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Advice.

What'er you have to say, my friend,
Whether witty, or grave or gay,
Condense as much as ever you can,
And say in the readiest way;
And whether you speak of rural affairs,
Or particular things in town,
Just a word of friendly advice—
Boil your MS. down.

For if you go spluttering over a page
When a couple of lines will do,
Your butter is spread so much, you see,
That the bread shows plainly through;
So that, when you have a story to tell,
And would like a little renown,
To make quite sure of your wish, my friend,
Boil your MS. down.

Daniel Gray.

DR. J. HOLLAND'S BEAUTIFUL PORTRAIT OF HIS FATHER.

If I shall ever win the home in heaven,
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope and pray,
In the great company of the forgiven
I shall figure to find old Daniel Gray.

I knew him well; in truth, few knew him better;
For my young eyes oft read for him the word,
And saw how meekly from the crystal letter
He drank the life of his beloved Lord.

Old Daniel Gray was not a man who lifted
On ready words his freight of gratitude;
Nor was he called among the gifted
In the prayer meetings of his neighborhood.

He had a few old-fashioned words and phrases,
Linked in with sacred text and Sunday rhymes;
And I suppose that in his prayers and graces,
I've heard them all at least a thousand times.

I see him now—his form, his face, his motions,
His homespun habit and his silver hair—
And hear the language of his trite devotions
Rising beyond the straight-backed kitchen chair.

I can remember how the sentence sounded,
"Help us, oh, Lord, to pray, and not to faint!"
And how the "conquering and to conquer" rounded
The loftier aspirations of the saint.

He had some notions that did not improve him;
He never kissed his children—so they say;
And finest scenes or rarest flowers would move him
Less than a horseshoe picked up in the way.

He had a hearty hatred of oppression,
And righteous word for sin of every kind;
Alas, that the transgressor and transgression
Were linked so closely in his honest mind!

He could see naught but vanity in beauty,
And naught but weakness in a fond caress,
And pitied men whose views of Christian duty
Allowed indulgence in such foolishness.

Yet there were love and tenderness within him;
And I am told that when his Charley died,
Not nature's need nor gentle word could win him
From his fond vigils at the sleeper's side.

And when they came to bury little Charley,
They found fresh dewdrops sprinkled in his hair,
And on his breast a rosebud gathered early,
And guessed, but did not know, who placed it there.

Honest and faithful, constant in his calling,
Strictly attendant on the means of grace,
Instant in prayer, and fearful most of falling,
Old Daniel Gray was always in his place.

A practical old man, and yet a dreamer;
He thought that in some strange, unlooked-for way
His mighty friend in heaven, the great Redeemer,
Would honor him with wealth some golden day.

This dream he carried in a hopeful spirit
Until in death his patient eye grew dim,
And his Redeemer called him to inherit
The heaven of wealth long garnered up for him.

So, if ever I win the home in heaven,
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope and pray,
In the great company of the forgiven
I shall be sure to find old Daniel Gray.

A LOST BABY.

Mr. Jonathan T. Ward, or as his card more modernly expressed it, "J. Templeton Ward, Jr.," looked like a man supremely satisfied with his fortune and himself.

He had just received a particularly gratifying letter from his sister in New York, calling him to the city on a flattering errand, and as he entered the cars this pleasant October morning the universe seemed irradiated with his own private sense of happiness. He dropped his hand-bag, cane and light overcoat carelessly in the vacant corners, and thus comfortably extended he found himself able to contemplate his plebeian and more crowded neighbors with urbane condescension.

After a few moments his fingers instinctively sought an inner pocket, and he re-read the letter which had so contributed to his self-gratulation. It was from his favorite sister Rose, who had married Henry Molineux, a wealthy broker, and whose happy married life had caused no diminution in her home affection. The Molineux were, in their way, very grand people, grander than the Wards, for they counted larger store of shekels and lands and antique heirlooms, and Rose's alliance had been fully approved by her brother. Rose herself was a bit of a match-maker, and had long cherished a dream of a double connection between the two families by the marriage of her brother with her husband's sister, Miss Winifred Molineux. Unfortunately for her plans, shortly after her own wedding her husband's family had sailed for Europe, remaining abroad four years, and the objects of her romantic schemes had never met. Very deftly, however, Miss Rose Molineux had managed her cards, keeping up Miss Winifred's interest in the unknown paragon by means of shrewd allusions and items of interest, but never waxing sufficiently enthusiastic to alarm the shy girl with apprehensions of a matrimonial pitfall arranged for her unsuspecting feet. With her brother Mrs. Molineux's maneuvers had been less strategic and delicate. The matter had been frankly discussed between them, and Mr. J. Templeton Ward acknowledged himself prepared to become Miss Winifred's willing slave at first sight. Indeed, he nearly persuaded himself that he was already in love with her, and he brooded over his sister's letter with all the benign serenity of an accepted lover.

"Dear Templeton" (wrote Mrs. Molineux), "Henry's father and mother have at length returned from Europe, and have agreed to let me have Winifred for the winter. I want you to drop everything else and devote yourself to us, to escort Winifred to all the exhibitions, symphony rehearsals, receptions, etc., of the season. She is looking remarkably well, and, what is better, has returned heart free. I was afraid some French marquis would be attracted by her dot and snatch her up. I know that you are very sensitive on such matters, and will not thank me for telling you, but by the death of her Uncle Robert in Pernambuco she has come into possession of thirty thousand dollars, which, in addition to her expectations from Papa Molineux, makes her a very pretty heiress. As What's-his-name says, 'A crisis comes once in the life of every man.'"

There is a trite old saying in regard to cup and lip which I forbear quoting, remarking only that it is a mistake to confide delicate porcelain to baby fingers. Mr. Ward's cup would probably never have slipped had it not been for a baby of whose influence upon his fate he was as yet blissfully unconscious. It was a sorry day for him when the three weird sisters converted Mr. Templeton Ward's cup of happiness—which had hitherto been as carefully guarded as though it had been a veritable bit of blossomed Dresden or fragile specimen of Sevres in Pompadour rose—into a plaything for a ruthless and irresponsible baby.

Mr. Ward had drifted into a day-dream, when he was recalled suddenly to the actualities of the present by a sweet voice at his elbow inquiring diffidently, "Is this seat engaged?"

Turning sharply, he saw a dignified but youthful lady, with a face like that of one of Raphael's Madonnas. His impressible heart paid her homage at once, and he was about to spring to his feet with spontaneous politeness, when the pleasurable emotion was checked by one of dismay. She held in her arms a baby—well dressed, neat, chubby, bright, and, to a parental eye, a cherub of a child; to Mr. J. Templeton Ward, his pet aversion and peculiar horror.

He looked at the child with an expression of intense disapprobation. "I think you will be more comfortable at the other end of the car," he remarked, slowly raising his eyeglasses and surveying the perspective of crowded seats.

"I will try another car," replied the lady, with quiet dignity.

Mr. Templeton Ward's good breeding asserted itself. "Indeed, madam, I had not observed that there were no vacant seats. Pray do not imagine me so egregiously selfish;" and the little lady was quickly seated at his vis-a-vis. For some time the baby conducted itself in an exemplary manner, drumming on the window-pane and watching the rapidly whirling landscape, and Mr. Templeton Ward had time to observe that the lady was dressed in that alleviated mourning which allows certain concessions to fashion and becomingness in the toleration of white at the throat and wrists, and solitaire pearls in either ear.

"You have a fine little boy, madam." The lady smiled. "She is a very good baby."

Mr. Ward was momentarily confused. "Your little daughter resembles you strikingly," he remarked.

Again the rarely sweet smile flickered across the lady's lips.

"You could not compliment me in a more gratifying manner," she replied.

He turned to the baby and endeavored to interest it in an exhibition of his watch and seals.

"What is her name?" he asked, hoping that the reply might involve that of the mother.

"We call her Dimple. Don't you think a baby the most delicious thing in the whole world?"

"Well, no, it had never occurred to me in that light before, but you know I have not had the advantage of an acquaintance with Miss Dimple."

"You could not help liking her. She never cries; she is absolutely angelic."

Mr. Ward was on the point of remarking, "I said she resembled you," but he checked himself, they were not sufficiently intimate yet for flattery.

The conversation became impersonal, and drifted through a wide range of subjects, Mr. Templeton Ward becoming more and more in erested in his traveling companion, and quite ignoring the presence of the baby. This young person at last became fidgety and even cross.

"The precious infant!" exclaimed the lady. "How forgetful I am! She should have been fed twenty minutes ago."

A basket was produced, and a little rummaging brought to light a nursing bottle. "Dear! dear!" murmured the baby's guardian; "here is the bottle, but where is the milk! How stupid in Maggie to forget it!"

The baby at the sight of the bottle at first chirruped with gleeful excitement, then became frantically impatient, and finally burst into a roar of anger as the train paused at an out-of-the-way country station.

"I see farmhouses and cows grazing in the pastures," suggested Mr. Ward; "Perhaps I can obtain some milk for you."

"Oh, no, no; pray do not trouble yourself," replied the lady; "if you will kindly watch the baby I can get it." And before he had time to insist she was out of the car and running toward one of the farmhouses. Mr. Ward explained the situation to the conductor, who agreed to wait two minutes beyond the usual time for her return. Two minutes, three minutes, four minutes passed, and still she came not.

The engineer sounded the whistle, the conductor shouted: "All aboard! I can't wait any longer. She's had plenty of time. I must reach the next station before the up-train," he explained, and the train moved on. Mr. J. Templeton Ward gazed in a stupefied manner from the window; the baby howled. "Come, this will never do," he said, as he endeavored simultaneously to realize the situation and to quiet the distracting baby, his thoughts and words keeping up a running fugue somewhat in this manner:

Thought: "What can have detained her?"

Aloud: "Precious little Dimple, so—"

Thought: "Where did she disappear to, anyway?"

Aloud: "—it was. Shall have the pretty watch."

Thought: "Great Cæsar! Can it be—"

Aloud: "Angelic little cherub!"

Thought: "– a case of desertion?"

Aloud: "Never cries—no, never."

Thought: "Of course not. She was a perfect lady; impossible."

Aloud: "Shut up this minute, or I'll—"

Thought: "What shall I do with the consumed—'

Aloud: "—speak to you like a father."

Thought: "—thing when I get to the city?"

Aloud (to old lady who offers a peppermint): "Thank you, ma'am. (To baby): "There, choke your blessed throat!"

Thought: "What a figure I'll cut at the depot!"

Aloud (attempting to sing): "Oh, where shall rest be found? Byelo, byelo" (shaking child violently) "go to sleepy."

Thought: "Suppose Rose should be at the station with Winifred to meet me?"

Aloud: "Darling popsy-wopsy, chickabiddy chum! See how funny it looks in big man's hat!" (Extinguishes it in light-colored high hat.)

Thought: "She said a baby was the most delightful thing in the whole world. Any woman who can lie like that is capable of deserting her unprotected offspring."

Aloud (removing the hat): "Good gracious! It's black in the face; its going into convulsions!"

Thought: "I'd like to know what everybody is laughing at. If I had a pistol I'd shoot somebody."

Aloud: "Look here, now, Miss Dimpsy Impsy. Come, let us reason together. This thing has got to be stopped. Be calm—I say be calm."

Thought: "I'll leave it in the seat, take my baggage and put for the smoking-car." (Suits the action to the idea. Settles himself comfortably. News boy appears almost immediately with the baby, still screaming.)

Newsboy: "Please, sir, you left part of your baggage." (Train comes to a stop in New York depot.)

Thought: "There's a policeman. I'll hand the wretch over to him, and get him to carry it to the station-house or the foundling hospital."

A few minutes later and Mr. J. Templeton Ward gayly mounted the steps of his brother-in-law's brown-stone mansion. A great incubus had been removed from his mind, and he now felt disposed to treat the adventure with hilarity. His sister met him most cordially, and, throwing himself upon the sofa by her side, he related the story, decorated with considerable imaginative embroidery.

"Think, Rose," he said, solemnly; "what a tremendous escape! There I was a complete victim. Why, I actually took her for a respectable and fascinating little widow, and was flirting with her in the most confiding manner."

"Do you really think she meant to desert the baby?" asked Mrs. Molineux.

"Oh, without doubt. She had got herself up nicely on purpose to deceive, and to think that I did not suspect her designs when she asked me if I did not think that execrable baby delicious!"

"Was the baby pretty, Templeton?"

"Pretty! I should think not. I wish you could have seen it. It bore the marks of depravity stamped upon its brow. When it howled, it glared at me with demoniac eyes, and fisted like a prize-fighter. I am morally certain that its father is one of the champions of the ring."

"And what did you say you did with it, dear?"

"I got rid of it as quickly as possible, I assure you. I handed it to a policeman, and requested him to drop it into the East river. I had the satisfaction, however, of pinching it well before I saw the last of it."

"Do you suppose the man thought you were in earnest, Templeton?"

"Of course not. He has carried it off to the Home of the Friendless, or the Asylum for Little Wanderers, or some institution of that sort, I suppose. But let's drop the baby. Where's Winifred?"

"I expect her every moment. There's the door-bell now. Let me see."

Mrs. Molineux motioned back the servant and herself opened the hall-door, finding herself, to her surprise, face to face with her husband, who wore an anxious expression. Mr. Ward, who sat just within the parlor, heard their conversation distinctly.

Rose. "Why, Henry, what's the matter?"

Mr. M. "Nothing. Don't be alarmed; only a telegram from Winifred. She was left and will come on the next train."

Rose. "Oh! is that all? Then she ought to be here now; the train runs every hour."

Mr. M. "Winifred's all right, but I don't won't to alarm you. Be calm—"

Rose. "The baby! is she sick?"

Mr. M. "Don't get excited. The baby is not sick."

Rose (desperately.) "Is she dead?"

Mr. M. "No, no. You always imagine the very worst that can happen. She is only lost."

A piercing shriek followed and Mr. Ward sprang into the hall just in time to see his sister faint in the arms of her husband. They carried her into the parlor, and she was at once surrounded by frightened domestics. In the confusion that followed Winifred Molineux arrived. There was no time for introductions, and indeed none were needed, for Mr. Ward to his utter dismay recognized his companion of the train, the supposed mother of the baby.

"I was bringing Dimple home from a visit to her grandmother," she explained, and added: "Is it possible that you are Mr. J. Templeton Ward? Then the baby is safe."

Mrs. Molineux opened her eyes, and suddenly sitting bolt upright assumed a tragic attitude. "Winifred," she demanded, "why did you abandon my precious Dimple?"

"I left her to get some milk," Winifred replied, good-humoredly, "and as I was coming out of the dairy a horrid goat barred my passage. The woman drove him away, but he stopped me again at the pasture bars, and I did not reach the station until the train had left."

Mrs. Molineux laughed hysterically. "Jonathan Templeton Ward," she exclaimed, "what have you done with your sister's child?"

"How was I to know it was yours?" he asked, deprecatingly. "I had forgotten that Miss Winifred would be in mourning for her uncle, and I though she was a widow."

"You thought!" interrupted his sister. "The least said about that the better. He sent his niece to the foundling hospital; he insulted Winifred and all of us in a manner not to be repeated. Oh, my precious Dimple, my lovely pet! He told the policeman to drop her into the East river. Henry, he said you were a prize-fighter. Winifred, he is not worthy of your slightest thought. Why do you stand there staring at me in that idiotic manner, Jonathan? I disown you; you are not worthy to be uncle of that cherub darling."

Mr. Templeton Ward did not wait to hear all. He darted out of the door, murmuring to himself, "A crisis comes once in the affairs of every man;" and, seeking the policeman with frantic haste, Miss Dimple was in a few hours returned to the bosom of her family. His sister, however, refused to see him, and it was not until the marriage of Miss Winifred Molineux to an officer in the United States navy that Mr. J. Templeton Ward finally made his peace with his outraged relatives.

Something for Nothing.

All newspaper publishers have had experience with men who want to advertise themselves or their business in newspapers without cost to themselves. It is pitiable to see the shabby means they take to attain the end they have in view. Men who would feel insulted if they were called dead-beats, will with bland effrontery ask a publisher to "please mention so and so" (an advertisement), or, handing in what is really an advertisement under the guise of a communication, they will say, "Here's a little item that will help you to fill up with." Men who do this—and there are some in every town—call themselves honorable and would not think of asking a real estate owner to let them use one of his houses a few months for nothing; nor would they ask him to let them cultivate and use a part of his farm, without expecting to have to pay rent for it.

The advertising columns of his paper is to the publisher what the house or farm is to the real estate owner—his source of income. Why any one should expect the newspaper publisher to be more generous in squandering his substance than other business men is something that cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition that some people have an idiotic idea that printers set up type for the love of the work, and that ink and type and printing presses are gifts from heaven to sinful men, who publish newspapers merely for the purpose of smoothing the pathway of their fellow men on the rugged road to fortune, and who hope not for reward this side of the grave.—*Texas Siftings.*

SINGULAR SUICIDES.

Some Odd Motives Impelling to Self-Destruction and Some Odd Methods Employed.

A glance at the files of a New York newspaper during 1881 discloses many interesting cases of suicide worth noticing from peculiarities of mode or motive. Dr. McCreery, of Louisville, killed himself because he believed his newly acquired appetite for liquor was incurable; John McPherson, of Toledo, because he had promised his wife on her deathbed not to drink again, and after a three days' struggle he found that he must break his vow or die; the Rev. Jacob Mulford, of Greenville, N. J., because after reforming and laboring successfully for some months as a temperance advocate he fell into temptation and lost his church. Professor Louis Walter, a pyrotechnist of St. Louis, put a nitro-glycerine cartridge on his breast and blew himself to pieces because he feared the shooting of President Garfield would spoil the Fourth of July business; John E. Jost, of the same city, read an account of a suicide, laid down the paper, drew his pistol and shot himself. A Philadelphian, on being slapped in the face by his wife, turned white with rage, and, after standing a moment irresolute, walked into the next room, took down his shotgun and killed himself. At Stepney, London, a girl drowned herself because her grandmother would not let her wear her new clothes, and at the funeral the Spartan ancestress was mobbed and almost killed. At Manchester a boy of thirteen hanged himself from remorse at playing truant, and at Newport, Canada, Ferdinand Pitcher, aged ten, went and did likewise when told to set the table for tea. William S. Pimer, of Willimantic, Conn., committed suicide on his wedding day from chagrin at not receiving a promised remittance to defray his expenses. Bruce Cooper, a young lawyer of Moorehead, Ky., eloped with Mollie De Hart, a girl of thirteen, whose parents had forbidden her to marry him, and after going a few miles advised her to return home, and shot himself. William Bennett, of Denton, Ala., was threatened with being disinherited in case he married a servant girl with whom he was in love; she refused him and he killed himself. At Newark, O., a rejected suitor made a final appeal to his obdurate sweetheart as they were driving together, and when she declared she never would consent to marry him took the check-rein from the horse, went into the woods and hanged himself. At Dallas, Tex., Mrs. C. T. Burke, of Little Rock, having followed and overtaken her eloping husband, put her two little children to sleep and poisoned herself with laudanum. At Louisville Mrs. Jennie Dorsey, when her husband, after six weeks of happiness, took to drinking and gambling and left her with a board bill of $25 unpaid, poisoned herself and died just a few minutes before a letter came protesting his love in earnest terms, and announcing that he was coming to take her away to a new home. At Melun, in France, Jules Roy and Clemence Wagner tied themselves tightly together and dropped into the river, leaving a request to the girl's father that they might be buried in the same grave. A young lady in South Carolina hanged herself because her father was defeated for the legislature. At Schoolcraft, Mich., Dr. Barnum, who had long been suffering from a painful disease, laid himself on his dissecting table and shot himself through the heart. David Crimmins, of Toronto, jumped over Niagara Falls, leaving a letter declaring that he had been forced to the act by his wife and their clergyman. Dr. G. T. B. Read, surgeon on the bark Veronica, drowned himself at sea near Madeira, while his brain was unsettled from the effects of an overdose of bromide, taken to relieve sea-sickness. At Buntingford, England, a servant girl of seventeen, named Miles, having been wrongfully accused of taking some articles belonging to her mistress, jumped down a well 120 feet deep. A female "Perfectionist," at Dallas, Texas, having failed in running herself to death, in the belief that this would be "running the race to the end" and making sure of heaven, threw herself into the river. At Hohemolsen, in Prussia, a police officer drove a three inch nail into his head with a curtain rod. Hugh Brandt, of Cohoes, having been unable to obtain work, tied a fifty pound rock around his neck, filled his pockets with stones and drowned himself in three feet of water. A negro named McJennings, at Indian Creek, Va., ran head foremost upon a circular saw in full operation, and had his head split through instantly. A woman in Milwaukee destroyed herself by holding her face in a basin of water, and a man at Constantine, Michigan, put his head into a bag with a number of stones, tied the mouth of the sack closely round his neck and jumped into a pond. At San Saber, Tex., L. B. Chapman, fearing a relapse of the mumps, shot himself four times. At Greenville, S. C., W. R. Mims, a prisoner in the jail, choked himself by thrusting his felt hat down his throat. At Dansville, N. Y., Mrs. J. S. Boyd went into the cellar of her dwelling, stripped herself, poured a pitcher of kerosene over herself and set fire to the oil. Captain Fritz, of San Francisco, hanged himself with his feet shackled and his wrists handcuffed, but his wife explained that she had frequently fastened him in this manner at his own request when he felt himself unable to resist the temptation to go out and spend the night with political workers. Before shooting herself, Josie Langelet, of St. Louis, put on an elaborately embroidered wrapper, arranged her hair becomingly and seated herself in a graceful position on a lounge. Before hanging himself Leonidas Robertson, of Madison, Ind., put on his wife's clothes and sunbonnet. George Wiggins, of Port Washington, L. I., loaded both barrels of his gun, fastened it to a fence, tied strings to the triggers and walked backward till he was about ten yards away, when with a sharp pull he brought both charges into his head and body, riddling himself from the waist upward. M. Anderwert, president of the Swiss confederation, shot himself on the promenade at Geneva on Christmas day, 1880. General Uchatius, the Austrian inventor of the "Uchatius gun-metal," being nettled at the failure of one of his guns, blew out his brains. A Hindoo priest at Ahmedabad, who for twelve years had made a practice of praying two hours daily at noon, gazing intently at the sun all the while, paid off his debts, composed and sang a hymn of praise and then ascended a pyre of his own building and setting fire to it burned himself to death. William Newkim, a Chinese theological student at Marietta, O., poisoned himself with chloroform through being worried over his love affairs. At Fishkill Landing Mr. Saunder's old horse drowned himself in the Hudson, in shallow water, after having been once brought in when he attempted to swim out into the river with manifest suicidal intentions.

Fables from Bret Harte's New Book.

THE KIND-HEARTED SHE-ELEPHANT.

A kind-hearted She-Elephant, while walking through the jungle where the spicy breezes blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle, heedlessly set foot upon a Partridge, which she crushed to death within a few inches of the nest containing its callow brood. "Poor little things!" said the generous Mammoth, "I have been a mother myself, and my affection shall atone for the fatal consequences of my neglect." So saying, she sat down upon the orphaned birds.

Moral.—The above teaches us what home is without a mother; also, that it is not every person who should be intrusted with the care of an orphan asylum.

THE PRUDENT TIGER.

A prudent Tiger having observed a procession bearing the remains of a sainted Brahmin to the tomb, communicated the intelligence to his wife, who said, "My dear, we are almost out of meat, and though the deceased, from the austerities of his pious life, was in poor condition, I make no doubt that among his surviving friends we may encounter others more succulent." "Miserable Tigress," exclaimed her lord, "cannot you see that if we permit the deceased to be cannonised, pilgrimages will be instituted to his tomb, and the producer and consumer will be brought together in accordance with the true principles of political economy? Rather let us, then, offer a chromo for each new pilgrim." This prudent advice being followed the Tiger enjoyed a free breakfast table to the end of his days.

Moral.—Beware of breaking the egg that hatches the golden goose.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A Wolf one day, drinking from a running stream, observed a Lamb also drinking from the same stream, at some distance from him.

"I have yet to learn," said the Wolf, addressing the Lamb with dignified serverity, "what right you have to muddy the stream from which I am drinking."

"Your premises are incorrect," replied the Lamb, with bland politeness, "for if you will take the trouble to examine the current critically, you will observe that it flows from you to me, and that my disturbance of sediment here would be, so far as you are concerned, entirely local."

"Possibly you are right," returned the Wolf; "but, if I am not mistaken, you are the person who, two years ago, used some influence against me at the University."

"Impossible," replied the Lamb; "two years ago I was not born."

"Ah, well," added the Wolf, composedly, "I am wrong again; but it must convince every intelligent person who has listened to this conversation that I am altogether insane, and consequently not responsible for my Actions."

With this remark he at once dispatched the Lamb, and was triumphantly Acquitted.

MORAL.—This fable teaches us how erroneous may be the popular impression in regard to the distribution of alluvium, and the formation of river deltas.

How Comets Affect the Earth.

The following extract is from the prize essay on comets, won by Professor Boss, of Albany: The influence of comets upon the earth is in all probability insignificant. They may, like the sun, affect the earth's magnetic condition, and thus to some extent, possibly, its meteorology. No such effect has ever been perceived. In spite of some chance coincidences between the apparitions of great comets and remarkable public events, no well informed person now believes that there is any real connection between them. By a liberal and credulous interpretation of any frequently occurring celestial phenomenon, similar coincidences could be shown.

When a comet is converted into meteoric bodies, which impinge upon the earth's atmosphere, there is some direct though probably minute effect. Some have thought that a sensible portion of the heat when the earth receives it is generated in this way; but the weight of scientific opinion seems to be against that hypothesis. The impact of the meteors upon our atmosphere must add some matter to it, and this is probably in the form of dust. This must be the origin of the so called cosmic dust, which has been collected at sea in recent times. The finer particles of it may have some influence on cloud formations, and other meteorological phenomena; but all this is merely conjecture.

A more remote effect may be sought in the possible fall of meteors and comets upon the surface of the sun. Owing to his vast bulk, the sun would attract an immense number of those bodies; but it is quite certain that their effect upon the sun's heat is quite insignificant. It is now generally admitted that we must look for the origin of the sun's heat in a constant, though to us, imperceptible shrinkage of his vast bulk.

Some connection between the frequency of sun spots and comets has been rather vaguely suspected. Were the search for comets systematically pursued with equal persistence for a long period, we might have some data for the formation of a sound opinion. Yet it would still be an open question whether comets cause the spots or whether greater activity of the sun tends in some way to render comets brighter, so that more will be visible, with probability in favor of the latter proposition.

Finally, it may be said, with all due respect to scientific decorum, that the appearance of a great comet does exert one most happy influence on the earth, in that it stimulates the curiosity of mankind and directs their thoughts to the more particular contemplation of the glorious universe which surrounds them.

Where the Money Went.

In July last George Sands, a well-to-do farmer living near Milan, Ohio, took home $300, and handing it to his wife requested her to take charge of it. She, with the thoughtfulness of the average housewife, considered that the straw bedtick would be about as safe a hiding place as she could find for the wealth. Accordingly she placed the roll of bills among the straw. The money not being needed for any purpose it was forgotten until several weeks after the house had been cleaned, when Mr. Sands inquired of his wife if she had that money. The thought came to her at once that she had emptied the straw-bed in the orchard, and of course the roll of bills had been dumped out too. A visit to the orchard showed that the swine and poultry had been very industrious there, and ten and twenty-dollar bills were found scattered by the wind and torn by the aforesaid farm stock. Careful search brought back about $230, leaving seventy dollars as the price of the carelessness. Mr. Sands does not put his money in straw-ticks any more.

Women are not cruel by nature. We never heard of one thoughtless enough to step on a mouse.

WISE WORDS.

It's easy finding reasons why other people should be good-natured.

Allowing the "blues" to master you is a sure way of cutting your life short.

A man who sits down on the road to success and waits for a free ride is sure to get left.

It is a mistake to judge of the excellence of your work by the trouble it has cost you.

To do good to our enemies is to resemble the incense whose aroma perfumes the fire by which it is consumed.

A head properly constituted can accommodate itself to whatever pillows the vicissitudes of fortune may place under it.

When bad men combine the good must associate, else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

To succeed in any of life's endeavors, be our talents what they may, we require perseverance, decision and tenacity of will to reach the full measure of success.

He who is always in want of something cannot be very rich. He is a poor wit who lives by borrowing the words, decisions, mien, inventions and actions of others.

Every one in this world has his or her share of troubles and trials. Let us then try as much as we are able not to increase the burden of any by as much as the weight of a straw.

Socially, politically and religiously the civilized world is in a terribly unsettled condition. Everything appears to be in a state of unrest. There seems to be no well-stated limit to anything.

Country Life in Italy.

A lady living in a country village in Italy writes, in the *Cornhill Magazine*, of her neighbors and their habits. She says:

It is amazing how smart the very poorest lady who has any pretentions to being such will turn out on occasions, however dilapidated her home attire. Two young ladies belonging to an old but utterly ruined family, whose parents were too poor to keep a servant, would dress themselves for their evening walk in the most fashionable hats and costumes, with their fans, smelling bottles, lace handkerchiefs and gloves, all complete. In order to obtain these dresses the young ladies had to condescend so far as to work for the peasants, who paid them for the manufacture of the smart stays and chemises they wear on feast days. The attempts at being highly fashionable, combined with an entire ignorance of the ways of the fashionable world, produce sometimes the strangest incongruities. The lacs veil is now almost confined to the class called "artisti"—that is, shopkeepers and skilled workpeople; but a few of the old-fashioned ladies still keep to it. Curious specimens of decayed nobility are to be found in these remote villages—people bearing grand names and retaining considerable pride in their ancient lineage, whom generations of idleness and unthriftiness have reduced to extreme poverty. They are not educated for any profession, and when starvation stares them in the face they have no resource but to earn their bread by manual labor. One noble count of my acquaintance is a carpenter; another a bricklayer. I have seen the granddaughters of a countess working in the fields. With their fortunes, their manners deteriorate, until nothing but a remnant of pride remains to distinguish them from the peasants between whose class and theirs so great a gulf was once fixed. I remember nothing more melancholy than the assemblage of these poverty-stricken nobles I once met at the house of the rich man of a village. We were at supper; and as one ragged and dirty old man after another came shambling in, each in turn was, to my great surprise, introduced as the descendant of an ancient and noble family, but fallen—"caduto"—added my host, with a gesture of compassion. The old man would then bow his head in melancholy acquiescence, and casting a rueful glance at his shabby cloak with the faded green lining, would slink into a chair at the far end of the table. One of these fallen nobles, who had taken to house-painting, we thought it only charitable to employ for the decoration of our ceiling. I was prepared to feel quite a romantic interest in this unfortunate nobleman, and to be enchanted with his artistic genius; but he was so uncommonly dirty, and his manners were so little removed from those of a peasant, that my illusions were dispelled at once.—Neither did his style of decoration exactly come up to my ideal, although it was ambitious enough. A basket of flowers soon adorned each corner of our ceiling, and in the center, from amid clouds and wreaths of roses, a rather shapeless Cupid began to be delineated. In the middle of the work the artist, whose temper was short and whose feelings were sensitive, took offense (as we supposed) at some unintentional slight on our part. Without the slightest explanation he departed one day, leaving the Cupid minus one leg and one arm, and returned no more. Poor Cupid!

Pots and Pans.

Utensils for boiling purposes have undergone little modification in shape from the remotest times to the present day. The reason for this is not far to seek. Water heated in a round vessel with upright sides would soon boil over, whereas when treated in a pot whose sides incline inward toward the top, the bubbling waves of the liquid have a tendency to a common center, and usually waste themselves in conflict with each other. Thus the caldron, kettle and saucepan have in all ages and in all nations much similarity in form. With regard to material, no doubt the earliest pots and pans consisted of such natural objects as adapted themselves to the requirements of cooking, as the gourd, pipkin, cocoanut shell, etc., and among savage tribes these are still employed for the purpose. In course of time vessels of clay came into service, and afterward metal was brought into requisition. The old Egyptians had pots precisely like the modern saucepan, and their larger utensils were furnished with the well-known ears and feet which may even yet be seen in some of the homesteads of our country. Shakespeare makes the "secret, black and midnight hags" in Macbeth use a caldron of this description, and it will be remembered that the savory mess with which the more respectable Meg Merrilles appeased the hunger of worthy Dominie Sampson was dished from a like vessel. That these articles were common in China in dim antiquity, and that the Chinese had a superior method of mending them, can surprise no one, and is what we have expected to find in a people who seem to have forestalled nearly every invention, great and small, that was ordinarily supposed to have first seen the light in other lands than theirs.—*Thomas J. Bowdwitch.*

FOR THE LADIES.

Homely Weddings.

I have attended all sorts of weddings in my time—the wedding of a king and queen; of a prince and princess; of lords and ladies; of Hebrews, with their quaint ceremonies; of gypsies in the fields; of borderers in the far West, when I held one end of the broomstick; of negroes down South; of Tom Thumb and tiny Miss Warren, weddings in cathedrals, churches, chapels, meeting houses; weddings before the mayor, justices of the peace and aldermen; weddings by cardinals, divines, priests and preachers—but to me the most impressive ceremony is the family wedding in the front parlor of the family homestead, when the father and the mother of the bride are present to give her away, and the father and mother of the groom to receive her into her new relationship, and the little room is overcrowded with relatives and friends who know each other, and everybody kisses the bride, and then the kissing—as well as the crying—becomes general, and even such an outsider as myself comes in for a share of the sweetest things in the party—I do not mean the bride cake. For others the march down the aisle, the massive music of the organ, the long train of bridemaids, the dress parade of ushers and the magnificent service. It is only a matter of taste, but I prefer the homely wedding that gives promise of a loving and lovely home thereafter.—*New York Star.*

Ante-Nuptial Dinners.

Among the latest of society customs, says the *American Queen*, which bid fair to secure a permanent stronghold among us is that of the ante-nuptial bachelor dinner, given by an expectant bridegroom to his ushers and intimate friends as a farewell to his bachelor life. The young lady is generally consulted in making up this list of guests, and in this way former friends of the gentleman are sometimes able to determine beforehand, a thing never known certainly before the introduction of this custom, whether the house of the aforesaid friend will be a closed or open one to them after his marriage, or if they be not invited the almost sure presumption is that they have not found favor in the lady's eyes. The dinner is generally appointed for the week preceding the marriage. If the gentleman be not blessed with the abundant means without which the fashionable caterers are only a delusion and a snare, it is permissible for him to give his farewell dinner in his own house, and in this case the number of guests is generally somewhat smaller, sometimes only comprising the best man and groomsmen. These are usually five in all, although in large weddings there sometimes are as many as seven or nine. Twenty is considered a good number of guests, and this quota attended the farewell dinners of George Merritt and Dr. Seward Webb this season.

Fashion Fancies.

Peacock fans are in high favor.

Chenille fringes are much worn.

Jerseys are revived on the other side.

Watered silk grows more and more fashionable.

Fashionable dancing dresses, all, have short skirts.

Æsthetic dress grows more and more in favor in England.

Plush is more fashionable as a lining for wraps than for the outside.

Black remains the choice color for the costliest and most elegant wraps.

Pale rose and cream white are the favorite colors for fine wool evening dresses.

Fringes of silver and pearl beads mixed are used for trimming evening dresses.

Artificial flower garnitures are de riguer with all gauzy and semi-diaphanous ball toilets.

Tan-colored long gloves with loose wrists are worn on all sorts of occasions and with any kind of a dress.

Black lace and fine jet are the approved trimmings for the handsomest black satin dresses for evening wear.

White, or pale blue, or rose-tinted Chudda shawls make lovely evening wraps when fur-lined ones are not needed.

The newest and most striking material in Paris for whole costumes is watered silk with a floriated damask pattern.

Detachable trains fastening below the short bouffant back draperies come with some of the handsomest late importations.

Court trains of great length, detachable and fastening on at the shoulders, come with the richest and costliest evening robes.

Silver gray silk trimmed with silver moire and steel and silver bead embroideries, is a much admired combination for light mourning.

Among fashionable shades are nasturtium, dead leaf, old green, all dark greens, faded old gold, and a shade copied from the inside of a ripe melon.

Tinted Roman pearls are much worn with full evening dress. Greek necklaces are also worn, made of several rows of pearls linked together at intervals by small diamond clasps.

Satin boots, with velvet tops, Spanish insteps and Chinese toes, and fastened with tiny jeweled buttons, are worn with handsome dinner or evening toilets of satin and velvet.

A Remarkable Gun.

In the late war between Chili and Peru a curious accident befell an eight-inch Armstrong gun on board the Chilian warship Angamos. The last time it was fired, the gun which was on deck slipped out of the trunnion ring, flew backward across the ship and leaped into the sea. This was the singular end of a rather remarkable history. The gun was supplied to the Chilians before the war by Sir William Armstrong's firm, and proved a formidable terror to Peru. The Angamos was previously an Irish pig-boat, and was acquired by Chili for the purpose of carrying this one gun, which, standing off at long ranges of 10,000 yards or so, she could do with impunity. The Peruvians at length sent out their fleet of gunboats to destroy this waspish antagonist, when the other Chilian ships, with their short rangers, came into action and drew off the gunboats, all but one, which was sent to engage the Angamos at close quarters. The Armstrong gun, however, sent a shower of Shrapnel bullets on to her decks and the gunboat retreated. As she was nearing port, a pot shot from the eight-inch gun, fired at long range and high elevation, managed to hit and sink her. The gun therefore did plenty of hard work and valuable service before it finally gave way and was lost in the sea.

Thirteen female physicians are practicing in Clayton, Ia., and at a recent fire there were not well men enough in the town to run the engine out. It is one grand incorporated hospital.

SUNDAY READING.

The Mote and the Beam.

We notice in an exchange a short anecdote with a point to it. A lady, on one occasion, upon examining a room which had not long before been put in order, complained to the servant that it was dusty. The latter said, respectfully, "The dust is on your glasses," and sure enough, when they had been removed and carefully wiped, the room put on quite another aspect. How very wide is the application that can be made of such an anecdote, and yet it is really only an extract from the Sermon on the Mount. We see it in our Lord's words respecting the mote and the beam. Objects change according to the media through which they are examined, just as the chemeleon—and there are many like them—takes its