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"The Rain Falls Softly."

The rain falls softly on the window eaves,
And whispers lowly to the rustling grass,
And loads the winds' dusk pinions as they pass
To shake the glittering moisture on the leaves
The rain sweeps where the great sea swells and heaves,
And dimples all the locked lakes' living glass;
The rain sobs round the home whose light she was,
As with the hearts left desolate it grieves,
And listening to its murmur all alone,
I set its cadence to my yearning sorrow,
And love's mute longing for the darling gone,
From nature's wail seems strength renewed to borrow,
Till I can hear the dull plash on the clay
Of that dear new-made grave, broad leagues away. —*All the Year Round.*

A Bit of a Sermon.

Whatso'er you find to do,
Do it, boys, with all your might!
Never be a little true;
Or a little in the right.
Trifles even
Lead to heaven,
Trifles make the life of man;
So in all things,
Great or small things,
Be as thorough as you can.

Let no speck their surface dim—
Spotless truth and honor bright!
I'd not give a fig for him
Who says any lie is white!
He who falters,
Twists or alters
Little atoms when we speak,
May deceive me,
But believe me,
To himself he is a sneak!

Help the weak if you are strong,
Love the old if you are young,
Own a fault if you are wrong,
If you're angry, hold your tongue,
In each duty
Lies a beauty,
If your eyes do not shut,
Just as surely
And securely
As a kernel in a nut!

Love with all your heart and soul,
Love with eye and ear and touch;
That's the moral of the whole.
You can never love too much!
'Tis the glory
Of the story
In our babyhood begun;
Our hearts without it,
(Never doubt it),
Are the worlds without a sun!

If you think a word will please,
Say it, if it is but true,
Words may give delight with ease,
When no act is asked from you.
Words may otten
Soothe and soften,
Gild a joy or heal a pain;
They are treasures
Yielding pleasures
It is wicked to retain!

Whatsoe'er you find to do,
Do it then with all your might;
Let your prayers be strong and true—
Prayer, my lads, will keep you right.
Prayer in all things,
Great and small things,
Like a Christian gentleman;
And forever,
Now or never,
Be as thorough as you can.

—*Good Words for the Young.*

IN PERIL.

"Lois—Lois Arnold! Drat the girl! Where is she now?"

The speaker was an energetic-looking middle-aged woman standing in the door of a small house in the side street of a village.

"What's the matter, Mary?" queried her husband, a kindly faced man, as he stepped into the porch beside her.

"Matter enough! Why, here it is six o'clock and the table ain't even set for supper. I can't find Lo's nowhere. What's more, Reuben," she added, with an anxious look, "I mistrust she's after no good."

"Why, how do you mean, Mary?"

"I'm afraid she's off with that Drayton."

"What, that city chap?"

"Yes. He's been moopin' around here a sight more'n I like, lately. I saw her puttin' on her best white frock two hours ago, and I thought then that more'n likely she expected to see him." And Mrs. Arnold shook her head solemnly.

At this moment a young man turned the corner of the street and came toward the couple. He was tall and well made, and evidently a carpenter by occupation, as the kit of tools he carried testified.

"Here comes Paul Haynes, now," said Mrs. Arnold. "Perhaps he's seen her." And, with a friendly nod she called out, "Seen Lois anywheres round, Paul?"

"No, I haven't," replied the young man, pausing; then added, anxiously, "You ain't worried about her, are you?"

"Oh, no; like's not she is in to one of the neighbors," said Mrs. Arnold, with feigned indifference; and, as Haynes passed on, she said to her husband: "I wasn't going to have him mistrust anything Lois had a sight better marry him; he wants her bad enough, and he's such a good fellow."

Lois Arnold was the niece of the good couple who were thus anxious about her—a pretty, wayward little thing, who had already given as much anxiety to her sober protectors as does the wanton duckling to the respectable hen she who rears it.

At this moment the culprit was walking down a green lane not far from her home, making her way toward it, indeed, but very slowly.

She was not alone. She was leaning on the arm of a man about thirty, evidently a denizon of the city. He was rather good looking, with intense dark eyes, and yet there lurked an expression on his face that might have inspired distrust in one more experienced than our country girl.

"And you say we must part here, Lois?" he said, pausing under the shade of a large tree, and drawing her into the shelter of some bushes.

"Yes, Frank," she replied. "I dare not have you go any further; and I shall be late at home, as it is. Aunt Mary will be sure to scold."

"Lois," said the young man suddenly, taking both her hands in his, "would you like to escape those scoldings for ever?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Drayton?" asked Lois, looking up at him with startled eyes.

"I mean will you go back to the city with me? Will you give yourself to me entirely, my own pretty pet?"

And he caught her suddenly in his arms, imprinting an audacious kiss on her trembling lips, and fairly overwhelming her with the force of his emotion.

After a moment Lois drew a little back from that almost fierce embrace, and looking frightened and bewildered, faltered:

"This is so sudden!"

"I know it is sudden, my darling," he said, drawing her toward him again; "but I am forced to speak to-day. I received a letter last night that well oblige me to return to the city in three days."

"So soon?"

"Yes, sweet one; must I go alone?" Lois hesitated, and even while she listened to this lover's pleadings the honest eyes of Paul Haynes seemed to be looking into hers with pitiful pleading and warning. But Drayton went on to paint pictures of life in the city with all its delights, and to utter passionate protestations of devotion. And bewildered by the suddenness of the attack, dazzled and intoxicated, before they parted Lois had consented to elope with her new lover.

Of course, no thought of evil crossed her mind. Somewhat more gently nurtured than the people about her, the picture of a city home possessed great attractions for her; and this man of the world, with his graceful manners and easy flatteries, had thrown about her a sort of fascination that for the time seemed to render her obedient to his will.

Lois walked home as in a dream, and was so absorbed in thought that she never heeded Aunt Mary's scoldings, but went about her evening duties mechanically. Only as she was washing the dishes after supper, she kept thinking how pleasant it would be to be rid of such drudgery in the future.

Yet her slumbers that night were being troubled; Drayton had, of course, proposed an enlopement, though she could not see why, if he wanted to marry her, why did he not come and ask her uncle for her and have the wedding take place in the village sothat s he might enjoy the innocent pleasure of showing her city conquest to her friends? And, somehow, she could not get Paul out of her head She had always thought she should marry him; she knew he had loved her so long and so well, she had teased him with her flirtations, of course, but, then, she had always intended to marry him in the end.

Drayton took good care that Lois should have as little time for reflection as possible during the next three days.

It was early September, the weather was warm and fine, and he persuaded Lois to spend a large portion of each day in rambling through the woods with him; and when she was by his side reflection was impossible.

He made passionate love to her all the time, half-frightening her with the fierceness of his protestations, yet rendering her quite powerless of resistance and molding her every day more absolutely to his will until she felt as if mysterious bonds were riveted about her.

She went home on the last evening through a gloomy twilight that threatened rain, with his last entreaties lingering in her ears, with no thought of trying to escape her destiny, and yet with a heart that was as heavy as lead in her bosom. At her own gate she met Paul Haynes.

"Oh, here you are, Lois!" he cried, with a joyful voice; "your aunt was just beginning to be terribly worried about you!"

"Was she?" said Lois, looking up at him with a pale face and wild startled eyes. "I won't trouble her any more."

Something in her look and tone smote Paul with sudden alarm.

"What is the matter, Lois?" he cried out.

"Nothing, nothing," she said, hastily; "let me go in," and before he could stop her, she hurried past him into the house.

Paul looked after her for a moment, and then walked thoughtfully down the street.

The next morning a dull, drizzling rain was falling, when, at a very early hour, Lois rose and looked with forlorn face out of her window. She dressed herself as in a dream, and then, with a little sachel in her hand, and closely wrapped in waterproof and vail stole from the house. Her limbs trembled so that she could scarcely walk, her face was pale, and tears stood in her eyes, and yet she was not, as in if obedient to some imperious power.

It had been arranged that she was to wait near the little station till the train approached, when she was to jump on the cars as quickly as possible, when Drayton would join her with the tickets.

Of course Lois was early at the appointed place, and as she stood under the tree, hiding herself as well as she could with an umbrella, she was a very miserable little creature. It all happened, however, as had been arranged. Lois hurried on to the train, and after it had whirled on for a short distance, she was joined by Drayton.

Once by his side again, her fears and her reluctance seemed in a great measure to vanish, and while he painted again to her in glowing colors the life they would lead in the city, or under her wraps clasped her hand in his, she forgot everything but the fascination he exerted over her.

When they reached New York, Drayton hurried Lois from the cars, and, finding her a seat in the waiting-room left her there. He must go away to make some arrangements for their comfort, but would return soon, he said.

Left to herself in the dreary quiet of the room, which was nearly empty after the rush of passengers had departed, Lois fell again into utter wretchedness. The rain fell in torrents outside, the air was damp and chill; she shivered, and after a while drooped her head and began to weep under her vail. The tears which at first dropped silently, grew thicker, and an irrepressible sob parted her lips.

At this moment a hand was laid gently on her shoulder, and a kind voice said:

"What is the matter, Lois?"

She looked up, and beside her stood Paul Haynes, gazing at her with eyes full of pity and tenderness. Lois half drew back and gasped out:

"Paul, what brought you here?"

"I came on your account, Lois," he said; then, noticing a little repellant gesture, he added quickly, "No, Lois, not to trouble you or interfere with your happiness, simply to protect you if you need protection. You believe that I am a true friend, do you not?"

"Yes, Paul, I am sure of that."

"I cannot bear to hurt your poor little child," he said, in a voice of infinite gentleness, "but I distrust Mr. Drayton. You think he is going to marry you?"

"Of course I do!" exclaimed Lois, pushing back her vail, and gazing at Paul with wide eyes of astonishment.

"And you wish to marry him?"

"Ye-e-s"—the assent was not very hearty.

"Of course you do, since you have come here with him, and you know, of course, that he ought to marry you at once—this afternoon."

"Certainly; that is what I expected."

Paul looked at her gravely.

"Lois," said he, "God forgive me if I do the man injustice. But I cannot help fearing that he does not mean to do the honorable thing by you. When I met you last night I was troubled to the heart. I distrusted Drayton, and when I learned that he was going away in the early train this morning I determined to watch him. I saw you get on the train and I followed. I will not tell you what I suffered"—a spasm of pain crossing his face—"you know how long I have loved you, Lois, and that ought to prove to you that I am your friend now. When Mr. Drayton returns, if you will give me leave, I will claim the right to go with you and see you married. If his intentions are what they ought to be, he will be glad to have me go. If they are not—"

"I will go home with you, Paul," said Lois, firmly. "I am glad you are here. I felt so—so lonesome," she added, hesitatingly.

"And you will authorize my being with you, Lois?"

"Yes, Paul, gladly."

And indeed it seemed as if new courage had come to the girl. Her eyes were alight again, her face bright, and she no longer cowered in her corner, but sat upright. They had not long to wait.

Presently Drayton stepped just within the door and beckoned to Lois. She did not respond to his signal, and, in surprise, he came toward her, an angry frown gathering on his brow as he saw that she was not alone.

"This is my friend, Mr. Haynes," said Lois, simply. "He will go with us."

Drayton acknowledged Paul's salutation with a stiff bow.

"Come," he said to Lois, imperiously. "The carriage is waiting."

Paul rose also.

"As one of the oldest friends of Miss Arnold's family, I claim the privilege of being present at her wedding ceremony," he said, firmly.

"Yes," said Lois, resolutely; "I want Paul to go with us."

Drayton looked from one to the other, the frown growing blacker on his brow, while his face wore an expression of helpless anger. Putting his hand on Lois' arm, he tried to drag her away.

"I will not have this man with us," he said, imperiously. "Lois, don't you trust me?"

She raised her innocent large eyes to his face, and half shrank away at the expression she met there.

"I shall not, unless you let Paul go with us. What harm can there be in that?"

"Every harm," muttered Drayton under his breath with an oath.

Paul stepped forward.

"Mr. Drayton," said he, "if you intend to marry this young lady at once like an honorable man, you can have no objection to my witnessing the ceremony. I am a very old friend of her family, and I can carry to them the assurance that, although she has done a very foolish thing in eloping, she has at least placed her trust wisely."

Drayton moved uneasily under the keen gray eyes.

"All confounded nonsense," he said. "Once for all, Lois, you will go with me alone, or you will not go at all. Choose." And he held out his hand.

Lois looked from his flushed and angry face to Paul's firm and kindly eyes; then, suddenly extending her hand to the young carpenter, she said:

"I will go home with you, Paul."

A look of sudden joy irradiated his face as he drew her hand within his arm and led her away, while Drayton, with an oath, strode from the room.

The return journey was, strange as it may seem, far happier to Lois than the outward one; somehow a great rest and peace seemed to have come to her; the excitements and turmoils of the last few weeks had vanished, and tranquility was restored to her life.

When she learned all from Paul—how he had heard what manner of man Drayton was, and that he had already wrecked the life of one young girl—when she thought of the devotion that had prompted Paul's action, and realized from what possibilities he had saved her—when she discovered at last that he hae even provided against any possible scandal by sending a hurried note to Mrs. Arnold, telling her not to let any one know that Lois had gone—when all this came to her, and she looked at his kind, honest face beside her, she said, with a sudden rush of tears:

"Paul, I can never thank you enough. I believe I have loved you best all the time. If you still care to have such a foolish, weak thing as I am, I will never tease you again."

And so Paul had his reward.

A Thrilling Story of the Sea.

Captain George Beal is the only survivor of nine persons on board the brig Lizzie M. Merrill, which sailed from New York for New Orleans, and foundered during a heavy storm. "When she went down I saw with the vessel a considerable depth," says Captain Beal, "and when I reached the surface again I saw the lifeboat, which I had launched as soon as the deck was stove, about twenty yards to the leeward of me, with the second mate and one sailor in it, but they could not pull to me to take me in, as they had lost the oars. I saw the mate and another sailor get upon some pieces of wreckage, and I got on some pieces myself which had broken from the deck of the after house. They were about eight feet long and two feet broad. On these I gradually drifted away from the lifeboat. Had the mate and his only companion in the boat even a light bit of wood they could have turned their boat so as to reach me and we would cling together in life or death. At one time I had formed the resolution to jump off the raft and swim to the boat but the distance was too great and the sea was running. Life was too sweet to take such a risk.

"Toward evening I threw up my hands every two or three minutes to encourage them and they returned the signal. We must have been then a mile apart, and the gap was steadily widening. A night was falling and they were fading from my sight the first feeling of terror crept over me, as I felt conscious it was our last separation, the chances of a rescue being all in their favor. Then I had only a few crackers in my pocket, but, strange to say, from the moment I began to realize my terrible situation the feeling of hunger departed. All night I was tossed about till my limbs so ached that they at last became benumbed and I began to fear that I would be washed off. At the same time I strained my eyes all that long night—a night of such awful length that I felt the darkness penetrate my very brain, and a feeling of bewilderment crept over me. As I watched and watched for a light and the day was not returning, I thought I should never gaze upon the light again. To add to my distressed condition I was seized with an intense thirst, which was burning me within. I kept my hair, face, and clothing well moistened, and this afforded me great relief.

"All the years of my life seemed crowded into one of those fearful minutes. At last when I remembered how much suffering was endured by other men at sea I formed a resolution to have courage in the hope that my companions of the previous day might have been picked up and would cause a search for me. Daylight came, but not an object was visible. All that day I drifted about and my situation was more comfortable, as the sea moderated. I ate two biscuits and found only one was left. I was repeatedly seized with a burning thirst and would have given the world for a drink. At nightfall a fainting feeling came over me and I became unconscious. I do not know how long I remained in this condition but I was aroused by a sharp pain in the left arm and found it was caught between the planks. I passed all that night and the next day and night without tasting anything but the remaining biscuit.

At two o'clock, on Friday afternoon, my heart jumped with delight when I sighted a sail bearing directly down on me. My arms had become so powerless that I was hardly able to signal with them. At six o'clock a boat was put out, and I was taken aboard the schooner Harold Haaringer, Captain Rein Kundsen, bound from Richmond, Va., to Rio Grande del Sul, after having been eighty-one hours floating on the eight-feet planks."

Stature of the Japanese.

Mrs. Chaplin Ayrton, M. D., has recently published the results of nearly three hundred observations of the height and span of the Japanese. She found the average height to be five feet three inches, and the span four feet eleven inches In the case of twenty-four women, taken at random, the tallest was a trifle over five feet two inches, and the average was four feet eight inches, with an average span of four feet six inches. The shortness of the span as compared with the height is a general characteristic that is especially marked in the case of the women. Sixty per cent. of the persons measured had the span less than the height, and thirty-three per cent. greater than the height, while in only 6.8 per cent. were the height and span equal. Climate can hardly be made to account satisfactorily for the smallness of the Japanese, as they live in a temperate region, though it is subject to sudden and marked changes. The general use of charcoal braziers for heating may have something to do with it by causing them to inhale the carbonic oxides. The characteristic of their food is the rarity of meat and the abundance of salt. Many of the additional causes of the smallness of the Japanese may be so remote as to cease to effect the nation except by hereditary influence.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

About 336,300,000 gallons of beer were manufactured in the United States in 1879, and 1,245,500,000 gallons in Great Britain.

TIMELY TOPICS.

A reformed orthography was introduced into all the Prussian schools on April 1. All new school-books will hereafter be printed with the reformed spelling, and no educational works with the old spelling will be used in schools after the lapse of a certain interval. The governments of Austria, Bavaria and Wurtemberg have also adopted the new spelling.

It seemed that oysters may be artifically propagated by chopping up the male and female oysters together. Dr. W. J. Brook says that the young oysters thereupon immediately begin forming. In a few hours the embryo can swim in the water. Its shells, at first small and apart, soon grow down over the edges and finally form the hinge. In twenty-four hours it is able to take food, and it grows to a size sufficient for food in about three years. An average oyster contains from six to nine million eggs. A large oyster contains fifty million eggs!

The *Berliner Zeitung* has caused some sensation in Germany by a terrible description which it has published of the maltreatment to which a soldier, and especially a young recruit, in the German army, is liable to be subjected at the caprice of his superior, and without any hope of redress. Kicks in the stomach, boxes on the ear, blows with a sheathed sword or the butt end of a musket, are part of the treatment to which the soldier must submit. The number of cases of suicide in the German army, which is notoriously exceeding'y large, is mentioned by the writer in support of his case. Ill-treated by his superiors, drilled till he faints from fatigue, subjected to most cruel tortures, which compare with those of the Inquisition, the soldier, desparing of obtaining justice or relief, puts an end to his life.

Prof. Wickersheimer, the celebrated taxidermist attached to the Anatomical Museum of Berlin, has just discovered a liquid which, injected into the veins of dead meat, not only preserves it for several weeks from decay, but keeps it perfectly fresh and in possession of its natural flavor. Having treated a slaughtered calf with his new preparation, and subsequently caused it to be exposed for a fortnight to the air and weather changes, hanging in the open front of a butcher's shop, he invited a select party of scientific celebrities to partake of the meat thus tested, providing for them, however, other viands in case the prepared veal should fail to suit their palates. The professor's guests, however, found his prepared veal so toothsome and delicate that they confined their attentions to it exclusively, neglecting all the other solid items in his bill of fare.

Philadelphia is astonished to find that it is to have an elevated railroad. The enterprise was kept a secret until very lately, and the first public intimation of it was the rapid demolition of houses. Contrary to what has been done in New York, the line within the city proper is to run on property owned by the company, except where it crosses streets. The projectors are the Pennsylvania railroad company, and it is to run from their present depot, in West Philadelphia, to Broad and Market streets, in the heart of the city. The job of purchasing the ground of its 250 owners was undertaken a year ago by trusty agents, and the buyers were over a hundred different persons, who resold to the company at the proper time. But this plan the property was all acquired at reasonable prices. The structure is to be of brick and iron, and the Schuylkill is to be crossed by a massive bridge.

The Brazilians have been proud of their two monitors, the Javary and the Solimoes, but recent developments have somewhat changed their views. They acted in the latter to steam down the coast for an military practice the other day, and after steam was made they found that the vessel would not start, and they had to put out the fires, cool off the boilers and overhaul the machinery to find out what the trouble was. The next day they got up steam and heaved ahead very satisfactorily, but the craft wouldn't obey her helm and bore down with great rapidity upon another iron-clad, which lay in her way. The officers and crew were paralyzed with fear, and the men on both crafts were preparing to go overboard, when by a flash of genius it suddenly occurred to somebody to reverse the engines, and the threatened collision was averted. The spectacle of an unmanageable monitor tearing about the bay has not convinced the Brazilians of their naval supremacy.

In a review of the British opium trade in India and China, Professor Christlieb, of Bonn, gives the following statistics showing the magnitude of the trade and its effects upon Indian agriculture: Since the conclusion of the treaty of Tientsin, in 1860, the quantity of opium annually imported into China from the East Indies has increased to 80,000 chests. In 1865 as many as 85,454 chests, worth $50,000,000, were brought into the Chinese market, 8,943 of which were sent to Malacca, while the consumption of the drug for medicinal purposes in Great Britain in the same year reached only 165 chests. The progressive growth of the trade during the past eighty years is thus shown: In the year 1800, about 5,000 chests; in 1825, 12,000 in 1850, 50,000; end in 1875, 90,640. Among the most striking effects caused by the extension of poppy planting in India are the diminution of the quantity of land available for other crops and the consequent curtailment of food products. In Benares and Behar, immense tracts of the finest and most fertile land in Northern and Central India have been gradually covered with poppy plantations. Quite recently 100,000 acres of the richest plains in Central India, and 55,000 acres in the valley of the Ganges, which formerly used to produce corn, sugar and indigo, have, to the impoverishment of the soil, been devoted to opium culture. The average devoted to that purpose to-day is estimated at 1,033,000 acres.

Japan's Mineral Wealth.

The Japanese have now a completely organized geological survey, with a full staff of native surveyors, under an American chief, Mr. B. S. Lyman. The first report of progress of this survey for 1878-9, has just been published, and contain some accurate and valuable information on the mineral wealth of the country. Mr. Lyman reckons that the coal fields of Western Japan contain about 620,000,000 tons, and if one-third be deducted for the working, there will remain 400,000,000 tons, representing a value at the coast of one thousand million dollars. Inconsiderable as this is in comparison with the large and rich coal fields of other lands, it is quite equal in value to all the metal products together, except iron. The copper of all the workable mines scarcely reaches the value of $750,000,000; the eight or ten gold and silver mines, which were formerly worked and may be so again, may, including the lead, antimony and tin mines, the workability of which is doubtful, be valued at not more than $250,000,000. On the other hand, the value of the iron amounts to at least $250,000,000,000. The relative importance of the mineral products may be represented by the following numbers: Iron, 1,000; coal, 4; copper, 3; all other metals (chiefly gold and silver), 1.

We would do many more things it we believed less in impossibilities.

Saved by His Skates.

An old Lake Superior trapper, named Thomas Judson, was once suddenly surrounded by a band of fierce Indians from whom he expected no good. While making free with his outfit, they found a pair of skates among his other trappings, and were immensely puzzled to know what to make of them. A funny thought seemed to occur to the hunter as he saw their curiosity, for his gray eye twinkled merrily.

"Ice moccasin," he said, putting a skate on his foot, and then made with his hands the gliding motion that the feet take in skating.

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian chief, pointing to the narrow blade of the skate, and shaking his head. As they were near the ice, Thomas proposed to fasten them on a young brave for trial.

The Indians welcomed the plan with glee, for, though savages, they were great lovers of sport. Selecting the bravest and swiftest young fellow, the chief bade him stick out his feet, which he did rather suspiciously. The skates were soon strapped on, and the young buck helped to his feet. The ice was like glass, and as he started to move, you know what happened. His feet flew out from under him and down he came with a crack. Such shouts of laughter as the rest set up! The young fellow was gritty, and scrambled up to try it again, but with the same result.

The chief now signaled the hunter to show them how the things worked. Thomas fastened on the skates with great care, picked up his rifle and used it as a cane, pretending to support himself. He moved awkwardly, fell down, got up and stumbled around, the Indians all the time laughing and capering at the sport. Gradually Thomas stumbled a little further away, whirling about and making believe it was very hard work to keep his balance, until he was near the point where the smooth lake ice stretched miles and miles away. Suddenly gathering himself up, he grasped his rifle firmly, gave a war-whoop as wild as the Indian's own, and dashed up the lake like an arrow, skating as far from the land as he had never skated before. If he had disappeared in the air, the Indians couldn't have been more astonished. Of course they couldn't hope to catch him, over the glassy ice, and they stood gaping after him, wondering more and more at the magic "ice moccasins."

Nothing pleased old Thomas in after years than to tell how he "fooled the redskins."—*Golden Rule.*

What to Do in Case of Fire.

The loose garments worn by women and children expose them to special danger from fire. If the fire starts from the bottom of the dress, the natural upward tendency of the flame soon envelops the whole person, unless by self-control and presence of mind the necessary care be taken by the sufferer, or some one near, without a moment's hesitation. To obey the first impulse and open the doors and rush out is sure destruction. The only safety is to fall down instantly on the floor, and roll over on to the fire, snatching a woolen shawl or rug, if near, to wrap round the body. One is generally safe by rolling over and over, for the flames will not rise to the face, and the lungs and breathing will be less likely to be injured. Those who may be in the room, or may come in, have their work plainly before them. Keep doors and windows closed; snatch the first woolen thing to be found—a table cover—without thinking of the work of art on it. Pull it off! When which is the most conspicuous of longest duration. Hence, for very young children it is improper, as, like all narcotics, it is apt to produce a morbid state of the brain and nervous system. In persons who do not take much active exercise, particularly in the female sex, tea promotes healthy bile, and assists digestion materially when taken with the meals, chiefly vegetable, it is most beneficial from the same cause.—*American Cultivator.*

The Prevailing Habit of Swearing.

It may be a grievous truth, but it is true, says a New York paper, that very many men and women are addicted to the use of expletives, some of which are profane, some simply silly, some in bad taste, some meaningless, and all unnecessary if you criticise them closely. Many men use oaths which are terrible in their intensity and bitterness, and yet their utterers have no feelings which need such language. They will condemn people to everlasting torment, curse their eyes, and call down the direst judgments of heaven on persons who cause them slight annoyance, and when anything goes wrong with them they will curse and swear like pirates; and yet really they would do no man any harm, and as to sending anybody's soul to hell, their lives would be miserable if they thought they had done it.

It is plain therefore that swearing generally is only a habit into which men fall, and that it by no means indicates that they are profane in their thoughts or disposed to arrogate to themselves the divine function of passing eternal judgment on their fellows. The exclamations expressive of wonder or delight or indignation which women so freely use, and which serve the purposes of a safety valve for their feelings, and the darns and godlys of the boys, are, in their essence, about the same. Of course it is foolish to use them, and their employment is in bad taste. They do not strengthen the speech, for they have lost any real meaning; their free and careless use has destroyed the force they may once have had. If men always had at their tongues' ends the fit words to express their ideas and feelings, they probably would not swear so much. But when the right word doesn't come easily an oath is handy for emphasis. That is about all there is in swearing.

It can't be defended, for it is a bad habit; and oaths, beyond question, greatly disfigure speech, which is most effective when it is calmest and simplest. Yet that habit of swearing in a very early period of their development is probably unquestionable; and that they have gone on in the practice, however civilized they have become, is a truth everybody's experience sustains. Christians, or those who nominally profess Christianity, often swear as much as the heathens, and probably there was not more swearing before our era than there is now. We have even retained some of the pagan oaths in their exact form, and to others we have given new forms learned under Christianity, while we have manufactured for ourselves an original supply.

Simple Protection against Epidemics.

Those who are at all afraid of epidemic diseases may feel comforted on hearing that one of the best protective measures that they can resort to is a very simple one—the use of soap and water. An eminent physician says: It is worth while for common people to learn that 50,000 typhus germs will thrive in the circumference of a pin-head or visible globule. It is worth while for them to note that these germs may be dessicated and be borne, like thistle seeds, everywhere, and like demoniacal possessions, may jump noiselessly down any throat. But there are certain things spores cannot stand, according to the latest ascertained results of science. A water temperature of 120 degrees boils them to death, and soap chemically poisons them. Here sanitary and microscopic science come together. Spores thrive in low ground and under low conditions of life. For redemption fly to hot water and soap, yet who live in danger of malarial poisoning. Hot water is sanitary. Soap is more sanitary. Fight typus, small-pox, yellow fever and ague with soap. Soap is a board of health.

A Dish of Tea.

The wholesale adulteration of this domestic article which have lately been detected in New York set one to thinking about the familiar Chinese staple. The well-known camellia japonica is of the same family as the tea-shrub; both have the same firm, dark, glossy green leaves, both the same kind of flower. The fruit contains two or three seeds of a mouse color, and from these plants may be raised. When tea was first introduced into Europe, in the seventeenth century, it was a costly article, the price being about twenty dollars a pound. When the founder of a celebrated London coffee-house advertised it at ten shillings, or two dollars and a half, a pound, some fifteen years later, it had already been denounced as interfering with the sale of beer and other liquors; and in 1660 a duty of eight pence per gallon was levied upon "all the liquor produced from tea which was made and sold in coffee-houses." Notwithstanding this great discouragement, it gradually went on making its way, till at last it became one of the most important articles of British commerce, and the duty was no longer levied upon the infusion, but upon the article itself.

If we take a map of China and mark with a pencil a line at twenty degrees of northern latitude, and another at thirty-one degrees, we shall include all the tea-producing district of the Celestial empire. Further north is Japan, which is equally suitable for the growth of tea. The finest tea is grown in the country about Nankin, situated midway between Pekin and Canton, where the climate is mild and temperate. The leaves are gathered one by one; and, tedious as the operation may seem, the daily average thus collected by each laborer is said to be from ten to fifteen pounds, according to the size of the leaves at the period of each of the three tea-harvests. The first harvest is toward the latter end of February, the second about the beginning of April, and the third in June. The finest shrubs frequently grow on the steep declivities of hills, where considerable hazard is encountered in the gathering process.

In tea districts everybody cultivates the shrubs and the poorest cottager has his tea-garden; even the priests who attend upon the temples are also tea-farmers, and the hills with low trees surrounding the pagodas, so often seen depicted upon our plates and table dishes, represent the tea-plantations of the priests. A new plantation is made by sowing the seeds, and the first crop is not obtained until the close of the third year. After four years more it ceases to yield fully and is cut down to the ground, when it will put forth fresh branches and bear fine leaves in great abundance. This process is repeated until the plant is some thirty years old, when it runs out and must be renewed by planting fresh seed. Its growth and culture have been attempted in India on a large scale, and with some degree of success. It also matured and yielded a harvest in some of our Southern States and on the Pacific coast, but China is, par excellence, the true tea country, and will doubtless always maintain the supremacy in its production.

The properties of tea nave been much extolled, and no doubt, moderately an properly taken, it acts as a gentle astringent and mild corroborative, giving tone to the stomach, and assisting digestion. It quenches thirst more readily than most fluids, and refreshes the spirits in heaviness and sleepiness. These qualities seem to be admitted on all hands, yet the most careful inquirers regard it as a narcotic, the stimulating period of which is the most conspicuous and of longest duration. Hence, for very young children it is improper, as, like all narcotics, it is apt to produce a morbid state of the brain and nervous system. In persons who do not take much active exercise, particularly in the female sex, tea promotes healthy bile, and assists digestion materially when taken with the meals, chiefly vegetable, it is most beneficial from the same cause.—*American Cultivator.*

Fijian Burial Customs.

At the meeting of the Anthropological institute, General Lane Fox presiding, a paper by the Rev. Lorimer Fison, entitled "Notes on Fijian Burial Customs," was read. The author observed that there was no uniformity of funeral customs in Fiji. The strangling of widows, however, was every where practiced in order that they might be buried with their husbands. In some cases ladies of rank volunteered to offer themselves for strangulation, but generally it was practiced on the "watina lalai" or "little wives." The operation was in most cases performed by the wife's brother, who is treated subsequently with marked respect by the husband's kinsfolk. In some parts of the island the death of the chief was kept a profound secret in order to save his goods from plunder, in supposed accordance with a communistic notion which prevailed in those parts of the Fijian group. The idea also existed among a certain class of the natives that it was not until decomposition had made considerable progress that the body of the dead man was fairly done with. With many of the tribes not only the fact of death, but subsequently the burial place of their chief, was kept a profound secret, lest those whom he had injured during his lifetime should dig up, dishonor and even eat his body. The general plan of sepulture appeared, according to Mr. Fison's description, to be that of a cave, in which the body was frequently placed before life was extinct, but which was not closed up until the person was supposed to be dead. In some parts stone coffins were used, and in one particular island a mausoleum was erected to be subsequently covered with clean sea sand. The author mentioned several customs which were based on the hypothesis that the dead man's spirit was ferried over the river or the sea. Moreover, nearly all the customs were based on the assumption that the departed spirit would return to annoy his old old enemies if means were not taken by securing his body to prevent it.—*London Standard.*

"High Falutin'."

Some seminary girls can throw a very powerful stream of words from the engine of their cultivated intellects, but they can't bluff everybody. The other day a fully diplomated miss of eighteen walked into a music store and asked the clerk for a song, which she called "Demonstrate by occular proof, the verdure of my sepulchre;" and, as he handed her a copy of "See that My Grave is Kept Green," and raked in thirty-five cents over the counter, he smiled blandly and said: "Is the ditty known as 'Argentine filaments interspersed with the aureate capillary attractions a novelty to your repertory?" She turned pale for a moment, and then concluded to go back to school for one more year.

The secretary of the Liverpool vegetarian society states that he has walked 500 miles in fifteen days—an average of thirty-five miles per day—on a diet of nothing but raw fruit, and this without unusual fatigue or bodily strain.

MONSTER SNAKES IN INDIANA.

A Farmer's Fight with the Huge Reptiles.

Mr. Joshua Mills, a farmer, lives in the extreme northwestern part of this or southeastern part of Grant county, near the junction of Delaware, Grant and Madison counties. One day recently he was clearing up a patch of deadening on his farm. The day was balmy and pleasant. At ten o'clock in the forenoon he had ready for burning three or four heaps of brush, and when about ready for doing so he conceived the idea of cremating an old log hog pen which stood near by. A hundred feet distant was a well which was uncovered, was operated by a deep bucket attached to a pole, and was used for watering stock. A hundred feet or so further on was a large shallow pond of stagnant water, surrounded by willows and dead flags and coarse grass. The surrounding country is low, wet and swampy. The hog-pen was a fair specimen of ye olden-time stye—roomy, with log flooring laid on the ground and the corners of the structure resting on large logs imbedded in the earth. After determining upon burning the hog pen, on account of the many rats, lizards, etc., he had seen about it, and because of its having done duty so long as to become a pest, he at once proceeded to carry brush and throw into it. He worked an hour at this. When he had almost completed his work, and was in the act of picking up the scattered limbs and throwing them into the pen, he was startled at seeing a monster water snake crawl out from under the logs and start off toward the pond. Mr. Mills told the *Commercial* correspondent's informant that this snake was not less than fourteen or sixteen feet long and about eight inches in diameter. He was so completely dumbfounded that he could not move for a moment, but finally ran toward the serpent, and with clubs succeeded in turning its course away from the pond. He then ran to the house for his gun, an old-fashioned musket.

When Mr. Mills returned the snake was not to be found. He then fired the truck in the pen, and started around farming the other heaps, laying his gun on the ground near by and fired the hog pen. The burning of the brush on the stye attracted to the scene a horse and colt, the latter a yearling, which were running loose in the clearing. After a lapse of probably twenty minutes after placing the fire to the hog pen, Mr. Mills heard a disturbance among the horses, which were standing near the fire. He looked up. The animals were a hundred and fifty yards distant. The first thing that attracted Mr. Mill's attention was the old horse kicking upward with his hind feet as if wild. The colt was stamping with his front feet. Finally the old horse kicked high into the air and ran, and at the same time something like a long rope whirled into the air and fell to the ground. Mr. Mills saw there was something wrong going on, and ran with all possible speed to where the trouble was. The horse, which had run away, stood off a hundred yards distant "whickering." The colt pawed the ground terribly, and it was not until Mr. Mills was right at the place where stood the colt that he comprehended the situation. Around the body of the colt was almost two coils of a large snake. Its tail was four or five times wrapper around one front leg, its head had moved its coils around the colt's body. The colt's eyes protruded, its breathing was hard, it pawed, pranced and cavorted around as if in the very throes of death. Mr. Mills had no knife with him of sufficient size to cut the reptile in twain. He hadn't time to go and get one, for the colt would die in half a minute's time. The snake was slowly tightening its coils, and on either side of it the colt's flesh protruded, showing the terrible strength of the twist Mr. Mills took in the situation at a glance. He must burst the reptile with a club, and do it very quick, too. He sprang toward a stake lying on the ground, and just as he was picking it up a whirr! whirr! was heard from behind, and looking up the forked tongue of a murderous rattlesnake presented itself.

The fire was so intensely hot there that it scared the rattlesnake and it sped on and away. But then the colt continued round and round, and pawing, slower and slower, as if ready to fail at any moment. Its very life was being squeezed out of it. Without any delay Mr. Mills rushed that way, and with one fell swoop of his club burst the reptile until its entrails were strewn all over the animal, and it fell to the ground dead. Strange, the colt was not seriously injured and it walked away.

But the danger to Mr. Mills had just begun. When the horse ran away, a score or more of snakes of various sizes and kinds were seen running from the fire. A load of shot from his gun failed to kill any of the huge yellow spotted monsters. Owing to the racket caused by the horses the snakes had so far run in another direction, but as soon the animals got out of reach they glided in the direction of Mr. Mills. With the club he held in his hand he succeeded in keeping the snakes away from him for awhile, but finally the number grew large, and their running so ferocious and promiscuous, that he himself was compelled to retreat Mr. Mills noticed from a distance that nearly all the reptiles, in their hurry to get away from the scorching flames, were plunging headlong into the well, the others into the pond. From the point where he stood Mr. Mills saw, he thinks, forty or fifty horribly large snakes of various kinds go into that well.

A comparatively few were rattlesnakes, and they were not very large, but some of the others were huge, fifteen to twenty feet in length. Some of the blue racers carried their heads as high as a man, and swept along like race horses. The sight was one which thrilled the auditor with sickening horror. When the pen had burned down, so that there was not a probability of there being any