

Dark Days Passed.

"Won't you buy a bunch of flowers for your lady?"

The gentleman to whom this question was addressed looked down into the face of the speaker, a rosy cheeked boy of eight or nine summers. The little fellow had a tiny basket on his arm, filled with bouquets such as we are wont to see in May or June. Flowers of the spring time, suggestive of the bright and happy days of our childhood when we were told by the teacher that we might vote for our next May Queen. Roses there were, white and pink moss roses, wild roses, and snowdrops; lilies there were, too, and all made up in lovely bouquets that it needed but a glance to know that a most artistic hand had arranged these children of the spring.

"But, my boy, it is the beginning of September—where did you get these lilies and roses from?"

"They are not real flowers, sir, they are artificial. Mother and auntie make them."

The gentleman looked more astonished than before, and after a keen look at the lad, he asked:

"Where do you live, my boy?"

"Away outside the city, in a cottage. We have real flowers, too. I have a flower patch of my own, and mother lets me plant just what I please. But, won't you buy a bunch of these, sir? They are only twenty-five cents, and they won't fade as soon as other flowers."

"Yes, I will buy two bunches of you, if you bring me a bouquet out of your garden to-morrow. Here is a half a dollar for these and another half for the flowers you are to bring to-morrow. Don't fail; I shall expect you at this hour, here in this saloon, where I generally drink a cup of chocolate."

The little fellow thanked the man, and was off in a moment.

Why had the man questioned the lad so about his mother's dwelling place? He could not account to himself for it. He, who came and went every day, and drank his chocolate in silence, hardly looking up at any one, had actually held a conversation of ten minutes duration with a little boy. Soon after he left the house, forgetting to empty his cup. Well, that was something new, and the waiters noticed it and commented upon it; for the gentleman had been their regular customer every day, for nearly a year, and they had never known him to speak to any one before, except to order his customary beverage, and after drinking it in silence he would lay his money down and walk out as moodily as he had entered.

The next day after his conversation with the boy, the man came a half hour sooner than was his wont, and he seemed excited. Every now and then he glanced toward the door, as if his life depended on the flowers that he was expecting. He had not long to wait, for the little fellow had evidently been as anxious to bring them in time as the gentleman to get them. After a glance at the beautiful bouquet, he said, more to himself than to the child, who seemed to be expecting a word of praise for his quickness or beauty of his pets.

"I thought I was not mistaken. No one knew how to arrange a bouquet like her. And the resemblance of this child! My God! could I, after all, have been deceived? It cannot be; I must have certainty." Biting hastily from his chair, he grasped the astonished child by the hand and said: "Come, show me where your mother lives, my boy, I must see her."

"But mother never sees company, sir. She only lets the old gardener come into our house to tend to the flowers."

"But I must see her. Stop! What is your mother's name? I might have thought of that before."

"Mrs. Norton, sir."

A shade of disappointment flashed over the man's face, but only for a moment.

"I must see your mother, child, else your face, too, deceives me."

The lad made no more objections. "If we take the shortest road home," he said, "we must go through the market house here, and then the other streets will soon be passed."

The walk was quite long, and especially so to the gentleman, who was traveling it for the first time. At last they came in sight of a little cottage surrounded by a garden. The house could hardly be seen, so thickly was it covered by vines and creeping plants. But one glance showed to an observer that no unskilful hand had been at work, and an uncommon mind must have planned the whole, to make the small place so complete a paradise. Opening the gate, the child led the way up the gravelled walk toward the house. On the portico, which was not only concealed by vines, but two splendid chestnut trees, he was received by a voice of surprise:

"Why, Harvey! back already? and

your flowers you've brought back. What has happened?"

"Mother, dear, don't be angry. The gentleman who wanted my flowers said he must see you. Here he is."

As he said this, the boy pointed to the gentleman, who was just stepping on the portico. He had stopped at the sound of the voice, and then reeled as if about to faint; but, rallying himself, he walked on until he confronted Harvey's mother. The lady looked at the gentleman in surprise, and was about to turn away; but one more look and then a cry, and she would have sunk to the floor had not the strong arm of the man caught her. But she did not faint; she was only overcome for the moment.

"Harvey, dearest, it is you or I dream?"

"Yes, my beloved wife, it is I. After a whole year's search I have at last found you, through what I know as our boy, whom I left as a babe." After mutual explanations, the gentleman said: "Ah these were bad days, when I had to leave you and our darling boy so destitute through the failure of that bank."

"Did our creditors seize all?"

"Yes, all; except our jewels."

"But why did you let me mourn you as dead all these years? Tell me that first."

"Darling, I wrote so often and never received a reply. Not a word of encouragement in these weary years of turmoil and trial. You know I left for China. I wrote from every port where we stopped and with every returning ship or steamer I sent you letters. After my arrival at Pekin, I wrote to you again to take heart, as I had the good fortune to get a situation in an American tea-house, and would, as I did send you half of my salary which was to be deposited semi-annually at the bank of New York."

"It must be there yet, then, for I have never drawn any, nor heard a word from you and mourned you as dead, as you can see by my wearing widow's weeds yet. When I turned my jewels into money, I labored hard, for more than a year at a millinery store, sister taking care of our boy. That was the hardest of all, to be separated from him so much. But I did it, and after I had learned the art of flower making, I got along very comfortably, for sister Ruth assisted me so faithfully. At last I had accumulated enough to lease this little place which was at that time a perfect wilderness and you see what four years of patient toil have made of it. We had ample time to make our artificial flowers, and for more than a year, Harvey has been in the habit of selling them for us. Yesterday I arranged some bunches as I used to do for you, and gave them to Harvey to sell."

"And it has been the means of my finding you; for I had made inquiries for you everywhere, and no one knew of your whereabouts. Thank the kind Lord who aided me. We will purchase his place, for I have ample means and we will forget in our future happiness the dark days that are past."

Personals.

The late ex-Congressman Lewis Selye of Rochester, N. Y., began life as a blacksmith.

The czar's new throne for the coronation is of black oak, carved richly, costing about \$9000. Its style is sadly suggestive.

The Queen of Serbia writes all her husband's letters, although the poor thing cannot paint, or embroider, or play the piano.

On her ninetieth birthday, Mrs. E. A. Jewett of Georgetown, Mass., coasted down hill on a hand-rod at a speed faster than that of a railway train.

The oldest clergyman in Massachusetts is Dr. Leonard Withington, Pastor Emeritus of the First Congregational Church of Newbury, Mass., born in 1789.

The Emperor of Russia often plays shuttlecock and shuttlecock with his children. People record such facts as if there were some reasons why emperors were not human beings.

It is said that the four stars, Nilsson, Patti, Modjeska and Langtry, will carry \$350,000 out of the country at the close of their tour through the States. If they wish to double the sum, they will leave it behind them in investments.

Once a year the Emperor of China, with all his ministers, plows a furrow across a field for the encouragement of agriculture, and the Queen of England enters the lists as competitors at local fairs for the same purpose.

Gates of white roses, swung from posts of the same flowers, separated the family friends from others in the church at the wedding of the daughter of Mrs. Attorney-General Brewster, where the bride was assisted by ten bridesmaids.

A band of Indians from the far West recently visited New Haven, and when they heard the Yale boys yell they drew apart and wept to think how they had been fooling themselves for years with the idea that the knew how to howl.

Scientific and Useful.

Sir William Thompson follows Dr. Thomas Reid in ascribing to man six senses instead of five, namely, the sense of force, of heat, of sound, of light, of taste and of smell.

An excellent soap-bubble preparation is composed of oleate of soda and glycerine, and from it bubbles two feet in diameter and of exceeding brilliancy can be blown. Some of these have been kept forty-eight hours under glass.

An apparatus for recording the exact speed of a train during its entire run, including stoppages and startings, has been invented by M. Pouzet.

M. Jacquelin says that carbons free from ash can be made by passing dry chlorine gas over pulverized coal or coke heated to bright redness.

According to the *Sanitary Review* the causes of the high mortality in Memphis have been shown by Dr. Thornton to be connected chiefly with the negro population.

In Great Britain the large sum of \$40,000,000,000 is invested in railways. Some of the engines weigh 45 tons and take a load of 60 tons at a speed of from 48 to 50 miles an hour.

There died in New York city last year 37,951 persons. The whole number of suicides recorded was 199, against 166 in 1881, and 152 in 1880. Of these 165 were men and 34 were women; 71 were Germans, 50 Americans and 20 Irish.

Bordeaux red is a new coloring matter for wine. It appears to be a naphthalene dye. Its presence in wine can be very easily detected. Silk is turned by it to a granite red, and the addition of a little ammonia makes the doctored wine brown.

A strong infusion of sassafras root is recommended by Dr. Hinton as a powerful remedy for poisoning by *Ilex toxicodendron*. When it is cool cloths are wet in it and applied frequently to the patient. A day's treatment will effect a cure usually.

The grapevine in France is surely and steadily failing. The phyllogera has no doubt contributed much toward its destruction, but aside from that the vine seems to be in a state of natural decay. The young and vigorous vines of this country must in the future supply the deficiency of the French vineyards.

Bricks are thus made without baking: Equal parts of hydraulic lime, sand and scoria are pounded and then mixed, being made into a paste by the addition of water. This paste is submitted to strong pressure in molds, and afterward hardened in cold water. The bricks therefore, it will be seen, simply consist of hydraulic cement.

There is sometimes an advantage gained in blindfolding a balky horse. If the habit is not inveterate, closely bandaging the eyes will distract the attention and set the animal at work again. To do this with the best effect the bandage must fit closely over the eyes, and the common blinders which only partially exclude light will not answer as well.

Artificial slates: Boil four gallons water, and add when boiling, four pounds and one and one-half ounces borax, and then one pound gumalac, in small portions. Then add two ounces lamp-black, eight ounces silicate of soda solution (strupy), one pound nine ounces silica. When this mixture is of convenient thickness it is applied on thick paper.

Some experiments have been made by M. Decaux, on the effect of the electric light on the colors of cloth and paintings, etc. The colors were exposed for 1500 hours under thin glasses to the action of an arc light at a distance of 150 cm. (about 60 inches), and under these conditions the effect of the electric light was found to be similar to that of sunlight, but only one-fourth as great.

It is almost a self-evident fact that there should be some other way of disposing of sewage than turning it into streams. But there is hardly any cure too severe for those who cut and store ice from polluted waters. Organic germs of disease are contained in such ice. People drink water cooled by it in the summer, when the system is most liable to sickness that may last all the year round.

An automatic electric mechanism that is designed to announce the approach of railroad trains has been tried on what is called the Paris-Lyon-Mediterranean line. It consists of a box filled with mercury placed under the rail at the required distance from a bell. When a train passes over this box the mercury is so agitated as to form contact with the wire communicating with the bell, and thus make it ring.

The South says that a number of ladies of Sumter, S. C., have organized a silk association, bought land near the town, purchased mulberry trees and silk-worm eggs, given notice of application for a charter and entered upon the venture in a very business like manner. The ladies propose to buy a reel and reel off the silk in Sumter instead of sending the cocoons off, and hope to have at some time a silk manufactory.

Dr. Thomas Taylor of Washington has made some investigations which

convince him that the common house-fly, aside from being an annoying pest, is possessed of the capacity of transmitting disease by carrying the germs from place to place.

It has been proved by numerous experiments that flour cannot bear the action of the sun, even when not exposed directly to its rays. When flour is exposed to the heat of the sun an alteration takes place in the gluten similar to that produced by the heating of the stones. For this reason it is advisable that the transportation of flour should take place, if possible, on cool days or by night, as well as that flour should be stored in a cool place.

A favorite antidote for rattlesnake poison in Mexico is a strong solution of iodine in potassium iodide. Mr. H. H. Croft has tested some of the poison itself with this solution, and finds that a light brown amorphous precipitate is formed, the insolubility of which explains the beneficial action of the antidote. When iodine cannot be readily obtained a solution of potassium iodide, to which a few drops of ferric chloride has been added can, perhaps, be used as an antidote to snake poison.

The sunflower does not turn with the sun, but a recent observer finds that a majority of the flowers do have a prevailing direction when opening. In the case of one of the perennial sunflowers (*Helianthus mollis*), of sixty-eight flowers up to one time all had their heads inclining to the southeast. Three days after this, with seventy-three flowers open, twenty-one (among the older flowers) had advanced toward the northeast, their horizontal faces becoming nearly erect during the journey.

A non-conductor of electricity has yet to be found, for all substances hitherto discovered are conductors of the force under certain known conditions; but those which offer a great resistance to it serve the purpose of non-conductors in practice, although they may be all classed as good or bad conductors. The best conductor known at present is silver; the worst conductor is solid paraffine. The Mayall metal, a substance composed of plumbago and rubber, recently patented by Thomas J. Mayall of Reading, Mass., is said to be economical and most efficacious in this connection.

Dr. Merkel states that the height of an individual after a night's rest, measured before rising from the bed, is two inches greater than it is in the evening, measured standing. There is a gradual diminution in height, caused by the yielding of the plantar arches and of the intervertebral discs; and a sudden diminution, when the individual rises, occurring at the articulations of the lower extremities. The sinking at the ankle is one-third of an inch; at the knee, one-twelfth to one-eighth of an inch; at the hip, two-fifths of an inch. The shortening at the knee is probably due to the elasticity of the cartilages. At the hip there is, in addition, a sinking of the head of the femur into the cotyloid cavity.

For our Better Halves.

Somebody has found a new use for the rubber-cloth hooded garments. If glazed on the inside, they make excellent fever-proof suits, and may be worn by doctors, nurses and other persons compelled to enter the rooms of those sick with contagious disease.

Silk muslin kerchiefs in white or colors are made up for house wear in very simple styles. They are bordered with a frill of lace, and have a small velvet flower in one corner. Net squares and scarfs have the flowers from Spanish lace applied in the ends or corners.

Scarfs of Oriental lace almost a yard wide and two yards long are shown for summer wear. They have very deep borders on the end of medallions or flower designs set close together and are sprinkled over nearly their whole surface.

The *Basar* patterns for summer dresses indicate a decided lowering of the standard of good taste, for every one of them is made of flowered materials, and two have birds in the design. There is nothing very new about the styles in which they are made, although in two the drapery is massed very high, apparently puffed out by some stiff substance, and in one model this arrangement is carried to absurdity, the puff being so large as to suggest that it is meant for a child to sit upon while the wearer stands. As for sitting down while arrayed in this way it is clearly impossible.

Black illusion dresses are dotted with pearl spangles, beetles' wings or butterflies, rather than with jet, by London dressmakers. The effect is better than that seen when jet was worn by every second woman in a ballroom.

The waist most in use for young girls' ball dresses in Paris is crossed in front and at the back and has a belt fastened by a rosette. It has a delightful air of old fashion which makes the wearer, if at all pretty, look positively babyish.

Still another use has been found for the little silk tufts. They are hung to the loops and ends of satin ribbon which sometimes trim the panels of skirts and have a very good effect.

The Last Railway Census of the United States.

The *Scientific American* collates the following railroad information.

The census report of 1880 relating to railways shows that for the fiscal year ending 1880, there were operated in the United States 80,781 miles of railway, the cost and liabilities for which were a little over five thousand six hundred millions of dollars (\$5,658,914,158).

The average cost of the railways, counting capital paid in and borrowed, has been approximately \$62,552 per mile.

The aggregate transportation earnings for 1880 were \$580,450,594, and the expenses were \$352,800,120. Net earnings, \$227,650,474. After paying interest and other fixed charges the amount available for dividends was \$110,344,507.

The total railway stock subject to dividend was over two thousand six hundred and thirteen millions of dollars (\$2,613,606,204), on which a trifle over 4 1/2 per cent. average dividends were earned, and an average of 2.70 declared, the balance of 1.80 being held.

The earnings per mile were \$6,688. Expenses per mile, \$4,665. Freight trains earned \$1.65 per mile, and cost to run 98 cents per mile. Passenger trains earned \$1.19 per mile, and cost to run them 76 cents per mile. In round numbers, 291,000,000 tons of freight were carried; average distance each ton, 112 miles. Passengers to the number of 270,000,000 were carried; average distance each, 23 miles.

No. of passengers killed, 146 Injured, 544
" employees " 928 " 3617
" other persons " 1475 " 1513

Total killed and wounded for 1880, 8215.

The equipment is as follows:

No. of locomotives, 17,412
" passenger cars, 12,330
" mail, express, and baggage cars, 4,475
" freight cars, 375,312
" all other cars, 80,138
Cost of equipment, \$418,045,459

The number of railway employees is as follows:

General officers, 3,375
" office clerks, 8,655
Stationmen, 63,380
Trainmen—Engineers, 18,977
" Conductors, 12,419
" All others, 48,254
—————79,650
Shopmen—Machinists, 22,796
" Carpenters, 23,202
" All others, 43,746
—————89,744
Trackmen, 122,489
All other employees, 51,694
—————181,183

Aggregate, 418,957

Am. of pay rolls for the year, \$195,550,013

Sanitary.

EFFECTS OF TOO MUCH BRAIN WORK FOR CHILDREN.—Dr. Richardson, F. R. S., delivered a lecture on "National Necessities as the Basis of Natural Education," before the Society of Arts, and brought forward the following facts:

"In one large establishment, containing about six hundred children, half girls and half boys, the means of industrial occupation were gained for the girls before any were obtained for the boys. The girls were, therefore, put upon half time tuitions; that is to say, their time of book instruction was reduced from thirty-six hours to eighteen per week, given on the three alternate days of their industrial occupation, the boys remaining at full school time of thirty-six hours per week, the teaching being the same, on the same system, and by the same teacher, the same school attendance in weeks and years in both cases. On the periodical examination of the school, surprise was expressed by the inspectors at finding how much more alert, mentally, the girls were than the boys, and in advance in book attainments. Subsequently, industrial occupation was found for the boys, when their time of book instruction was reduced from thirty-six hours a week to eighteen, and after a while the boys were proved, upon examination, to have obtained their previous relative position, which was in advance of the girls."

TETANUS FROM A CURIOUS TOOTH.—The *American Journal of Dental Science* says that a very remarkable case of fatal tetanus, ascribed to the irritation of a carious tooth, was reported some time back in one of the West of England journals. The patient was a shoemaker, residing at Bridgewater, who had enjoyed excellent health until he was seized with violent pain in the side of his head. He was treated in the first instance by a chemist for neuralgia, but the symptoms becoming aggravated, Mr. Kemmis, a medical practitioner, was called in. He found the patient insensible, with his jaw locked and immovable. Treatment, however, was unavailing; the man remained insensible, and died in a few hours. At the inquest Mr. Kemmis stated it as his opinion that death was due to tetanus brought about by a decayed tooth, and

he characterized the case as a most extraordinary one, a statement with which every one will agree. Simple trismus from some form of dental irritation, generally the difficult eruption of wisdom teeth, is not a very rare phenomenon, and cases of it are recorded. But general and fatal tetanus from a similar cause is happily of rare occurrence. Mr. Tomes has recorded a case which was apparently due to the operation of pivoting, and Wedd has mentioned one in which tetanus followed the extraction of a tooth. In Mr. Tomes' case, as in the one the particulars of which are given above, death occurred very soon after the first appearance of muscular spasm.

Curious Facts.

A spring in St. Tammany parish, Louisiana, pours forth clear, cold water all day, but at sunset it suddenly goes dry, discharging no water until the sun rises again.

While sawing veneer from a walnut knot an Indian discovered in the twisted fibres of the wood a perfect picture of a spaniel's head. The lines are as accurately drawn as if by the pencil of an artist, and when framed this natural curiosity has all the semblance of art.

One theatrical sham which has been revealed by a florist is the remodelling of designs received by actors and actresses. The material of a flower ship received in the first act appears in the shape of a harp in the second, of an anchor in the third, or of any other design. And all the time the audience is amazed at the extravagant profusion of flowers.

The contraries of the Chinese, as compared with us, have often been commented on. The Rev. Selah Brown writes about them as follows: We shake hands as a salutation; a Chinaman shakes hands with himself. He stands at a distance, and clasping both together, he shakes them up and down at you. We uncover the head as a mark of respect; they keep their heads covered, but take off their shoes for politeness. We shave the face; they shave head and eyebrows. We cut our finger nails; they consider it aristocratic to have nails from three to five inches long, which they are obliged to protect in silver cases. The Chinaman's waistcoat is outside his coat, and his drawers outside his trousers. We blacken our shoes; he whitens them. We have soup as a first course at dinner, and dessert at last; they have dessert at first and soup at last. We want our wines ice cold; the Chinese drink theirs scalding hot. We bury in the earth; they on its surface.

With us, black clothing is a badge of mourning; with them, white garments indicate the loss of friends. In that land of opposites it is the old men who fly kites, walk on stilts, and play the shuttlecock, and to keep up their odd ways of doing things, they play the latter with their feet instead of their hands.

In China women do men's work, and men are the milliners, dressmakers and washerwomen. With us the right hand is the place of honor; with them it is the left hand. In dating letters we place the year last; they write it first. They always speak of the mariner's compass (their own invention) as pointing to the south. We pay our physicians when we are sick; they pay while they are well, but as soon they get sick the pay stops. Here men kill their enemies, a Chinaman gets revenge by killing himself. We use a soft pillow; they a block of wood. They launch ships sidewise, ring bells from the outside, and actually turn their screws in the opposite direction from ours.

Swedish Expedition to Spitzbergen.

The expedition dispatched to Spitzbergen last summer by the Swedish Academy of Sciences, under Baron G. de Geer and Dr. Nathorst, two eminent naturalists, has resulted in a greatly increased knowledge of that desolate land. The outlines of the fjords and valleys of the southern part of the island and the relative depth of the seas around it and Scandinavia have been mapped out, rendering it evident that Spitzbergen is a ridge placed upon a comparatively level plateau, identical with that from which Scandinavia arises. This plateau sinks abruptly into the ocean west of Spitzbergen.

The fjords and narrow valleys are due to the action of glaciers. Old gravel beaches and marine shells occur far inland, showing a considerable re-elevation after the subsidence that followed the glacial period during which the mountains were sculptured. Some of the most characteristic plants and animals of Scandinavia exist in Spitzbergen, a circumstance due to a former land connection along the line of the plateau. Such a connection would cause the Gulf Stream to flow past the western coasts of Spitzbergen, and thus would bring about the milder climate which its fossils seem to indicate.