

A Presentiment.

It was in the Spring of 1850 that I prepared to leave my Western home to attend the bridal of a brother in Huntsville, Ala. I have been such a Jonah of a traveler that I cannot avoid shuddering at the sight of water; but on that occasion my mind was so filled with pleasant anticipations of reunion with relatives and friends, that I was not annoyed during my preparations with usual forebodings and vague fears.

I bade adieu to my friends at Shreveport with a light and happy heart, although my husband being judge of the Eighteenth Judicial District, of course could not leave his duties and accompany me. He was holding court at the time I repaired to the boat, and one of his personal friends escorted me thither; but as the steamer wouldn't leave before dark, he would come down as soon as he could adjourn court to bid me adieu. I had on my arm a handsome traveling companion or satchel, which I had just purchased, perfectly new and lightly filled. To my dismay and horror, I had no sooner put my foot upon the steamer than the chain of the satchel snapped in two, and it rolled down at my feet.

If I had the intellect of an Alexander or a Caesar, I could not have battled with the gloom and terrible apprehension of approaching evil which from that moment took possession of me.

"There!" I exclaimed; "it is an evil omen. If it were possible, I would not go on this boat."

My companion, of course, laughed and endeavored to quiet my apprehensions; and conscious of the silly weakness I betrayed I concealed my further evidence of it from him.

"Do not tell the judge," I requested. "He is afraid of my 'presentiments,' and I know he would feel uneasy."

My husband came down after awhile and introduced me to the only acquaintance of his on board, an elderly gentleman, Mr. E., whom he requested to take charge of his family.

I restrained all expression of uneasiness until after my husband left, when I freely confessed to the old gentleman the singular hallucination which had taken possession of me.

The old man, in a genial manner, soothed my apprehensions and the boat went down the river.

It was Saturday night—a sleepless one to me—and all the next day, with every knot the beautiful river palace made down the winding current my heart felt shortened of its throbs, as a malefactor who sees the gibbet rise in the distance which he veers.

Late in the evening of Sunday the boat was moored to the shore, wooding, and we all leaning over the guards—some talking, but I peered out into the sombre and melancholy gloom of solemn-looking twilight.

My presentiment had taken by this time such possession of my mind that I had been able to speak of nothing else; but oh! horror! while I was standing a new revelation of terror smote upon my soul. Was it some voice whispering to me from the land of shadows? Whence, whence did it come?

"You, you only, are menaced—only your life trembles in the balance."

I held at that time my little daughter by the hand. I had just folded away two other little darlings in their berth. Happiness and wealth are mine. I had all which could render life desirable.

I cannot describe the feelings which now took possession of my soul. Powerless, helpless, I was conscious that my fate awaited adverse powers and that the dread moment sped onward on the wings of lightning.

We adjourned to the cabin, where Mr. E. and myself sought a divan, the chandeliers now flashing with radiance, in contrast to the solemn landscape without.

"Mr. E.," I remarked, "our catastrophe will soon arrive—and I shall only rejoice; for any certainty is better than the horrid state of suspense I have endured."

Mr. E. looked hard at me; he was impressed, in spite of his better judgment, by a pertinacious belief in some impending calamity.

"Indeed," he remarked, "you have nearly succeeded in frightening me, too, at last. Yet I do not see why this is not a very safe boat? It is finely officered."

"No," I replied, in a low tone; "you need not be alarmed; there is danger to no one—but myself—and it comes now."

I had no sooner spoken than a deafening, crashing noise, like the tearing of timbers, smote upon the ear—loud, terrific and continuous. The floor of the gentlemen's cabin rose in the middle, like a sail billowing with the wind, and its convexity came traveling up to the locality. The ladies shrieked and rushed down toward the bow, flying past the mysterious enemy beneath their feet. I knew that that was the safest direction to seek in case of accident, but in the opposite one, in my stateroom, lay my two rosy cherubs, and instinct turned my steps toward them.

I caught up my little daughter in my arms and flew ahead of the strange monster, which was rending so fearfully our craft. I sought my stateroom, that I might perish with my children, but before I reached it, I was felled, stunned by a succession of blows, from heavy substances. The last thing I remembered was tightening my grasp around my daughter, and protecting her with my own limbs.

But, although badly bruised, I emerged from a pile of wrecks, to the astonishment of all beholders, who had thought such a catastrophe certain death.

An immense sawyer had penetrated our boat just above the lower guards, and the pilot, imagining it was a log, had steamed on prizing it higher up from the water with every puff. It had raked all along under the floor until it reached the stove in the ladies' cabin, where it had overtaken me, and where it litted up the stove, snapping the pipe into several pieces, and precipitating every disjointed member, stove and all, upon my devoted head.

Nothing had saved my life but the little cane-bottomed chairs ranged around it which some kind angel had woven into a kind of bower for my head, and which though it was splintered into fragments yet broke the force of the descent of the iron missiles. My little daughter was unharmed.

I shudder now when I recall the narrow escape, and I am told that Mr. E., verging to the forgetfulness of old age, yet never hears the word "presentiment," without insisting upon relating the narration you have just read.

Laugh And Grow Fat.

"That puts a different face on it," said the swindler when he raised a check from \$20 to \$200.

Massachusetts newspapers are to be prohibited from publishing marriage notices in the future, because marriage is a lottery.

Mark Twain, lecturing on the Fiji islands offered to show how cannibals ate their food, if any lady would lend him a baby. The lecture had to go unillustrated.

"Money does everything for a man," said an old gentleman pompously. "Yes," replied another man, "but money won't do as much for a man as some men will do for money."

A poor excuse is better than none. We heard of a man who justifies his meanness towards his wife by asserting that he and she are one, and therefore by refusing her money he practices the heroic virtue of self-denial.

"Does your wife ever get mad? Does she ever threaten to tear your eyes out? Does she ever hump her back?" "No," he answered pensively. "I can't say that she ever humps her back, but she's raised a hump or two on mine."

Very innocent man, old man Mildboy is. A friend found him at his desk the other day absorbed in perplexing study. "I am writing my will," the old man said, "and I want to fix it somehow so that the lawyers can get some of the property."

What is that on the table? That is cake. What are those things looking at it? Those are children. Do children like cake? No, children do not like cake. Does cake like children? Yes, cake likes children. Where have the children gone? The children have gone up-stairs. Where has the cake gone? The cake has gone with the children.

At the mechanical school: "Now, John, did you ever see a saw?" "Yes sir, I've saw a saw." "What saw was it you saw, John?" "It was a see-saw, sir." "A see saw? Why, John, what do you mean?" "I mean a see-saw, sir." "And when did you see the sea?" "Oh! sir, I didn't see the sea. I saw the saw, sir." "But if you only saw the saw, how saw you the saw?"

"Why, sir I never saw the saw. I saw the see-saw, sir. See?" "Well," my boy, if that's the way you see saws the less saws you see the better. You may take your seat."

The time wasted by men in feeling in the wrong pocket would make the next generation rich if they had it.

It looked very gloomy the other morning. The sky was heavy overcast and a mist was falling, the air was chill. But before noon an organ grinder appeared. How much we doubt, how little we trust.

Bill Nye's platform is: "One country one flag and one wife." He says, he has never pined to make the marriage record of his family Bible look like a hotel register. It is suspected at Salt Lake that William is opposed to Mormonism.

"Well, what do you want here?" remarked Mr. Smith, as he sat up in bed and addressed a professional burglar who stood in front of the bureau. "I want money and bonds," hissed the burglar through his clenched teeth "and quick about it, too." "My friend," retorted Smith, "I've been looking for those things for the last twenty years without success; but go on with your burglary, I'm sleepy."

For the Young.

A Cat's Strategy.

In a certain doctor's family there is a cat—thought to be the smartest of its kind. Like other cats he is fond of petting, but, unlike them, he wants to do it all himself.

But put out a hand to stroke him, or that delight of cats, to scratch his head, and an ugly slap with his paw exhibits his displeasure. Yet he himself keeps on petting in his own way, jumping into your lap and standing up to rub his head against your chin.

Cats have never been known to attend church services, as dogs sometimes do, but this cat never takes an active interest in the family prayers. Having been well brought up, he never expects to be fed until breakfast is finished and prayers are over. If, however, he thinks the family has sat long enough at table, he taps his mistress on the arm and runs swiftly back upon his hind legs, and sits up like a kangaroo, begging. If he discovers that this has no effect, he jumps up on the little stand where the Bibles are kept, and pushes them off, one after another.

The attention of the family is thereby drawn, and he is punished, but his end is gained. For the Bibles are handed to the different members of the family and prayers begin.

Then he jumps upon the stand, sits upright with wide open eyes, a grave and solemn aspect, and utters not a sound during the reading and the saying of the prayers, until the doctor says "Amen." Before the word is finished, an imperative *Moue* tells that he well knows that his turn has come at last.

Alfonso's Kindness.

Alfonso, the young king of Spain, is popular with his subjects. They credit him with possessing more of the virtues and fewer of the vices than are usually associated with monarchs.

One of his prominent traits is his kindness of heart. In this, he resembles his mother, the de throne queen Isabella, who, notwithstanding her grave faults, is greatly beloved on account of her amiable disposition.

One day, while riding in a Madrid horse car, the Marquis entered. Whereupon a friend told us an incident associated with that nobleman, which goes to explain Alfonso's popularity.

The Spaniards are fond of picnics. Even in winter, families may be seen in sunny spots, sitting on the ground, eating and drinking with merry hearts. We have witnessed, with a surprise incident to a Boston training, a group of friends sitting on the curb-stone, on the sunny side of a broad street in Madrid, and munching together as pleasantly as if in a dining-room.

The royal family share the Spanish love for live in the open air, and often go on picnics into the country around Madrid. One day, last spring, a party of ladies and gentlemen, headed by the king and queen, started on horseback for the woods, where they intended to breakfast, a meal which, in Spain, is eaten at noon.

It began to rain, but the royal cavalcade were not to be balked of their pleasure for fear of a slight wetting. They kept on, entered the woods, ate their breakfast, and had a jolly time, even though the raindrops did beat a tattoo on the leaves.

On their return, the horse of the Marquis—slipped on the wet road, and fell with his rider under him. The Marquis' leg was broken; there was no doctor in the party, and they were three miles from the city.

Constructing a litter of branches and leaves, they placed the wounded man thereon, and bore him to Madrid. The king dismounting from his horse, insisted upon walking the whole distance by the side of the litter, that he might cheer the sufferer with encouraging words.

When the party reached the city, Alfonso ordered the Marquis to be taken to the royal palace, and the king's physician to be summoned.

In a few hours the incident was known all over Madrid, and even the most pronounced Spanish republican could not help saying:

"Long live Alfonso!"

He who established his throne in the affections of the people acts on the republican principle, and usually enjoys a long reign. The incident may indicate the stability of Alfonso's throne.

Truthful and Thorough.

William Cullen Bryant was a plain man, and disliked pretentious people. "How is it that you can make Mr. Bryant talk?" asked a lady of another, with whom she had seen the poet conversing. "Simply by not trying to be smart and making no effort to talk well," was

Many sought the poet whose works they admired. Some used to call him cold and unsympathetic. They were mistaken. The man they sought was modest in his estimation of himself, and therefore shy. He disliked to be lionized, and would not be patronized. But his apparent coldness of manner arose from his truthfulness—he was willing to express a greater degree of interest than he felt.

No man was more cordial to those he knew and esteemed. As the editor of the *Evening Post*, he was distinguished for his frank and easy manner with his subordinates. His commands were put in the form of requests. If he wished to see a member of his staff, he never sent for, but went to him. He was never ostentatious of himself on his position.

Consideration for others, and a desire to avoid the infliction of pain were prominent traits of Mr. Bryant's character. A literary editor of the *Evening Post* once had a bad case of poetic idiosyncrasy to deal with.

Mr. Bryant had said to him, "I wish you to deal very gently with poets, especially the weaker ones." The editor was embarrassed—on one side was the injunction, on the other was the book of poems, without a line to praise.

Just then Mr. Bryant came in, and the editor, stating his embarrassment, read some of the stanzas to him. "No you can't praise it of course," answered Mr. Bryant; "it won't do to lie about it but"—turning the volume in his hand and inspecting it—"you might say that the binding is securely put on and that—well, the binder has planed the edges pretty smooth."

Journalism demands rapid work. Topics must be shot on the wing. The haste is fatal to the style of journalists. But Bryant's style was marked all through his half century of editorial work by purity and elegance. It never degenerated.

"How do you manage to retain the purity of your style?" asked a friend.

"If my style has fewer defects than you expect," answered the poet, "it is for the reason, I suppose, which Dr. Johnson gave Boswell for conversing so well; I always write my best."

"But," rejoined the friend, "there are daily emergencies when there is no time to choose words and be dainty, when the alternative is a hasty article or none at all."

"I would sooner," replied the painstaking editor, "the paper should go to press without an editorial article than to send to the printer one I was not satisfied with."

Perhaps another cause for the purity of Mr. Bryant's prose may be found in his habits of reading. He was fond of the old English classics, and often deplored their neglect by the present generation. He believed there was no worse thief than a bad book, and thought a man degraded his memory and his reason who used them to read any book which did not make him better intellectually or morally.

Ornamental Hints.

ORNAMENTAL TABLE COVERS.—Handsome table covers are made of alternate squares or half squares of basket flannel and of velvet; one made of two shades of brown is very pretty, and one of brown and lemon color is particularly effective. The spread should be lined; it is not necessary that the entire lining should be of expensive material; unbleached factory cloth will answer, provided that the facing is deep. No border is requisite, but if one prefers to have it this should be of velvet, and the facing of a contrasting color. If the blocks are neatly put together no needlework is necessary to adorn the spread; but, of course, this point may be determined according to the taste and means of the maker.

THERE ARE MANY WOMEN, at least two in every village, some of whose moments are made burdensome on account of having in their sitting-room, behind the coal stove, a long shelf of wood. This is usually painted white, to match other wood-work in the room; and on this white-painted surface the soft, gray dust settles all the time. There is no vigilance short of the eternal which serves to keep it free. A young wife tried this plan, and it is so nearly satisfactory that she tells it for the benefit of others: Make a lambrequin for the shelf; it may be of aida canvas or of Macrame. It need not be a deep lambrequin, from ten inches to fifteen will answer. Then cover the shelf with crash and attach the lambrequin to it. The dust may settle there, but if given one careful brushing in the morning you will not be disheartened by seeing it for the rest of the day. The lambrequin in the case mentioned was made of Macrame, and was crocheted; three spaces were left through which scarlet ribbons were run; the edge was finished with a deep, large scallop. The ribbons were put in lengthwise. If one choose to do so, the ribbons could be put in the other way and the ends could be left a little longer than the lambrequin, and, after being turned back in points, little tassels of crevel could be put on. This is a pretty design for a corner bracket.

Suicide by Starvation is so popular now that a Philadelphia man is going to try it. He will board at a New York hotel and refuse to fee the waiters.

A New Cereal.

An exchange says: A new cereal has been introduced by a gentleman of South Carolina, a description of which may interest our readers. Millomaize is a native of the Southern Hemisphere, being found in large quantities in Columbia, where it is used as the common food of the working people and the grain is fed to working animals. In food qualities it is said to be superior to wheat, and experiments show that fifty to one hundred bushels of clean seed can be raised to the acre. Rev. R. H. Pratt, formerly a missionary in South America, the gentleman who introduced the grain and who has raised it successfully for some years in South Carolina, says the millomaize is allied to the sorghum and Guinea corn families, and should not be planted where there is any danger of mixing them. The grain is small, and more mealy than the Guinea corn families, heads are larger and more compact, and the color is milk white instead of red. It differs from sorghum in this, that the sugar it contains is fully converted into corn when the grain matures—so that the pith of the grain-stalks becomes as dry and tasteless as that of Indian corn when the stalk is dead. In Barranquilla, on the coast, where we have a dry season (which is really a drought) of five or six months' continuance, I have had it planted in my garden, and after it had ripened one crop of seed I have cut it down to the roots in the midst of this dry season and had a second crop, of inferior quality, of course, to shoot up at once from the roots. I have been told that a third crop of fully ripened seed can thus be obtained from a single plant. I do not know what this can imply (for the soil at this season gets as dry as a potsherd, and nearly as hard) unless it means that, above most other plants, this lives off the atmosphere which there, certainly, is densely charged with moisture from the sea. It was this unlimited capacity to stand drought which induced me to bring the seed home, in the belief that it would be of incalculable service to our Southern States, where our crops so often fail from drought.

Seal Hunters.

Women and Children Engaged in the Slaughter.

A motley and curious lot are the men who for a few weeks in the year hunt the seal, says a letter writer at St. John's, N. F. Stalwart in frame, used to the sea until they have absolute contempt of its terrors, bold in adventures on the treacherous ice floes and marvelously skilled in seal lore, they make up a body of men in some respects not to be matched on the globe. Crowded like pigs on a sealing steamer, they cultivate a positive affection for dirt, and regard it as a kind of honorable badge for their adventurous calling. During a voyage of several weeks they never take off their clothes, even to sleep. The oil from seal blubber fairly drips from their garments, dirt, soot and tar adhere to their faces in steadily thickening strata, and when they finally enter port to strut the streets in unwashed glory they are incarnate emblems of filth and odor. A night in St. John after the arrival of two or three lucky seal crews means bedlam for the city. Honest burghers fly the streets and look well to the doors and shutters of night. On the ice the endurance, sure-footedness and daring of the seal hunters are well-nigh incredible. They leap from cake to cake where it seems a child could not be sustained, drag their heavy boats long distances through the hammocks, and think nothing of passing a night in the ice far from the steamer, provided only seal are near. Their cold hands they warm by thrusting them in the gashes cut in the still palpitating carcass of the seal, and one instance is recorded where a freezing sealer saved his life by heaping up the gory carcasses for a night over his own body. When hunting, the sealers go by twos, so that one can aid his companion should he fall in the water between the floes.

Though the finding of the seal herds is largely a matter of luck, considerable depends on the sagacity of the captain, who, if up to his business, watches carefully the winds of late February and early March, so as to know where and when the ice can best be met.

Curious and isolated facts gathered from sealing experiences are related here without number. Some years ago, during an otherwise bad season, the seals "struck in" on the ice near Newfoundland coast, while the steamers were away. Women and children, leaving the shore, engaged in the slaughter, and during a few days 64,000 head were killed within a few miles of St. John's. The flippers of the seal, by the way, when fried are reckoned a rare dainty by the islanders, and are often brought back from the ice in long strips to be kept for food. When, as rarely happens, more seals are found than a single steamer can load, the surplus are killed and pelts heaped with the steamer's flag, in that case an unloaded vessel can

bring in the pelts and demand a certain large percentage of their value. On their second voyage out the steamers seek the full grown animals, which weigh some 200 pounds. They are fierce fellows, who force their way to the water and have to be shot, making the process of collection pelts slow and unprofitable as compared with the capture of a new born herd.

When the steamers arrive the pelts are unloaded and transferred to the oil factories which line the border of St. John's harbor. The blubber is separated from the pelt to be fried into oil, which is used for lubricating, for the fine soaps and a dozen other purposes. The skins are salted, then sent to Europe, where they are tanned into coarse but handsome leather, particularly beautiful for its graining, and worked up for purses, costly bookbinding and like uses. As stated, the sealing business of the North Atlantic is almost monopolized by the Newfoundlanders. A fleet of steamers belonging to a firm at Dundee, Scotland, come every year to St. John's, but they take their crews on here, and here also is the factory of the owners. The monopoly is now and promises to be for a time a natural one, founded on proximity to the ice, and still firmer on the long traditions, the trained experience and the almost reckless enterprise of the bold island sealers.

Keeping Warm in the Far North.

I reached home on the 13th, the coldest weather I experienced on the trip being on the 13th, when, about two hours before sunrise, the thermometer indicated 53° F. That day I made a journey of twenty-five miles, riding most of the way on the sledge, and at no time during that day did I feel uncomfortable, the highest thermometer reached being 60° F., and I might here say that I really enjoyed the whole trip. I attribute it almost wholly to the Esquimaux reindeer clothing and constant living in a snow igloo like the natives, where the temperature is never above freezing and generally 10° to 15° below that point. I do not believe—and my belief is confirmed by the written accounts of others—that any Arctic voyagers, housed in warm ships as their base and clad in the usual Arctic suits of explorers, could stand such a journey without more or less material discomfort. Once only did I learn the lesson of caution. I took off my right mitten in attempting to get a shot at a passing reindeer, the wind blowing stiffly in my face, and the thermometer 37° F., when the persistent refusal of the frozen gun-lock to work perfectly kept my hand exposed much longer than I had intended. When I attempted to use it again it seemed paralyzed, and looking at it I noticed that the skin was as white as marble. Toooloah, who was beside me, noticed it at the same time, and with an Innuut exclamation of surprise, hastily doffing both his mittens grasped it between his warm hands, and then held it against his warmer body under his *oo-oo-oo*, or Esquimaux coat. It soon resumed its functions, and, although I felt for some time as though I was holding on to a hornet's nest, I experienced no more serious results than a couple of ugly looking blisters where the iron of the gun had come in contact with the bare hand. The reindeer escaped. As the reindeer clothing is the warmest in the Arctic, so it makes the warmest bedding, two large skins made into a long coffin-like bag or sack, the hair side in being a sufficient protection in the coldest weather when in a properly constructed igloo. When the first severe cold came at North Hudson Bay I was sleeping under a blanket and two fine buffalo robes, which I found, as the thermometer sank below 30° to 40° F., to be inadequate to secure comfort, until I procured a reindeer sleeping-bag, weighing not half as much, after which cold nights were no longer dreaded. The robe of the American bison seems under the least provocation to become damp, and then freezes as stiff as a piece of sole-leather. Once spoiled in this manner, it is difficult to dry it and restore it to its former pliability in the low temperature of an igloo. The furs of the beaver and muskrat I found to be equally unsuitable in our mode of life, and I believe that all the other furs of the temperate zone would have shared the same opinion if tested in the same practical way.—*Lieut. Schwetka, in Forest and Stream.*

To make incombustible writing and printing paper asbestos of the best quality is treated with potassium permanganate and then with sulphuric acid. About 95 per cent. of such asbestos is mixed with 5 per cent. of wood pulp in water containing borax and glue. A fire-proof ink is made of patulous chloride and oil of lavender, mixed for writing with India ink and gum, and for printing with lampblack and varnish.

David N. Selleg, a blind man, has started a manufacturing enterprise at Newburg, N. Y., in which only blind persons will be employed.