

In Blue and Gold.

Well, since you mention it yourself, Hal, I will confess that I was surprised to find you engaged to Miss Brookfield," said Ned Chester, to his life-long chum, Hal Elmendorf (the two young men were leisurely strolling through Maple Avenue), "for when I went abroad, you were most emphatically denouncing the heartlessness and selfishness and extravagance and a few other amiable characteristics—according to your way of thinking at the time—of society girls, and apparently sincere in your determination to remain a bachelor rather than marry one of them. And your letters have given no hint of a change in your sentiments. Quite the contrary. Your last, by-the-by, was most perplexing. No woman's letter could have been more so. In it you suddenly jumped from the Cladson Mine to a 'sweet, wild rose,' of whom you had previously told me nothing. If I remember aright, the sentence introducing her ran thus: 'And the dividends this year are much larger than this sweet, wild rose that I have found in this lonely place, and am almost persuaded to court and marry, after the manner of Tennyson's landscape painter.'"

Elmendorf threw away his cigarette, looked thoughtfully into space a moment, dropped into a still slower walk, and asked, "Should you like to hear all about it, old fellow?"

"Of course I should," replied Chester. "Lives there a man with soul so dead, who ever to himself has said, 'I take no interest in sweet, wild roses?' And beside that, haven't I been the confidant of all our love affairs since you were twelve, and awfully smitten with the pretty girl in Wild's confectionery? Drive ahead! I'm all attention."

"As you remarked a few moments ago," began Elmendorf, "just before you crossed the briny, I became disgusted with fashionable young ladies in general, and, as you did not remark, for fear of hurting my feelings, with Eudora Brookfield, in particular. It was rather hard on a romantic sort of fellow, who was awful spoons on a girl, to be told by that girl that his fortune considerably enhanced his attractions in her eyes, and that for her own part, she thought love in a cottage, less than five thousand a year must be the dreariest of existences. We quarreled, as you know, and parted. She went shortly after to Newport, and I filled with scorn of managing mammas and fortune-hunting daughters, donned a blue flannel suit and coarse, broad-brimmed hat, and carrying with me only a small valise, started for anywhere—anywhere out of the world."

"At noon of my second day's travel, the train stopped at a quiet, tree-embowered station, and following the impulse of the moment, I jumped off, and struck into a lonely, shady road, resolving to keep on, on foot, until Fate should say, 'Thus far, and no farther.' Ned, that road was certainly the loneliest road I ever saw. Not a person did I meet, not a house did I see, in an hour's brisk tramp. But I trudged on; and the more Eudora's beauty and grace lifted before me, the more her sweet voice rang out in the song of the birds, the more my heart yearned for her smile, the more I was determined to put miles between us. I would not be married for my fortune. I would be loved for myself, or not at all. And growing stronger in resolution, at every step, I suddenly found myself in front of a small, gray cottage—I remembered instantly that Eudora had a silk dress of the same shade of gray—half covered with woodbines and rose vines, that stood just at the entrance of a dense wood, were grew oaks, maples, willows, elder bushes, blackberry bushes, and heaven only knows how many other things planted there by the winds and the birds. A cow with a young calf beside her, was lowing in a field opposite, and a brook was sparkling in the sunshine a short distance away."

"On the porch of this cottage sat a middle-aged woman, sewing. To her, that in hand I advanced, and humbly proffered a request for a drink of water. And she, rising with hospitable quickness, bade me take the seat she left, while she went to the well. I sank into the chair, for I was weary, and soon she returned with a glass of water and a glass of milk. I drank them both—not at once, of course, but during the conversation about the weather that ensued—and had risen to depart when the prettiest girl in blue and gold that I ever beheld came tripping up the garden path, a pail of water in each hand. 'A sweet, wild rose,' I said to myself, and sat down again, convinced by a single glance at that lovely face and form that this cottage was 'Fate's no farther.'"

"Accordingly, I told mine hostess that I was a poor story-writer (you will admit that that was no lie, for all the editors to whom I have submitted my manuscripts have said the same thing), with a book to finish, and that of all places in the world to finish it, her beautiful, quiet home seemed the best, and I

begged her to let me stay a few weeks, promising to make her as little trouble as possible. "Well, I don't see nothin' agin it, if father and daughter don't," said she, and away she went again, and from the murmur of voices in the hall, I knew the matter was being discussed by the family. And in a few moments a shrewd-looking old man appeared, looked at me sharply, and asked brusquely, 'Kin you 'ford to pay four dollars a week?' I told him I thought I could, and he seized my valise and carried it into the cottage, I following. Ned, old chap, it was a lovely spot, and no mistake. Every morning the birds awakened me with their songs, and they were so fearless, never having learned how cruel men can be, that they flew in at my window and perched upon the frame of the old looking-glass—such a rum old glass (crooked my nose and crossed my eyes)—and watch me dress; and fragrance enough from the rose vines floated into that attic room in one day to have perfumed Eudora's handkerchiefs for a whole year."

"As for Alice—the sweet wild rose—no poet ever dreamed of maid more beautiful. Large, innocent dark-blue eyes, with lashes so long that they cast a faint shadow on her rounded cheeks; mouth, nose, chin, ears, hands, feet, simply perfection; and a voice, not as musical as Eudora's it is true, but with a childish ring and sweetness; and when she spoke, which was seldom, it was with pretty modest hesitancy that made you long to catch her in your arms and kiss the words from her full red lips. I had only seen her three times, when I was madly in love with her, and thought the plain, calico gowns she wore the prettiest gowns in the world. Her father and mother watched us closely, but that blessed (as I thought then) drouth had set in a week or so before my arrival, and in two or three weeks more our rain-water cask—we hadn't attained to the dignity of a cistern—was empty, and our well ran low, and much water had to be brought from the brook, and of course I helped the sweet wild rose to carry the pails, and (again, as I thought then) the brook was a blessed quarter of a mile from the house; and one day, after traversing this quarter of a mile with the pails and Bonnie Alice, I wrote you a very long letter, in which among many other things, I reviewed my Eudora experience, and told you of the treasure I had found in the cottage by the wood. And a few days after posting this letter, I asked the sweet wild rose to be my wife. She raised those glorious, innocent blue eyes to my face for an instant, and then hid them upon my breast, while she whispered—the shy darling—

"Don't ask father and mother just yet, until I get used to the thought myself. It seems so very strange."

"And are you sure you love me? And will you be willing to wear calico gowns, and live in a cottage all your life?" said I.

"Try me," she replied with glowing cheeks and an arch smile.

"Now am I really loved," said I to the birds, next morning—not having you, Ned, I made confidants of them, and like you, they never betrayed me. It is Hal Elmendorf wins the heart of Alice, not his fortune—no sighing for gems and gold, no longing for silks and velvets and satins, knows this simple country maid. She is even unaware of her own marvelous grace and beauty, and she is also unaware, it cannot be denied, of many of the rules of grammar and pronunciation. But these I can soon teach her, Heaven bless her! And then I thought what delight it would be to see those guileless blue eyes open wide in pleasure and astonishment when after gaining her parents' consent to our marriage, I placed a diamond ring upon the little hand. And I made up my mind to start for the nearest city immediately and obtain the ring.

"So, pleading urgent business to my darling, as soon as breakfast was over, I bade her goody-by for a day or two.

"Oh! if you should never come back," she sobbed, clinging around my neck.

"But I will, dearest," I said, unloosing her lovely arms, and kissing the tears from her eyes. 'I shall be back again before you have time to miss me.' And I was; for I had only gone a mile or two when I discovered I had left my pocket-book behind, and full of anger against myself for my carelessness, I hastened back. As I neared the cottage, I heard loud voices—the voices of Mrs. Burdock, my prospective mother-in-law, and—could it be? Yes, it was my sweet wild rose.

"Well it's a regular mess, and I don't know what to say to Bill Tryon when he comes back from sea," the elder lady was saying. 'He'll raise the ruff off the house.'

"Let him," replied Alice. 'I'll build you a better house—near to folks; for I'm sure I never want to come back to this lonely hole, after I onst leave it.'

"But s'pose this man shouldn't be

so rich, after all?" persisted the prudent mamma.

"He's as rich as Screechus," answered the daughter, in anything but a sweet voice. And oh! how dreadful the grammar and pronunciations sounded in it. 'Do you think I'd give up Bill, if I wasn't sure of it? He writ a long rigmarole to some friend of his one day, and he lost a piece, and I found it—'

"The page almost ending with the Cladson Mine, and nearly beginning with the sweet wild rose," interrupted Chester.

"Just so," assented his friend. "But to go on with the conversation, to which I boldly confess I deliberately listened. 'I found it, he never missed it, and I read it,' said the simple country maid. 'Some fash'nable girl wanted him for his fortune, and he got mad and cleared out, and walked round till he found me. A sweet, wild rose he calls me, and he ain't so far out, neither.'

"You'd better let your pa inquire about him some, before you promise sure to marry him," advised Mrs. Burdock.

"Rubbish!" exclaimed the rose. 'Pa goin' snoopin' round might spoil everything. I know he's got lots of money and I bet he's gone off to buy me something elegant now. Calico gowns, indeed! I'll wear silk every day of my life. But come along, ma, let's go up stairs. P'r'haps he's left his satchel unlocked, and we can rummage through it.'

"No, he hasn't, said I, coming forward; but don't let that prevent your enjoying yourselves, ladies; here is the key, at your service.'

"With a shrill scream, the sweet wild rose fled. I reached my room under the eaves in three bounds, gathered together my belongings, left some bank-bills on the table, and fled, too.

"And I am to marry Eudora Brookfield a month from to-day."—*Harper's Weekly.*

Opening Oysters With Prayer.

There is a certain class of people who take a very gloomy view of religion and declare that we ought to do everything as though we were to die the next minute. What a long-faced community we should be if that rule were carried out. A man couldn't laugh at a joke; indeed, no one would dare to make a joke for people to laugh at, and life would become a slow march to the grave. If to-day were to be our last we should not lay in a stock of provisions for to-morrow, we should not want to go over the Brooklyn Bridge, and we should not pay the note that becomes due to-day because our creditor won't need it. The best way, in spite of some gloomy souls, is to live gladly, honestly and happily as long as you can, to cry at the things that ought to be cried over and to laugh at things that ought to be laughed at. There is no good reason why a man should have crow's feet before his time simply because he is religious and wants to do the right thing. We are reminded of a story in this connection. "You ought to engage in nothing," said a solemn saint, whose soul was like a squeezed lemon, "that you can't open with prayer." The wag to whom he addressed himself replied irreverently, "Well, suppose I want a dozen of oysters, can I consistently open them with prayer?"

Habits of California Ostriches.

The editor of the Anaheim (Cal.) Gazette has been viewing the ostriches on a ranch near Costa Station. He says: "The female lays an egg on alternate days to the number of fifteen, when, if permitted to sit, she considers her work done. If, however, her eggs are taken from her she will lay thirty before she discovers the deception. And such eggs! The one showed us weighs three and a half pounds, and contains food sufficient to furnish a plentiful breakfast for four men. One would suppose that the flavor of such eggs would be unpleasantly pronounced. Such is not the case, however, the flavor not being as decided as that of duck eggs. What school-boy has not read of the ostrich egg, and of its being hatched in the hot sun of Africa's sunny shore? But this pretty legend, like many other cherished stories of the past, is all gammon. The chicks are brought forth in the good old way. The female sits on the eggs in the daytime, and the male assumes the duty at night, allowing the female to seek rest and recreation while he attends to the household duties. It must be noted here that the male is much more solicitous for his household than is the female. It is not infrequently happens that the latter prefers to gad about rather than take her turn at sitting, and on such occasions her lord and master administers to her a deserved chastisement by kicking her heartily around the paddock until she manifests proper contrition, and signifies her willingness to settle down on the eggs. There is a moral somewhere about this incident which, when found, make a note of."

Parliamentary Manners.

There was a time when manners were very bad in the English Parliament, but this was when Parliament had not yet established its supremacy, and it is worth remarking that manners improved from the time when Parliament grew supreme, and when it came to be recognized that this supremacy could only be maintained if on many great questions both parties acted in concert. Pepys, writing on the 19th of December, 1666, describes a queer scene which he witnessed in the House of Lords: "My Lord Buckingham leaning rudely over my Lord Marquis Dorchester, my Lord Dorchester removed his elbow. The Duke asked whether he was uneasy. Dorchester replied yes, and that the Duke durst not do this if he were anywhere else. Buckingham replied yes he would, and that he was a better man than himself. Dorchester said that he lyled. With this Buckingham struck off his hat, took him by his periwig, and pulled it aside and held him." There is nothing so bad as this in the Parliamentary annals of the Georgian era. Chatham is said to have been more feared than any orator of his time, but his invective was carefully measured. Speaking of Newcastle, then Prime Minister, he once asked whether Parliament sat only to register the edicts of one too powerful subject? Hereupon Newcastle is reported to have been frightened almost out of his wits. But this was fair fighting. There was no imputation on Chatham's part of ignominious motives; he simply accused his adversary of the splendid sin of ambition.

Our Parliamentary history abounds with encounters of this sort, in which the thrusts delivered, whether in earnest or in jest, were often hard, but always bestowed according to fair rules, and with an absence of that implacable animus which leaves combatants enemies when the fight is over. Everybody knows the story of Sir Robert Walpole having a dispute with Pulteney about a quotation from Horace. The Minister bet a guinea that his own version was right; a "Horace" was sent for; and Sir Robert, proving to be in the wrong, threw down a guinea, which Pulteney pocketed with the remark that it was the only money ever paid by the Minister which a member could accept without shame. The words were not in the best taste, perhaps; but how English the whole scene was and how suggestive of good-humored sparring with the gloves on! Mingling with the chronicles of Parliamentary jousts, however, are many stories of downright kindness and chivalry in debate, upon which students of Parliamentary history must always dwell with a sincere pleasure. Coming to recent times, nothing could have been better than Mr. Disraeli's panegyric on Cobden after the latter's death, or than Mr. Gladstone's references in Parliament to the death of Lady Beaconsfield. On this occasion the Liberal leader quoted the words, "sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalita tangunt," which Fox had also quoted in 1805 during Pitt's last illness, refusing at the same time (though unaware that his great rival was actually dying) to support an amendment to the Address which was going to be moved by Lord Henry Petty. Mr. Disraeli was not long in repaying Mr. Gladstone's generous tribute of respect, for he alluded to him as "the most eminent member of this House;" and the same compliment was paid on another occasion to the present Premier by the present Lord Derby, then Lord Stanley, who said that, "on whatever points they might differ, everyone would acknowledge the right honorable gentleman of the greatest orators England had produced."—*London Times.*

Flirtation Among Andaman Islanders.

Owing to a singular practice of adoption, it is rare to see a child above six or seven years residing with its parents. It is considered a compliment for a married man after a visit, to ask his host for one of his children. Indeed, the *vis disant* father may, on a similar occasion, pass the child on further without referring to the real parents. To prevent improper flirtations among the lads and lasses, they paint the suspected parties, one red, the other white; of course they cannot mutually embrace without partially exchanging color. Marriage is forbidden among near relatives. Relationship are traced in both lines, and the system with reference to either sex is identical; but the record falls after three generations. Children are named before they are born after some friend of the parent; there being no distinction of sex in these titles.

Much ceremony is practised in the burial of the dead; infants being deposited under the hearth of the hut where they died, and adults upon a "machan," or platform, in the jungle or in a grave. Temporary migrations in either case follow death, in order to allow the spirit of the deceased full range around the old haunts.

Items.

The strength of iron in boilers is not much affected by the working temperatures up to considerably over 400°, nor by low temperatures down to the freezing point. But when the temperature of the plates, through the absence of water or any other cause, rises much above 500°, then a change commences. Above 750° the tenacity diminishes very rapidly, and when the plates become red hot they have lost fully half of their usual strength.

For a fire-proof paint MM. Viide and Schimbeck made a varnish described by a French paper as of twenty parts of very finely-powdered glass, twenty parts porcelain, twenty parts stone of any kind, ten parts calcined lime, thirty parts soluble-soda glass. Silicate of potash may be substituted for the silicate of soda. The first coat soon hardens and a second coat may be applied from six to twelve hours afterward. Two coats are sufficient. The varnish may be employed as a preservative against rust.

The term "opium joint" appears so often in print that an explanation seems appropriate. The heathen Chinese, being naturally an imitator, borrows an idea from the "Melica man." It did not take long to learn the advantage of club life. "Melica man join—John Chinaman join too." "Joint is, therefore, only another term for "club," but it is now applied to every place where opium is used for intoxicating purposes.

The Cincinnati Enquirer tells that a young lady was receiving a surprise party. The girls entered first, and she kissed them; but some young men followed, and the hostess, all smiles and blushes, in the dim, religious light, made a mistake. The first young man that stepped in to surprise was himself surprised by a warm hug and a most decided osculatory salute square in the middle of his mouth. With courage bordering on the sublime the hostess did not faint. She saw she had made a miscalculation that was simply awful. Nothing remained to her but to rest ever after under the suspicion of partiality or to treat the boys all alike. She chose the latter course.

It was found by M. Burt that anaesthesia could be produced with a mixture of nitric protoxide (85 vol.) and oxygen (15 vol.), if the application were made in a metallic inclosure with a certain pressure above the atmospheric M. de St. Martin has obtained the same effect at ordinary pressure by adding a small quantity of chloroform to the mixture (6 or 7 drams per hectoliter). The physiological effects seem to be intermediate between those of nitric protoxide and of chloroform. Anaesthesia is very rapidly produced, and the period of excitation which occurs with chloroform is avoided. The superiority of nitric protoxide is taken advantage of but without pressure being necessary. The protoxide alone, it may be mentioned, produces anaesthesia rapidly, but also gradually asphyxia.

Rapacity of the Raven.

The raven is as easily tamed as the hooded crow; but he does not make so interesting and amusing a pet, being rather of a sulky and solitary disposition. In his wild state he is excessively suspicious and wary, and he needs to be, for no mercy is ever shown him. He is a terrible robber of the poultry-yard, destroys a great number of young lambs, and will never hesitate if he gets the chance to attack a weak or sick pony. The poor ponies, even in the most inclement weather, never know the luxury of a sheltering roof, and during the long winter seldom get any food out of the scanty pickings of a barren common, varied with an occasional breakfast of seaweed. Consequently they become very lean and weak in spring; and after lying down on the cold, damp ground, which they never do in winter, they often get so stiff as to be unable to rise without assistance. They are then said to be "in lifting." This is the cruel raven's opportunity. In the cold gray dawn of the morning he spies his victim making unavailing efforts to rise, swoops down upon him, and with a fierce dab of his powerful bill destroys one eye; and in a few hours his carcass furnishes a rich repast to his murderer and a score of his kind. No wonder, then, that this "bird of ill-omen" is persecuted and slaughtered without mercy, and that sometimes a price is set upon his head. But in spite of gun and poison, the wary and sagacious ravens are still too numerous. They build their nests in the loftiest and most inaccessible precipices, which generally defy the most expert and daring cragsmen to scale, and it is therefore not always easy to get a young raven for a pet; and the universal detestation in which they are held perhaps helps to make them regarded as not particularly desirable ones.—*Chambers' Journal.*

Some one has said: "It may be that the diamond is the stone for an engagement; but give us the old cobblestone in a free fight."

Effect of Sunshine.

From an acorn, weighing a few grains, a tree will grow for a hundred years or more, not only throwing off many pounds of leaves every year, but itself weighing several tons. If an orange twig is put in a large box of earth, and that earth is weighed when the twig becomes a tree, bearing luscious fruit, there will be very nearly the same amount of earth. From careful experiments made by different scientific men, it is an ascertained fact that a very large part of the growth of the tree is derived from the sun, from the air, and from the water, and a very little from the earth; and notably all vegetation becomes sickly unless it is freely exposed to sunshine. Wood and coal are but condensed sunshine, which contains three important elements equally essential to both vegetation and animal life—magnesia, lime and iron. It is the iron in the blood which gives it its sparkling red color and its strength. It is the lime in the bones which gives them the durability necessary to bodily vigor, while the magnesia is important to all of the tissues. Thus it is, that the more persons are out of doors the more healthy and vigorous they are, and the longer they will live. Every human being ought to have an hour or two of sunshine at noon in winter, and in the early forenoon in summer.

Who Owns It?

A sailor who thought he had been cheated by a second-hand clothier in Buffalo, returned with the garment and demanded his money. When this was refused he shouted out—

"I'll raise a row with some of you here!"

"Vhell, who shall it be?"

"I want to see the party who owns this store!"

"So do I."

"Where is he?"

"Dot's what I'd like to know myself. You see, my fren, my uncle Isaac first opened dis store, and he failed and assigned. Den my fadder-law he runs it and burns out, and ships off to New York. Den my Brudder Moses runs it and pays ten cents on der dollar. Den my vife goes into peesness and makes me agent, and shust when I feels dot I haf scooped her out of eafery shilling along comes her cousin mit a shattel-mortgage on der last old coat. If you can tell me who owns dis place I like to gif you such a suit of clothes ash would make a king feel stuck up all ofer."—*Wall Street News.*

A Magnificent Brigade.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade, of London, controls 124 fire-escape stations, four floating stations, three large land steam fire engines, thirty-eight small land steam fire engines, seventy-eight six-inch manual fire engines, thirty-seven under six-inch manual fire engines, 144 fire-escapes and long scaling ladders, three floating steam fire engines, two steam tugs, four barges, fifty-two hose carts, fourteen vans, thirteen wagons for street stations, two trollies, two ladder trucks, forty-nine telegraph lines, seventeen telephone lines, eleven fire-alarm circuits, with seventy-seven call points; 576 firemen, including chief officer, second officer, superintendents, and all ranks. The number of fire alarms during 1882 in London was 2341, but of these 254 were false alarms, and 161 were mere "chimney alarms." One hundred and sixty-four fires resulted in serious damage and 1762 in slight damage. The number of persons seriously endangered by fire during 1882 was 175; of these 139 were saved and thirty-six were lost, twenty-two of whom were taken out alive, but died afterward, and fourteen were suffocated or burned to death. During the year there were 121 injuries to firemen, of which many were serious and three were fatal.

Horticulture.

The narcissus makes a beautiful border plant, and does much better if not disturbed for many years after planting. It makes an excellent edging to a bed of geraniums, petunias, or in fact any plant that is grown in masses; as its leaves can be cut away soon after flowering, it does not mar the beauty of the summer flowering plants.

The soil for the culture of the tulip is a rich, rather light loam. A bed of sufficient size for planting the bulbs should be dug at least twelve inches deep, and good drainage secured. The tulips should then be planted six inches apart each way pressed deep enough to keep them in their places, and covered with mould to the depth of three inches on the sides of the beds, and five inches in the centre. This precaution is necessary that water may not stand on the bed during winter. When the bed is planted and covered, it may be left to the weather until the tulips come up, on or about the first of March.

A well known literateur and humorist modestly says that his chief literary acquisitions are the books he has borrowed and never returned.