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The Plague.

Plague, pestilence and famine! These are three,
That walk together in this world of woe;
Their comrade Death, and they no other know.
From such deliver us, prays our Litany.
Oh! might one stand, as Aaron stood of old,
Betwixt the dead and living, and might say,
The plague is stayed that walks abroad to-day;
Heaven showeth mercy to its stricken fold;
One grateful throb would animate a land
Bowed to the dust;—now triumphs over death,
That power which measures ocean in His hand.
That stirs or quickens our faint mortal breath,
And stays the plague;—the Shepherd knoweth best
What hour to call His flock and give it rest.
—*Boston Transcript.*

"Forget Thee?"

"Forget thee?" If to dream by night, and muse on thee by day;
If all the worship deep and wild a lover's heart can pay;
If prayers in absence, breathed for thee to heaven's protecting power;
If winged thoughts that flit to thee, a thousand in an hour;
If busy fancy blending thee with all my future lot,—
If this then call'st "forgetting," then indeed shalt be forgot.

"Forget thee?" Bid the forest birds forge their sweetest tune.
"Forget thee?" Bid the sea forget to swell beneath the moon;
Bid thirsty flowers forget to drink the eve's refreshing dew;
Thyself forget thine own dear land, its waters deep and blue;
Forget each old familiar face, each long-remembered spot,—
When these things are forgot by thee, then thou shalt be forgot.

Keep, if thou wilt, thy maiden peace, still calm and fancy free;
For God forbid thy gladsome heart to grow less glad for me;
Yet while that heart is still unwon, Oh, bid me mine to rove,
But let it keep its hum le faith and uncomplaining love.
If these, preserved for patient years, at las avail me not,
Forget me then—but ne'er believe that thou canst be forgot.

OFF NAXOS.

"Yes. We are almost islanders," Dora said. "Here we have our triangular land. The bay on one side and the river on the other side, and the creek skirting the third side. Isn't it pretty, Ada?"

"Lovely. Blue sky and blue water, and the nice picturesque old houses."

The two had climbed to the top of the ancient Port Royal State-house to see all this. Dora, peeping over the railing, tried to make out her husband—who was a lawyer, and had a case in court that day—among the crowd of men standing in front of the courthouse. Ada gazed out upon the glancing, shining waters of the bay.

Presently, to them a third person; a man—lean, gaunt, as yellow as parchment, but with a look of self-gratulation at present in his eyes which lighted up his ugly face.

"I saw you ladies, as you turned into the State-house. I was two blocks off."

Ada laid the ends of her fingers in his. Dora shook hands cordially. But, in spite of Dora's warmer greeting, he seated himself by Ada, and Dora returned to her post of observation. There was a high wind, under the lower of which the two talked.

"I might have known you would not be glad to see me," began the young man. "I am surprised at myself for coming."

"Yes!"

"I conclude that I was overcome by the suicidal instinct of the moth."

No answer.

"It is a year to-day since I first saw you, Miss Ada."

Still no answer.

"A year which has not proved altogether propitious to our acquaintance. I wonder why it is that I can not please you? I fancied—I do not think I was entirely mistaken—that we used to be very good friends. I should like to know why it is that you dislike me now," he pursued, plaintively.

"Do not let us discuss it," Ada said, brusquely. Have patience with her. Her harshness and selfishness are not without parallels in others of her sex and age.

"I would do anything to please you. I sometimes think it is my manners that offend you. I know that I am awkward. I assure you that my manners give me more concern than my salvation."

This had an irreligious sound, as Ada vaguely felt; she was therefore called upon to bestow upon him a look of orthodox reproof. "Of course they do," he continued. "The one matter is entirely my own personal responsibility; the other is not."

Ada gave over the theme. She had no theological opinions. She merely remarked, calmly: "You surprise me. I should have said you were a very self-complacent person."

"On the contrary, I always feel as though every one—you especially—were laughing at me. If you would only give me a hint now and then—"

"Thank you, but I do not feel equal to carrying on your education."

"And I give you so much! 'A present for a mighty king.'"

Ada, with hot cheeks, remembered where George Herbert says that "Love is a present for a mighty king." In a sentimental mood, such as she now no longer experienced in her intercourse with Professor Luce, she had once made full quotation herself. She said, pettfully, "I was having such a peaceful time up here before you came."

"And produced discord. If you would only say how or why?"

"I think it is your clothes," Ada rejoined, recklessly. She longed to add: "And your hair," but refrained, on the possibility that Dora might overhear and denounce her afterward for her rudeness. It seemed to her intolerable that a man should approach her, basking in the beauty of this perfect day, with that crop of long, lank, light hair, so nearly the shade of his complexion.

Professor Luce drew a long breath. He who had hitherto professed to hold all outside shows in lofty contempt had condescended to debate the external of his manners; but to be quarrelled with for such mere superficial considerations as coat and trousers! He had gone on enduring Ada for some time past, as some women are sometimes endured by some men. Now he wanted to get up and leave. Only he did not know exactly how. That wretched awkwardness of his was in the way of a dignified departure. Ada spoke next, quite cheerfully, since she had silenced him, the least in the world afraid that she had gone too far.

"I love the bay. One never knows what new shape it may bring in from the sea from day to day. It is like life, freighted with surprises."

He rose and folded his hands. A more graceful man would have folded his arms, but his hung limp at his side.

"I tremble to think what life may have in store for me. 'Prophet, said I, thing of evil,'" declaimed Ada.

"Yes. Of discipline. Some natures would seem to demand purgatorial fires before they rise to their highest possibilities."

"Thank you for your good opinion."

"You well may. I have a most excellent opinion of you. Have I not paid you the highest compliment a man can pay a woman?"

"You certainly are fully sensible of the honor you have done me." Nor is it to be denied that there was a self-assertion in Professor Luce's tone which most women would have resented under the circumstances. Dora now sauntered toward the pair. She did not approve of the intonations of voice. Professor Luce said "Good morning" stiffly, and left.

"Ada, you treat him abominably," Dora said; "and you certainly encouraged him at one time."

"I liked him at one time. How is one to tell one will change one's mind?"

"He is a genius," Dora commented; "every one says so. Papa says he will make his mark. He discovered two new stars last year. So of course he is eccentric. But I rather like that; and you did too when he first came to the college. You are so contrary. You set yourself against him now because he shows his devotion too plainly. All the same, you led him on."

"Well, I might have liked him,"

They clambered down the dark, dusty stairway and came out into the spacious entrance hall of the State house.

"Why," Dora said, "there's John."

Her husband was showing off the architectural features of the hall to a stranger. He presented Mr. Vane to his wife and her sister. The two girls wore fresh white dresses, Ada's with a green bordering, and their blonde hair and blue eyes were shaded by picturesque palmetto hats. Mr. Vane viewed them with the spontaneous admiration of the man and the artist.

"Mr. Vane brings me a letter from my friend Stevens, Dora," John said. Then, to his sister-in-law; "Ada, Mr. Vane is fresh from Rome, where he has been painting for a year or so. You can talk art to your heart's content."

"When I talk art it is to my heart's discontent," Philip Vane said, as they walked away, he and Ada together. Dora, of course, put her arm through John's. She had not seen him for three hours, and fifty things had happened in the interval she must tell him about.

"Because your ideal eludes you?" answered Ada to Philip.

"No; for a more commonplace reason: because I am lazy. I work fast enough when I am once at it, but I hate to get to work. I am an inveterate procrastinator."

"What a pity!" Ada said, seriously. "I can't understand that. If I were an artist with a gift, I should be breathless until I had reached my goal. There is always the possible immortality."

Philip was impressed. Ada was nothing if not in earnest. In this instance a breath of her enthusiasm passed into her susceptible companion. He looked eagerly into the depths of her steady, clear blue eyes with his liquid dark ones. "There is oxygen in your voice and in your words," he said. He passed his hand over his brow. "You have put backbone into me."

She laughed. She was accustomed to act as a kind of mental tonic. But the stimulus took effect with unwonted suddenness upon this new patient. How unconventional he was!

Ada followed in the wake of Dora and John down one of the queer little dark alleys, of which there were many in Port Royal, and which served as short-cuts from street to street.

"Where are we?" laughed Philip. "Ah! I see"—as they emerged at the other end. "'O strange new world that hath such people in it!" (this with a half-deprecating, lingering infection and a little smile). Your quaint little city is a tangle of labyrinths, in which you play the part of Ariadne to my Theseus."

His companion slightly started and blushed, and gave a low, odd laugh.

"What is it?" he began; but she put him off with a gesture, and he continued: "But what skies you have! And what an atmosphere! When I woke up this morning I thought I had sailed into Paradise during the night."

"Sailed?"

"Yes. My friend Sinclair brought me here on his yacht. There she lies now. I am to pitch my tent on shore, while he cruises in and out of the harbor for a while. I want to make some sketches of your old houses.

Ada had deserted the college, and her own housekeeping for her father there, and was spending a few days with Dora. They all had dinner in the middle of the warm, sunny May afternoon; then they ransacked the garden beds for violets. Violet Bank was famous for these. They bloomed early and lingered late. Dora picked a great bunch, and divided them between Philip and Ada. Philip held his thoughtfully, and smelled them tenderly. He had a habit of theorizing about people; he was thinking now that Dora was full of unselfish womanly traits. There was something even in her way of doing little things which pleased him, rested him.

Dora said: "Violets are my favorite flowers. We have such quantities of them here!"

And Philip answered: "It would seem to be their native soil. They always suggest to me, with their subtle, penetrating perfume, the most precious thing in life—sympathy."

There were more in this than the mere words, but it escaped Dora. Ada, however, as she said "Yes," smiled softly. She laid great stress upon sympathy. She was always talking about it or the absence of it. It was a pleasure to her to infer that Mr. Vance felt in sympathy with them—with her.

They saw much of him after that. He was easily magnetized, although the impression was apt to wear off soon, and Ada had magnetized him in a fit of energy. He took a fresh departure in his profession during those days, painting more diligently than he had done for years. In truth, that was an eventful epoch in his art life. The pictures he painted then laid the foundation of his future success.

Ada's secret ideal had always been a man whose life should be dedicated to the interpretation of beauty, to whom a sunset should be of infinitely greater importance than logarithm or a title deed. The men of Port Royal all gravitated either toward the law, like John, or toward science and letters, like her father and Professor Luce. Ada made no secret of her pleasure in her new acquaintance. Dora liked him too. John, to be sure, insisted that he was a bit effeminate. But he was a lithe, active, strongly built young fellow, with a manly air, in spite of his faultless features and golden hair and mustache. This blonde delicacy contrasted peculiarly with a skin so dark that it might be called olive, and splendid dark eyes. Moreover, his tailor had done as much for him as Professor Luce's had failed to do for that gentleman. So a month went by. Philip and Ada went rowing almost every afternoon in her little boat, exploring sunsets and woods, and bringing home stacks of laurel. The woods were bowers of laurel then.

"I should like to transfer some of this loveliness to canvas," Philip said, breaking off a bough that hung down into the water; "but I despair. It is maddening that one has nothing more ethereal than mud to work with."

"Mud? Oh, you mean your paints."

He laughed. "I mean my paints. How literal you are!" Then, as her face changed: "I like it; I applaud it. You never let me wander long off the track; you are my friendly Ariadne, as I told you the first time I saw you. What is it? You smiled in that same odd way then."

"I was only thinking— No, I won't tell you."

He was all curiosity now, teasing, insisting.

"If I must, then: It's something I've always been ashamed of, childishly, since I had nothing to do with it. But wasn't it aggravating of my sponsors in baptism to give me such an outlandish name as Ariadne?"

"Really?"

"Really!"

He laughed. They both laughed. "So you are undoubtedly she. The coincidences have it. It is charming! Ariadne! It has such an unusual sound that one might call you that and not feel that one was taking a liberty with your Christian name. Do you know I wish I might—sometimes?"

"Very well, you may."

Occasionally after that he did so. And the name, hitherto detested, became music to her ears.

"I wish you would paint this laurel," she said, "this particular bough. Call it a sunset study. It looks as though it had been dipped into a rose-colored sunset."

"I should have to engage in a sharp tussle with my Minotaur of laziness if I were to paint that before it fades."

She sat in the stern of the boat holding the laurel. "I wish you would," she said, seriously. She was making his doing so a sort of test in her own mind. He saw through her, and colored, but not from annoyance. He was always pleased to inspire a woman's interest. "I'll do my best," he said, "since you ask it." In reply to which she looked up to him with shining, happy eyes. The earth was transfigured for her. That was no longer Port Royal in the distance; this no longer the placid stream she had known all her life; it was a land of romance: the same land, let us say, in which the fabled Cretan maiden strayed with her beautiful Greek and listened to his fleeting vows.

"It is all of a piece," Vane laughed, presently. "You—Ariadne; this island you live on; the laurel. Quantities of laurel grew on Naxos."

"But Ariadne lived on Crete."

"At Naxos afterward. Don't you remember? It was there she parted from Theseus."

"I had forgotten that she had parted from Theseus."

"Oh, certainly. She was not for 'the false Athenian youth,' but for 'Bacchus bright—a god in place of mortal.'"

It suited Ada to compare Philip just here to this latter personage; although, drolly enough, Philip hailed from the modern Athens, as it happened. Rowing home, he sang an exquisite Venetian gondola song that filled her eyes with tears.

She held out the laurel branch at parting. "You have no time to lose," she said. "You had better take it."

"No. You keep it for me. I'll come and sketch it to-morrow morning, if you will give it and me house-room. Shall we say ten o'clock?"

But the next morning Philip met a friend, who beguiled him into taking a stroll about town. The clock struck noon, and he remembered his engagement, and hurried to the college. He found Ada's bright face clouded for the first time. "I beg ten thousand pardons," he began, his own countenance kindled with eagerness, in the way Ada found so irresistible. "Have you thrown away the thread, Ariadne?"

Her brow cleared. "No. Of course it was business letters. It always is with business men. Those horrid business letters!"

"You know all about them, don't you?" he rejoined, neither affirming nor denying. Then he made a few marks with his pencil. Then Dora came in and said:

"The students are to have a band here on the campus to-night, and the town are invited to stroll about in the moonlight. Ada, I want you and Mr. Vane to dine with John and me, and then we can all come back together."

Agreed. On their way to Violet Bank a stylish woman, unknown to our sisters, walking, however, with a Port Royal acquaintance — Mrs. Smith—stopped with an exclamation of surprise, and put out her hand to Philip. Mrs. Smith then presented Mrs. Forsyth, her guest, adding: "Mrs. Forsyth wants to come up and see President Field about her brother, who is in college. Shall we find him in to-morrow morning?" Ada said yes, she thought so; and they walked on.

"Mrs. Forsyth's stunning, isn't she?" inquired Philip. At which Ada was stupidly displeased.

Somehow there was a lack in the moonlight concert on the campus, and Ada went home less gay than she had been of late. But Philip had promised to come the next morning, and when the time came she proceeded to make herself lovely for him. One of the students had brought her some fresh laurel, and she pinned bright bits of it in her hair and at her throat. She should always associate laurel now with the one person. Then she seated herself in a deep window-seat. Steps came up the walk; stopped at the door; the bell rang. Talk and laughter came in to her through the open window. That was surely Mrs. Smith; yes, and that horrid Mrs. Forsyth was with her, saying: "Mr. Vance"—ah! so Philip was there too; they had met on the way, no doubt—"did not go to the promenade concert last night?"

And Philip replied, carelessly, in his delicious flute-like voice, "Yes, worse luck. It was a stupid affair."

A mere passing speech; but Ada sprang to her feet, and confronted her flaming face and angry eyes in the mirror close at hand. She pulled out the laurel blossoms she had adorned herself with, and stamped on them. She hated them; she hated herself. A stupid affair! And they had been together; and when they parted he had kissed the rose she gave him. The next moment the three guests were announced, and she cooled down, as we all must on such occasions. The morning went by aimlessly. Philip lingered a little behind Mrs. Forsyth, as she was leaving, to say, "I notice that our laurel is beginning to be worn about the edges. Hardly worth while to attempt it, is it?" And Ada answered, "No, it is only worth throwing away." Then Philip followed in the wake of his stunning friend, careless, charming, idle. His fit of work was over for the present. Ada, for her part, tossed away the laurel bough with icy fingers and a silly head and a stupid heart that ached in unison.

And actually that was the end of a foolish dream that only lasted four weeks, after all. A morning or so later Philip called at Violet Bank to say good-by. Ada was again staying with her sister for a few days. Mrs. Ray was indisposed—a bad headache—so could not see him. She sent him down, however, a cordial little pencilled note of farewell, begging him to wait a few moments for her sister's return. Ada had gone out for a little while. Philip was sincerely sorry not to see Mrs. Ray. It seemed to him now that he had always preferred her to her sister; she was less positive. He looked at his watch. Yes, he would wait awhile. He picked up a book, but had not turned over a page before Ada entered. I am inclined to think that it was Ada's fault, upon the whole, that the meeting was cold and constrained. But on parting Philip smiled a golden smile and said, "I am delighted to have seen you. They told me you were out, but I wouldn't be turned off. I insisted upon waiting till you came in." To do him justice, this was the way the case presented itself to him at that moment.

"Ah, darling," Dora annotated to this, five minutes later. "I am glad you were in time to see Mr. Vane. I sent him word to be sure to wait for you."

Our Ariadne seated herself by an open window and looked out at the shifting water without replying. That shifting water was to her still like life—as inconstant. A parting equivocation! A very trifle, yet still the "little flaw within the lute." Then she looked up at the clear blue sky with gathering tears. "I am glad there are some things that do not deceive," she thought.

After this episode Ada was gentler, more tolerant even of Professor Luce's clothes. However, he marked an era in his life just here by purchasing a new suit. He also put himself into the hands of a barber; perhaps some one suggested to him that his hair was too long; not Ada, however, I am positive. The result was marvelous. It is incredible what an effect the outward man has upon the interpretation of the inward man. But I am convinced that it was for some cause still deeper than this that when Ada and he next met she felt that they had both undergone a transforming power. Professor Luce, for his part, mentally and with contrition revoked those harsh remarks I quoted above about purgatorial fires. Ada was once more the girl with whom he fell in love at first sight in the good old-fashioned way.

People thought it was a strange match. He might be brilliant, but he was undeniably uncouth. However, Ada told Dora: "He may not have the outward making of an ideal lover; but no one else has such a true, true heart."

Moreover, he gave her abundant cause to be proud of him in other ways. In fact, there is no telling what reflected honors may not be in store for her through him. Some new planet may yet be called by her name.—*Harper's Bazar.*

False Confessions of Murder.

Mr. Henry C. Lea's "Superstition and Force" gives many remarkable instances of false confessions of murder, extracted by torture, and capital punishment inflicted in consequence thereof, followed by the detection of the real culprits. Boyvin du Villars relates that during the war in Piedmont, in 1559, he released from the dungeons of the Marquis of Masserono an unfortunate gentleman who had been secretly kept there for eighteen years, in consequence of having attempted to serve a prisoner from the Duke of Savoy on the Marquis. His disappearance having naturally been attributed to foul play, his kindred prosecuted an enemy of the family who, under stress of torture, duly confessed to having committed the murder, and was accordingly executed, in a town where Masserono himself was residing. Godelmann relates that a monument in a church in Upper Germany, representing a man broken on a wheel, commemorated a case in which two young journeymen set out together to make the accustomed tour of the country. One of them returned alone, clad in the garments of the other, and was suspected of having made way with him. He was arrested, and, in the absence of all other evidence, was promptly put to the torture, when he confessed the crime in all its details, and was executed on the wheel, after which his companion returned. Another case was that of a young man near Bremen, whose widowed mother lived with a servant. The son quarreled with the man, who fled and took service at a distance. His father, not knowing his departure, accused the youth of murder; and torture speedily drew from the latter a full confession of the crime, including his throwing the corpse into the Weser. Not long after his execution the serving-man reappeared and was duly put to death, as also was his father, to make amends for the blunders of the laws. Few, when once engaged in such pursuit, could be induced to follow the example of the Milanese judge who resolved his doubts as to the efficacy of torture in evidence by killing a favorite mule and allowing the accusation to fall upon one of his servants. The man of course denied the offense, was duly tortured, confessed and persisted in his confession after torture. The judge, thus convinced by experiment of the fallacy of the system, resigned the office whose duties he could no longer conscientiously discharge, and in his subsequent career rose to the cardinalate. The mood in which these untoward results were usually treated is illustrated in another somewhat similar case, which was told to Augustin Nicholas, at Amsterdam, in explanation of the fact that the city was obliged to borrow a headsman from the neighboring towns whenever the services of one were required for an execution. It appears that a young man of Amsterdam, returning home late at night from a revel, sank upon a doorstep, in a drunken sleep. A thief emptied his pockets, securing among other things, a dirk, with which, a few minutes later, he stabbed a man in a quarrel. Returning to the sleeper, he slipped the bloody weapon back to its place. The young man awoke, but before he had taken many steps he was seized by the watch, who had just discovered the murder. Appearances were against him, he was tortured, confessed, persisted in confession after torture and was duly hanged. Soon after, the real criminal was condemned for another crime and revealed the history of the previous one, whereupon the States General of the United Provinces, using the ordinary logic of the criminal law, deprived the city of Amsterdam of its executioner, as a punishment for a result that was inevitable under the system.

A Wonderful Tree.

A tree well deserving cultivation, which exists in Morocco, is mentioned with favorable comment by Consul Drummond Hay in his trade report on Mogador for the past year. This remarkable tree is the "argan." It grows only in the provinces of Haka Shiedma and Sooz, and in times of scarcity affords nourishment both for the natives and their flocks. It is utilized in the following ways: In the first place, the peasants extract an oil from the nut, which is useful both for burning and cooking purposes. When the nuts ripen and fall off the trees they are collected by the natives, who are aided in the harvest by their goats. These animals swallow the fruit for the rind, but being unable to digest the nut, they throw it up again, and it is then added by their owners to the store for making the oil. For their private consumption the peasants rarely make a large quantity of oil at a time, but crack open a few handfuls of nuts with a stone, and, after toasting the kernels in an earthenware dish, grind them into flour. The oil is extracted by adding water in small quantities to the flour, which is stirred in a bowl. As the oil is being formed by this process, the flour hardens into a cake, which is finally squeezed, leaving the oil perfectly clear and fit for use. This kind of oilcake then serves as an excellent food for cattle, as also the dry rind of the nut, which is generally given to them with the cake, forming together their principal and most nutritious food during the year, and is invaluable to the natives in time of drought; for the argan tree is very hardy, and a dry year has little if any effect upon it. Even the empty husk of the nut when broken is not thrown away by the peasants, but is used as fuel. The best charcoal is made from the argan tree, and the dry timber is excellent firewood. The goats feed also upon the leaves of the tree, and when browsing in the argan forest may be seen climbing among the trees, plucking and nibbling the nuts and leaves.

TIMELY TOPICS.

Prussia has what is said to be a sure exterminator of the Colorado beetle.

The well-known steamship Great Eastern—the largest in the world—is to transport cattle from Texas to England.

It is estimated that 5,000,000 sheep, valued at $12,500,000, perished in Australia, last year, in consequence of the drought, which cut off the pasturage.

The largest piece of belting in the world is to be seen in the American department of the Paris Exposition. It is seven feet in width, and is made from 130 hides,

The cultivated land of France is held by 5,500,000 owners. Five millions do not own to exceed six acres each. A similar state of things exist in Belgium. But in Ireland one-fifth of the soil is held by 110 persons.

Mr. W. F. Parker, of Nashua, N. H., puzzles the doctors with an annual attack of the measles. For twenty years they have broken out upon him, on the same day of the year and at precisely the same hour.

A Chinaman found a nugget of gold in the Dunolly district of Australia weighing over twenty-two pounds. A rush of miners to the place was the result, but thus far none of them have been lucky. Australia's yield of gold has been steadily declining for years.

The enemies which the British soldiers encounter in Cyprus are deadly fevers, mosquitoes of the most numerous and pertinacious kind, wasps of a remarkably energetic character, and huge centipedes that have a sociable way of insisting on sharing their camp beds with them.

Of Longfellow's five children, Onslow, the eldest, is married and in business in Boston; Ernest is a rising young painter, studying in Europe; Alice, the eldest daughter, is a pleasing writer; Edith is now Mrs. Richard H. Dana third, and Anna is decidedly literary in her inclinations.

Frank Palmer, who was in the fight in which Custer was killed, tells how those who buried the bodies discriminated. They carefully interred the remains of the officers, piled stones over the graves, and inscribed them; but the privates "were not buried at all, only covered, a little earth being thrown on them, and their bones are now strung from one end of the prairie to the other.

Last year in Massachusetts 12,737 couples were joined in the bond of wedlock. Of these there were 9,915 bachelors who chose maidens to be their wives and 608 who chose widows; while 1,396 widowers married maidens and 818 married widows. From this it appears that 788 more widowers than widows were married again, and that 1,396 maidens married widowers, when only 608 bachelors married widows.

The Pioche (Nev.) *Record* has this to say of Red Kenner: "He was a wild and reckless 'sport,' and has lived in the mountains for a number of years; he never forgot his old mother back in the States, and after selling his mining property down at Silver Reef for some $55,000 or $60,000, he took a trip home, purchased his mother a nice and comfortable homestead, and gave her nearly $40,000 to keep her from want in her old age, then returned to his wild mountain home with a light heart, knowing that his mother was well provided for the balance of her days on this earth. No matter how many Red's sins may be, his kindness to his mother will obliterate them all in the eyes of the people."

The Blue Hen Hotel.

"Some time ago," said the drummer, "I had occasion to visit the city of D—, in the State of Delaware, and I concluded to stop at the Blue Hen hotel, where I had spent one night during a previous visit. When I reached the spot where the hotel used to be, I was surprised to see that the tall building had given place to a low structure with a single row of windows, and the roof close to the ground. However, I recognized the keeper of the old hotel sitting on a chair in front of one of the windows, and I asked him where his establishment was.

"There she is, sir. I've enlarged her since you were here last."

"Indeed! Enlarged? I don't exactly understand."

"Oh, I know she looks smaller; but, stranger, I tell you that I've added four stories to this hotel since January, '75."

"What became of them?"

"I'll explain. After the hotel had been built a year or two she suddenly began to sink. I dunno what the reason is. A quicksand under her, I reckon. Anyhow, she kept going down and down, until the first story passed under ground. Then I moved the bar-room up stairs, put another story on top and began business again. Pretty soon she sank to another floor, and we moved up a second time and added another story. It's been nothing unusual in this house to go to bed in the second story and wake up in the morning to find yourself in the cellar. The milkman has regular instructions to pour the milk down the chimney in case he comes some morning early and can't dig out a window. Last month I overslept myself for forty-eigt hours because the room remained dark, and when I did get up, the roof was just even with the streets.

"This part of the house that you see now I built on early last week. The property became too valuable to lease. There are sixteen stories to the Blue Hen now, and I have got to add another before the week is out. If this hotel was spread out sideways she'd be about three hundred yards long. Eventually I expect she'll be six or seven hundred stories high, and it'll take you a week to get into the celler. I s'pose if I keep on, this here hotel will reach clean through, from Delaware to China. The lower end will come bursting out into Hong Kong or Shanghai, and maybe I'll be taken Chinamen for boarders without knowing it. Then, very likely, they'll tax both ends of the hotel and take money out of my pocket. They're always grinding a poor man so's he can hardly get along. Costs like thunder, you know, to run a hotel like this that requires so much to keep up a respectable appearance. I duno exactly what I'll do if she breaks out on the other side of the earth and then slips through the hole. I can't carry on a hotel floating out into ethereal space, you know.

"I have some hopes that may be, before she sinks more'n a mile or two, she'll strike a volcanic vein or something and get a shove up; come all the way out, for all I know, and stand on solid ground. If she does, you come round and see me, and I'll take you up and show you the view. I'll bet you can see Pern and Oshkosh and Nova Zembla and Tuckertown, and all those places—regular bird's eye view. You come round anyway and I'll take you down into the cellar."

I said I would, and then I hunted up a safer hotel. The Blue Hen is too original, too eccentric for comfort.—*Max Adeler, in Philadelphia Bulletin.*

A Thirsty Boy.

I saw the boy who wanted a drink—a restless, questioning, uneasy, thirsty boy. He let the window fall on his fingers before the train had gone a mile. He stood out on the platform until he was incrusted two inches deep with ashes and dust and cinders. He went to the water cooler and got a drink; then he came back and told his mother he was hot, and went back and got another drink. He drank about four times per mile, seldom oftener, unless he was seized with a sudden uncontrollable spasm of thirst. If he was drinking, and somebody else came after a drink, the boy would suddenly seize the cup he had just set down and refill it, and drink as though he had wrapped his stomach in the desert of Sahara, glaring suspiciously over the top of the cup at the waiting passenger as he drank. When he was in his seat, he watched the aisle narrowly, and if he saw any passenger get up and move toward the water-cooler, he would jump up and race for it. If he got there first, he would drink and snore over the cup until the thirsty traveler forgot what he went down there after. People began to wonder how much the boy was gauged for, and if he wasn't rather straining his capacity. The remotest hint or suggestion was enough to send him back to the cooler. When the train ran over a creek, the water made him think of his thirst. When it rattled over a long stretch of dry prairie, the absence of water drove him mad. I was afraid the supply of water would give out before the boy was filled up, and he was rather a small boy, too. His interior circumference, I think, must have inclosed an area double in extent to that inclosed by the exterior belt. Near Waseca we ran nearly a mile without the boy making a stop at the tank. I grew very nervous now, for I was fearful that during such an unheard of abstinence from water his pumps would run dry, rust out, and he might blow up. So I leaned over the edge of the seat and said carelessly:

"By George, but I am thirsty. I wonder if there is any water in this car?"

You want to understand me now, as recording very plainly, and without any mental reservation, the fact that the boy's mother, sitting beside him, was no fool. Her eyes snapped when she heard my careless and innocent remark, she took in every syllable of it, and she turned on me in a flash with "I wish you would mind your own business and leave my boy alone!"

A low, mocking murmur of applause went through the car, a little of it for the indignant mother, some of it for the charity boy, but most of it for me. She suppressed "yours truly" very successfully, but it was too late. Long before she had finished this brief sentence her boy was down at the water-cooler holding his eyes tight shut to keep the water from running out of them, while he flooded his system as though he had taken a contract to keep up a perennial freshet inside of himself.—*Burdette, in Burlington Hawkeye.*

Continually in Hot Water.

The woman who is always falling to pieces came to the station a little late and had to make a rush for the train. When she reached her seat her hat fell off. She got it on, but it toppled over to one side, and when she tried to straighten it up her hair came tumbling down. She lost her ticket twice before the conductor reached her, and would have lost it again if he hadn't taken it away from her. She reached up to put a bundle in the rack above her head, and burst the collar button off her duster, and stuck her fingers on four pins in her dress before she could find one that she dared take out to repair the damage. Then just as she thought she had got comfortably settled her little hand valise, packed to bursting with enough things to load a Saratoga trunk to the muzzle, exploded, and she nearly worked herself into fragments getting it together again. Then by the time she got the valise shut up her hat tumbled off again, and by the time she got the hat straightened back into its place, her hair tumbled down again, and as soon as she got her hair twisted up, and harpooned in with a couple of hair pins, the valise went off, and when she got off at New Prague she tucked the gasping valise under her arm, and tried to corral her toppling hat and wandering hair with one hand, and as she went fluttering and straggling into the depot, one couldn't help thinking that it would be safer and more convenient to run her in sections and flag her against everything. I have seen this woman on several other trains, and she has never been able to keep herself together. She keeps you in a state of agonizing suspense, for you never know where she is going to give way next.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

County Fairs.

The fair, as a pretext for bringing people together, has for twenty years taken the place of the ancient political mass-meetings of the North, and the barbecues and camp-meetings of the South. All the tribes of the farm districts go up to it. Not the fancy-stock raiser alone, with his fashionable clothes, high-crowned hat, shining sulky and thoroughbred mare, or his neighbor, the Squire, solid and keen-eyed, in his muddy "Jarsey," the broad back of his coat sunburned a dozen shades; but their wives and their daughters also, the storekeeper with whom they trade in the village, the lawyer who expounds greenbacks or the labor question to them in the drug shop of an evening, the editor of the country paper, and his young college-bred man-of-all-work, who writes leading articles, gums wrappers and mails the paper by turn. Specimens of all the farm stock join the great caravans; monster oxen and enormous pigs, dainty Alderneys and miniature bantams, famous imported ewes and bulls, heavily insured before they go, and sent with a corporal's guard of watchers. Then there are marvelous cheeses and butter, crystal jellies and homemade wines, invariably attended by their anxious owners, sharp-eyed matrons or pretty but loud-voiced girls.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Hindoo Weddings.

Among the Hindoos early marriages are the rule. By the time a boy of good family has reached the age of fourteen or fifteen, a wife has been selected for him, usually a girl a year or two younger than himself. Very possibly he has never seen her until the marriage ceremony is about to be performed. At the wedding both families lay themselves out to make the utmost possible display. Relatives, friends and guests are gathered in the house of the bride's father. Clad in her richest attire, the girl kneels on a slight platform covered with a rich tissue, the boy sitting cross-legged opposite her. The bride's father raises her hand over a vase filled with the holy water of the Ganges, and places her hand in that of the bridegroom, who puts the ring on her finger, amid the prayers of the Brahmins. This is the essential part of the ceremony, which makes them husband and wife. The genealogy of the husband is then formally read, and the stipulated dowry is paid over to him. After this, the festivities begin, and are kept up for several days.

RUNNING THE FAST TRAIN.

Lightning-Like Railroad Speed Betwe New York and Philadelphia—A Mile in Forty-Eight Seconds.

The train leaving this city at 7.35 in the morning for New York over the Pennsylvania Railroad is among the fastest in the world. Indeed, a portion of the distance is made at a rate scarcely obtained by any other road in Europe or America. The distance between West Philadelphia and Jersey City is eighty-nine miles, accomplished in one hour and fifty-four minutes, with a single stop, while the return is six minutes less, including two stops. This gives a rate in going, of nearly fifty miles, and in returning of slightly more than fifty miles an hour, surpassing that of the celebrated Queen's mail between London and Holyhead, where the run of 264 miles occupies seven hours. At half past seven o'clock on the morning when a *Times* man, by permission, boarded the engine at the West Philadelphia depot the steam guage marked 120 pounds and "still rising." Precisely five minutes later the bell clinked over the engineer's head, and almost simultaneously he gave a slight clutch of the lever and the train of four cars was off. It stopped at Germantown Junction thirteen minutes later. As soon as the engine got clear of the suburbs she shrieked and bounded away at greater speed. About twenty minutes after it wound its way through Bristol, and in till less time the iron bridge over the Delaware was sighted and Trenton was bisected at the same moderate speed which had been adhered to through Philadelphia. But it was necessary to do better in order to reach Jersey City, nearly sixty miles away at the appointed time. Trenton was scarcely passed when the engineer touched up his steed. Between the first two mile posts noted, the distance was passed in sixty-three seconds; the next in a little less, and a third in precisely sixty. Hurrah! The train was spinning along at the rate of a mile a minute. And yet everything proceeded with so much smoothness that it was impossible to appreciate the amazing swiftness. There was no unusual jolting, and in the cars the passengers were smoking, dozing or reading, just as though it was an ordinary train in which they were riding. Just beyond Princeton, the speed rose to the rate of a mile in fifty-eight seconds and continued it without diminution, except a slight "slowing up" at Monmouth Junction, until New Brunswick was in view. As soon as the town was left behind the engine was at it again, and in the neighborhood of Menlo Park the speed became prodigious, as if the locomotive was snorting defiance to to the wonderful Edison in his laboratory under the hill.

In this neighborhood Conductor Silance, with watch in hand, carefully timed the train for three miles. The first was passed in fifty-four seconds, the second in fifty-two, and the third in fifty. The last was seventy-two miles an hour. The puffs from the engine had become a continuous shuddering roar; the driving wheels were spinning around four hundred times a minute—a half dozen times a second—with a centrifugal force that, it would seem, ought to shatter their peripheries to atoms. The day was a hot one and the air was at a dead calm, but it rushed through the narrow door in front of the engine like a tornado. Small bridges were thundered over so quickly that they gave a single rumble as they whisked out of sight behind; the express train coming from the opposite direction flashed by like a meteor in a single hot puff of air; you might yell to the engineer, two feet distant, and yet he would only see your lips move, without hearing anything above the deafening roar of the engine, which drowns everything except the shriek of the whistle. All the time the fireman steadily shovels in coal or climbs around the engine with oil can in hand, his clothing fluttering so fiercely in the wind that it seems in danger of being blown off. The engineer with his hand upon the lever watches, with a cat-like vigilance, the rails sweeping under his wheels. The whole train is constantly under his eye, and he never allows his attention to be diverted for an instant.

One Saturday morning, as the train was approaching New Brunswick, and before its speed had diminished, Ed Osmond, the engineer, felt a sudden thump beneath him. It was repeated instantly, and then his entire side of the cab flew off as if from a thunderbolt. But the veteran knew like a flash what was coming when he heard the first thump, and with one bound he threw himself astride the boiler, shut off steam, and applied the automatic air brake. This stopped the train with such suddenness as almost to throw the passengers off their seats; but no one was hurt, and the slight scratch of the engineer's nose and the blow on his arm did not prevent his running back to Philadelphia in the evening. This is the only accident which the fast train has encountered since it began running on the 8th of July last. As proof of the ease with which the extraordinary speed is maintained, it may be said that the train goes into the Jersey City depot frequently ahead of the schedule time. One day the passengers began stepping off just a minute and a half before the train was due. Of the twenty-nine trips from West Philadelphia to New York, twenty-five were made on time connection. The train has been missed only twice. Once was on account of the accident mentioned, and the other was a twelve minute detention caused by an excursion train getting in the way. The other delays were just two minutes apiece, occasioned by the drug shop of an evening, the editor of the country paper, and his young college-bred man-of-all-work, who writes leading articles, gums wrappers and mails the paper by turn. Specimens of all the farm stock join the great caravans; monster oxen and enormous pigs, dainty Alderneys and miniature bantams, famous imported ewes and bulls, heavily insured before they go, and sent with a corporal's guard of watchers. Then there are marvelous cheeses and butter, crystal jellies and homemade wines, invariably attended by their anxious owners, sharp-eyed matrons or pretty but loud-voiced girls.—*N. Y. Tribune