the land should be again plowed in the spring, unless it has been finally plowed in rough ridges, which can be worked down with the harrow. Sod upon light soil should in any case be spring plowed. Fresh green matter, in an open, warm soil, will decay in a very short time, and a light sod plowed now will leave no trace of it in the spring. Sod ground for potatoes or corn should, if possible, be top-dressed now, and left in the spring as long as possible for a good growth of clover to appear. This should be plowed under, the ground harrowed, and planting done at once upon the mellow soil. To hasten the work and insure quick planting, it is well to procure and use a swivel plow, with which all the furrows can be laid the same way, beginning at one side of the field and proceeding to the other side. The first day's plowing may then be harrowed, marked out, and planted, the harrowing and planting keeping up close to the plowing. Growth begins at once and continues rapidly when this is done.

As a means for destroying weeds, fall plowing or fall fallowing may be profitably used. The fields are now green with the ever-present rag-weed, the persistent golden rod, with its almost indestructible root; the wild carrot, and scores of others which disfigure the farm and if permitted to seed will furnish work for years to come. These plants should be plowed down, and the stubbles cleaned before the seed is formed. There will not then be time for them to mature seed again this year, and the present crop, with all its power for harm, will be vanquished. Year by year farms grow more weedy, and as the old-fashioned summer fallow has become absolete, these parasites