

A gentle word hath a magical power  
The weary heart to beguile,  
It quickens the eye, it brightens the brow,  
And changes the tear to a smile.  
In the gentle sunshine it sheds around,  
The shadows of care depart;  
And we feel in its soothing and friendly  
tone  
There's a balm for the wounded heart.  
Oh! watch thou then, that thy lips ne'er  
breathe  
A bitter, ungentle word,  
For that which is lightly and idly said  
Is often too deeply heard.  
Alas! though for a moment it leaves no trace,  
For pride will its woes conceal,  
Remember the spirit that's calm and still  
Is always the first to feel.  
Be easy not be in thy power, perchance,  
To secure a lofty place,  
And blazen thy name upon history's page,  
As a friend of the human race;  
Rest oft in the daily tasks of life,  
Through the world behold thee not,  
They gentle and kindly words may soothe  
A despairing brother's lot.  
"Ere well to walk with a cheerful heart,  
Whenever our fortunes call;  
With a friendly glance, and an open hand,  
And a gentle word for all.  
Since life is a thorny and difficult path,  
Where toil is the portion of man,  
We all should endeavor, while passing  
along,  
To make it as smooth as we can.

THE WAY IT HAPPENED.

I was sitting in my study, reading Moliere when she entered the room unannounced at that.  
I looked and saw an angel in white gauze veiling, jaunty little blue hat, about the size of a saucer, tipped to one side in a most bewitchingly heart-rending manner; and she wore cream-colored kids, and carried a white sponge—taken in all, a fairy!  
She smiled at me, and held out her hand.  
I took it mechanically. What did this mean?  
She pouted—ah! those cherry lips—and stamped her little No. 2 impatiently on the floor.  
"You don't seem very glad to see me," she said pettishly.  
I murmured that I was delighted—entranced! So I was—such visions were not of everyday occurrence with me.  
"Well?" said she, gleefully, that's a comfort! Now, they told me that you wouldn't receive me—that I would be turned out of doors."  
"Reptiles!" said I.  
"But I came—and you're not angry?"  
"Angry!"  
I could say no more.  
Then she walked up and down the room.  
"How do you like my dress?" she asked, revolving before me as if on a pivot.  
I murmured something about one "angelic superbness!"  
"I did intend," she said, half doubtfully, "to get a dress of gray cashmere, with underskirt trimmed with deep plaiting—the space to be filled in with bias folds above the plaitings in a band of silk—the overskirt cut square—the side gores rounded up four inches and finished with a bow—the back breadth 12 inches longer, and looped up into a tournure. That, with a pretty little sacque with open sleeves, trimmed to match the under dress, would be nice, wouldn't it?"  
I murmured an unqualified assent—not that I understood what she was talking about, for she uttered the full description in one breath, but then I didn't know what I was saying.  
"But," said she, "I bought this gauze because I liked it. Don't you?"  
"I admire your taste," said I, faintly, for I was fast losing my senses, through wondering as to who and what she was.  
"You're a dear, good fellow," said she rapturously; "and I know we'll get on well together!"  
So she intended to stay here! I was getting into very deep water!  
"Now, then," she continued, "show me some place to put my things, and then you and I will have a talk."  
I mechanically pointed out a small room opening out of the library. She hurried in. I sat like a statue carved from adamant. Deeper water.  
Presently she returned, divested of little hat, pounce and kids. Dainty and jaunty as the little hat was, it never could be such a head dress as the curly black head of hair; and the bare hand was certainly prettier and its dimples showed better than when gloved. I could not speak—I only looked.  
She cast a searching glance around the library.  
"Horrid dirty!" she said, disdainfully.  
"When has it been cleaned?"  
"About a year ago," I said quickly.  
She gave utterances to a pretty little scream.  
"A year? Shocking! Oh, I couldn't sit down in a room that hasn't been cleaned for a year? This must be put to rights."  
She said this in a very determined tone and then set to work. She converted my linen coat into an apron, fixed a cunning little handkerchief over that pretty head, and snatching up the fly duster, dusted away valiantly—raising a cloud of dust, in which I sat gazing on the vision. What did all this mean? I consulted Moliere, my standing authority, but Moliere could give no explanation. Could she be an angel, sent to cast a ray of light over my dismal path of life? Perhaps, but did angels wear white gauze veiling, and talk about cashmere and tournures? Impossible! It must be a dream.

Suddenly she paused and came to me through the cloud, and held out her arms, and said:  
"Roll up my sleeves, please. I can work better with them up."  
I did roll the white sleeves up, and then immediately scouted the idea of its being a dream. Could I dream of such arms, with such a beautiful dimple in each elbow?  
Certainly not! They were real! I did think that a sculptor would have been proud to have them for a model, because I was morally certain that any sculptor would have been distracted by the sight, and have dropped his chisel, despairing of ever doing them justice.  
And then she dusted, and while she dusted she sang, what a voice! Don't mention Nilsson—I won't hear of it!  
And then she drew up a chair, and sat down beside me, having first removed the handkerchief and the improvised apron. Then she shook her curls and addressed me.  
"My dear uncle, let us have a talk."  
Her uncle! If my heart had suddenly changed to a lump of lead, it couldn't have sunk quicker that it did then.  
"You know," she continued, "that you wrote me a letter saying that you considered it best for me to stay on the farm until you wrote again. But, then, I don't want to stay; I felt so lonely away out there, hardly seeing a new face once in a month, for the 12 years I have been there—for you know you left me when I was six years old. Well, I thought I would come up to the city, so I took \$50 and bought this suit. Mrs. Marsh picked it out for me. You know she has been in the city, and so I came; and you're not angry, are you? Because, if you are, I'll go back again uncle—indeed I will!"  
My feelings during this brief speech had been very painful. I gradually awoke to the fact that it was all a blunder—that the visit of this angel was not intended for me—and I felt very bitter over the discovery but my duty was plain.  
"My dear child," said I, humbly, "will you have the kindness to inform me what your name is?"  
She opened her eyes and then laughed.  
"Why," she said you cannot have forgotten me? Little Bess you know."  
"Little Bess?" I repeated.  
"Bessie Ludlow," she said gravely.  
"Your niece."  
"No," said I, readily; "not my niece. I have no nieces. There is some error. My name is Floyd."  
"Then said she, "you are my uncle—Mr. Richard Floyd. I saw the name on the door, so I came in. Now you remember me, don't you?"  
"Sorry to disappoint you, Miss Ludlow," said I calmly, "but I am not your uncle. You saw the name 'R. Floyd' on the door; my name is Robert."  
"Then," she said hopelessly, "where is my uncle?"  
I felt bound to confess my ignorance, whereat she looked incredulous. I explained that strange as it may seem, I did not know every person who happened to rejoice in the same surname as myself.  
"But, I said cheerfully, seeing her look blank, "we can soon find out. Here is a directory, your uncle's name is Richard Floyd?"  
"Yes."  
"His occupation or profession?"  
"Oh?"  
"What does he do for a living?"  
"Nothing. He's rich—awful rich!"  
"Ah! a gentleman? Behold! two Richard Floyds; both gentlemen. Let us hope they are! Now get ready, and we'll go and find your uncle."  
She stood by my side in the street, and looked ten times more bewitching than ever. We walked along the streets, and how many male friends stared, and wondered and envied me.  
"We found the first Mr. Floyd," just stepping into his carriage in front of the house. He was big, pompous and vulgar. I tapped him on the shoulder.  
"Your niece, Mr. Floyd," I said, and I commenced to explain, when he cut me off short.  
"Nothing of the kind! not my niece! An adventuress, no doubt! You're a swindler, I suppose! Drive on!"  
I inwardly vowed to assassinate that man some dark night. My companion grasped her pounce fiercely.  
"Oh, I could beat him!" she said savagely. I trembled at the outburst.  
"But however," she said "that's not my uncle, he's a very quiet man. I saw him about 11 years ago. He came only to see me once—I suppose because I am a poor relation."  
Here she laughed, as if being a poor relation was something funny—which it isn't.  
Then we tried the second Mr. Floyd; he was the uncle. We found him reading a book of sermons.  
"I accosted him, introduced myself and his niece. Then I explained everything and turned to go."  
He stopped me and inquired if I would do him a favor.  
I answered I would.  
"Then," said he, calmly, "take this young lady and put her in the car. I desire her to return to Cedar farm."  
"Uncle," said she.  
"Niece!" said he. "Do as I bid you—I am your only friend. Don't

make me your enemy by foolishness. Stay at Cedar farm, and I am your friend; leave the Cedar farm and you may regret it. Go!"  
We went.  
She sobbed. (Looked prettier than ever).  
"I can't go back," she wailed.  
"They don't know I left. I'm afraid to go back."  
"Then," said I, "what will you do?"  
"I don't know," she said, defiantly.  
"But I won't go back!"  
I found myself in a nice predicament—young lady, act. 18, on my hands, a bachelor, act. 39. What was I to do?  
A sudden thought, I would!  
"My dear," said I "I will take care of you."  
"You!" (Astonished and prettier.)  
"Yes, I." Marry me! Instead of my niece, be my wife! Will you?"  
She could not give an answer immediately. Such important questions require deliberation. She was silent for about two minutes, and then said:  
"I like you."  
"Bless you," said I.  
"And you want some one to care for you?"  
"I do!"  
"I will marry you for that room isn't half dusted."  
She was angelic! She was an angel! I embraced the angel!  
"And that room is such a cunning little one!"  
Words fail to express how handsome she was!  
We were married!  
And that's the way it happened!

Midnight in Montreal

In the early part of February a monster Ice Palace, was erected in Montreal and thousands of people visited it from all part of the Union. A midnight despatch from Montreal says; Montreal is delirious. Since dark the carnival has reached its highest tide. The business streets were abandoned and the stores closed at sundown, after which the multitude, including all but the crippled and infirm, climbed the hill to the ice palace, which glittered like a monstrous jewel. There were 50,000 persons in and near Dominion square. Fifteen hundred snow shovels, wearing their clattering foot nets, and clad in blanket suits of every brilliant hue, wound in a long procession beneath flaming torches through the swarm of people. While some entered the palace of shining crystal, others massed themselves outside. Then began a fierce battle of skyrocket, Roman candle, and Chinese bombs. The tens of thousands of French people laughed and applauded like children. When the serpentine stream of torches next made its way through the black mass of people it was to reappear presently, winding its way up the steep mountain side. The people stood in the open squares and yelled with delight. The torches came together in a solid field of flame, then separated, and were strung in a thin line along the crest of the mountain, whence they let off more fireworks.

The town at midnight shows no symptoms of either moderating its enthusiasm or going to bed. The New Yorkers have unpacked their swallow tails and low-necked dresses, and are dancing in the biggest hotel parlor in town. Although they are already too numerous to mention, they are still crowding into the city by car loads. Those who came to-night will have a chance to see a marquis hurried down the glazed side of a mountain on a thin strip of birch veneering. A slide called the Lansdowne has been named in his honor, and he has shown his disregard of safety of life and limb by promising to cross his legs on a toboggan mattress.

Home-made Bonnets.

One of the pleasant things to know about Alexandra, the Princess of Wales, is that she knows how to make her own bonnets. It brings her nearer to the universal heart of woman than anything she could do. The first thing she did, after entering the Queen's household at Windsor castle, was to make over her Majesty's bonnet. Of course that bonnet needed making over badly. Imagination pictures it at once. A heavy, funeral affair, covered with crape, bugles, and nonsense. Such a bonnet as no one except Victoria or a Cape Cod woman would wear. It is no wonder that the fingers of the Princess fairly tingled to weed it out, and add a touch of redemption and good sense to the homely structure. And she does it every time the Queen buys a new bonnet, which is not often. Madame Louise, the greatest authority in London on the subject of bonnets, admitted that the Princess has given her many of her best ideas on the subject—among them, that simplicity was more stylish than fuss or feathers. Louise brought out several small capotes, ordered by the Princess, to show us what good taste she had. One bonnet was a small, fine straw, faced with black velvet, trimmed with a broad band of black velvet ribbon, caught down by a jet buckle; a cluster of fine white lilacs was the only decoration. Her bonnets, traveling dresses and walking suits are stylish, but severely plain. History will record that the Princess of Wales has done more than any other woman of royalty to improve the fashions.

Artists' Models.

In London the model can be, and very often is an ex-respectable member of society; and if his or her work be well done, the pay is not bad, as wages go in England. Seven and sixpence a day, or a shilling an hour, is the price paid a costume model, while those in the life classes or posing as figure models earn half as much again. Some men and women have grown old in the profession, know every artist and his or her works, are well versed in studio ways, understand costumes, and even something of periods in costumes and not frequently contribute valuable suggestions. Others, who may be invaluable so far as lines go, are, after years of work, hopelessly dull, stiff and uninterested; indeed, we have known of an instance where a young woman has sat three years for a well-known artist without having acquired the faintest idea of what he was doing, or what special style he worked in, and would as placidly pose for an escaping slave as for a lady of fashion, without taking the smallest interest in the work or its success. Others, however, enter with very deliberate zeal into their work, and where they are not too knowing they are valuable assistants. Naturally the specialties of the model are so much capital in his favor. Some are noted for hands, others for the pose of the head, others for some peculiarity of coloring, while the "classical" is looked for in certain instances, and the grotesque in others. One of the most perfect models we ever knew was a man who had not a single absolutely good feature, but whose toutensemble was excellent, and whose entire willingness to sink personal prejudice and devote himself to the cause was really noble. This spirited person has posed on a broiling July day, with heavy wraps, and over a candle which illuminated his heated face, to represent a Christian traveller cowering over the fire, and that no moon escaped him is to be recorded to his credit; and on a fine day in June he "posed" in bed, as a very sick person, in an elaborate night-cap, wearing an expression of patient anguish, which perhaps toward sundown ceased to be entirely simulated. This man had been, as it is called, "on the grounds," otherwise a sporting character, and being converted by some travelling preacher, he abandoned a very money-making and exciting career for the life of artists' model, and years proved his patience and sincerity; an in-born cockney, hopelessly though cheerfully independent of his, he had a queer streak of fun in him which asserted itself oddly, and under no circumstances required the aid of a smile. He had a grave way of telling imitatively funny things, which illumined many a foggy afternoon, and his staid endurance of the most hopeless cold we ever heard added to the impression of strength he gave. How he sat for a certain "queer old gent on the Brumpton road" who "did the classical," and how the old gent "hasked" his opinion, and then never took it, sir, don't you know," and how he went to a florid artist of the hour, who kept him posing as a Turk six hours at a time, while he was "a-painting" of his background in half the "ole bloom" time I was a planted there, sir," with the details of both incidents are tales that to be appreciated should be heard from those grave pale lips, while his eyes were full of suppressed glee.

When such a faithful follower of the arts falls ill his employers usually contribute toward his support; but at best it is a hard life, and old age rarely finds such a one with any resource, the life as a model having entirely destroyed other aims and powers of activity, so that until a "Models' Fund" be formed there must always be the sad spectacle of the old and decrepit model going from studio to studio seeking the only employment he understands but finding it not.

Good Advice.

Take your meals with great regularity, and avoid eating too much at once, regulating the amount of food taken by the quantity of work—especially outdoor work—done; for if you eat the same quantity of food when indoors that you do whilst engaged in full open-air exercise, you will eat too much sometimes, the result being that a lot of useless nutriment will be flying about the system, which, having no good work to do, very soon becomes harmful.

Let your food be plain and substantial. Do not eat meat in excess, and let it be rather under than over done. Fats and starchy foods are particularly suited to cold weather, tending to sustain the body heat by their combustion in the system. Scotch oatmeal porridge and new milk are capital things to start the day with, and you will better be prepared for breakfast by first rousing the stomach by a preparatory walk in the open air. Chocolate and cocoa made with new milk are highly nutritious, and the regulation country breakfast of ham or bacon with eggs is a sign that they know how to take care of themselves in the country, and have found what is the best food to work on. Once a day is quite often enough for tea or coffee, and then they should be well diluted with new milk.

Avoid pastry, the fatty particles of which collect in the stomach, never thoroughly digesting, and only destroying the efficiency of that organ and the

comfort of the system. Older folk can often get on better with pastry than younger one; and for children pastry and sweetmeats are particularly harmful, affecting the stomach, and through that the teeth, and developing a taste for such things that can rarely be checked before permanent harm has resulted, and the happiness of the child endangered for life. Children cannot have too much milk food—such as milk puddings well made with plenty of eggs and good milk being the best possible food for them. Boiled milk and bread, porridge and milk, brown bread and stewed fruits, would be a diet calculated to bring health and comfort to many families where the children are everlastingly in the doctor's hands undergoing courses of pills and powders. I have little sympathy for those unhappy people who give way to the whims and fancies of childhood, and thus prepare much future wretchedness for themselves and their children. It is disgusting to see, as one does too often, children of tender years given meat two or three times a day, and filled with sauces and seasonings. Parents have themselves to blame who are worried with constant juvenile squabbling and fighting, followed by tears and sick headache. You find a house in confusion and wonder what is the matter. "Oh, it is only one of Master Johnny's bilious attacks;" and you probably find the young gentleman lying on a sofa, sulking and moping, with sore lips and yellow eyes, scowling at the mother who attends him so assiduously when ill because she has not had the moral courage to discharge her duty to God and her child when he is well. "I cannot understand my children," many a poor lady will say; "those next door are always well, while mine are always ill."  
The reason is simple enough; those next door are given simple food, and have to eat it, which hers never have; because, forsooth, they won't. But if we would have our children temperate we must be so ourselves, and not lecture them on indiscretions in diet between the mouthfuls of lemon cheesecake.

Influence of Wholesome Food.

There is little doubt that savory dishes, serving to vary the monotony of the poor, hard-working man's ordinary fare, afford considerable moral, as well as physical advantage. An instructive experience of my own illustrates this. When wandering alone through Norway, in 1856, I lost the track in crossing the Kyolen field, struggled on for twenty-three hours without food or rest, and arrived in a sorry plight at Lom, a very wild region. After a few hours' rest I pushed on to a still wilder region and still rougher quarters, and continued thus to the great Jostedal table-land, an unbroken glacier of five hundred square miles; then descended the Jostedal itself to its opening on the Sogne fjord—five days of extreme hardship, with no other food than flatbread (very coarse cake), and bilberries gathered on the way, varied on one occasion with the luxury of two raw turnips. Then I reached a comparatively luxurious station, Bonnel, where ham and eggs and claret were obtainable. The first glass of claret produced an effect that alarmed me—a craving for more and for stronger drink, that was most irresistible. I finished a bottle of the wine, and nothing but a violent effort of will prevented me from then ordering some brandy. I attribute this to the excessive work, and insufficient, unsavory food of the previous five days. I have made many subsequent observations on the victims of alcohol, and have no doubt that over-work, and scanty, tasteless food, are the primary source of craving for strong drink that so largely prevails with such deplorable results among the class that is the most exposed to such privation. I do not say that this is the only source of such depraved appetite. It may also be engendered by luxurious pandering to general sensuality. The practical inference suggested by this experience and these observations, is, that speech-making and pledge-signing, can only effect temporary results, unless supplemented by satisfying the natural appetite of hungry people by supplies of food that is not only nutritious, but savory and varied. Such food need be no more expensive than that which is commonly eaten by the poorest laboring man, but it must be far better cooked.

Children in Russia.

A new law regulating the labor of children in factories in Russia came into operation on the first of the year, and provision is made for its enforcement. The following are its stipulations: Children under 10 years of age must not be allowed to work in factories. Workers from the age of 12 to 15 years must not work more than eight hours a day. Night work for children can only be authorized in establishments where the process of manufacture cannot have a bad influence on the health. Even if allowed, the work must not exceed four hours. The work of children must be regulated in such a way as not to prevent their going to school three hours every day. The owners of factories are obliged to admit inspectors and their assistants into their works at any hour of the day.

Little George was questioned the other day about his big sister's bean.  
"New old is he?" "I don't know."  
"Well, is he young?" "I think so, for he hasn't any hair on his head."

February.

February was one of the two months—January being the other—introduced into the Roman Calendar by Numa Pompilius when he extended the year to twelve of these periods. Its name (February, to expiate, to purify) arose from the practice of religious expiation and purification which took place among the Romans at the beginning of this month. He arranged that it should have twenty-nine days, excepting in leap years, when, by the intercalation of a day between the 23d and 24th it was to have thirty. But a time came when Augustus chose to add a thirty-first day to August, in order that the month named after him might not lack the dignity enjoyed by six other months of the year. He took it from February, which could least spare it, thus reducing it to twenty-eight days in all ordinary years.

This month has Pisces or the fishes for its Zodiacal sign. The Saxons called it *Sprotnkale*, because this species of the cabbage tribe sprouted freely at this ungenial season. The name of Soemmonat was afterwards conferred upon it in consequence of the return of the sun from the low course in the heavens, which for some time he had been running. Others say that "soe" signified "food" or "cakes," and that it meant "pan-cake month," because cakes were offered by the pagan Saxons to the sun.

In "The Months," by Leigh Hunt, he remarks that "if February were not the precursor of spring, it would be the least pleasant month of the year, November not excepted." What can be more delicately beautiful than the spectacle which sometimes salutes the eye at the breakfast-room window occasioned by the hoar-frost? If a jeweller had come to dress every plant over night to surprise an Eastern Sultan, he could not produce anything like the "pearly drops" or the "silvery plumage." An ordinary bed of greens seems corrugated with emeralds and powdered with diamonds to those who are not at the mercy of their own vulgar associations.

An Eccentric Funeral.

An old woman named Mary Robinson, who is said to have been well known through London as "the queen of the costermongers," was buried recently in Finchley Cemetery. She at one time used to have a stall in Somers-town, and of late years had been a vender of cats' meat. It is stated that she amassed a fortune of £20,000. It was her custom to lend costermongers money on Fridays and Saturdays to go to market with, they paying her for the loan a shilling in the pound. She was a most eccentric woman. She paid, twenty years ago, to Mr. Sharman of Caledonia road, £20 for her funeral expenses. Owing to the rumor that the deceased inheritor had ordered that her remains should be carried to the grave by four men wearing white smocks, and that twenty-four young women should follow wearing violet or purple dresses, Paisley shawls, hats with white feathers in them and white aprons; that some money was to be spent in drink for costermongers at certain public houses she named, and that there was to be a band of music in attendance, some thousands of persons congregated in Bemerton street, where she lived, along the Caledonian road, and along the route to Finchley cemetery. The concourse of people blocked the streets for a time, and in some cases persons paid for windows to see the procession. The coffin, which was of a handsome polished oak, bore a brass plate, with the inscription: "Mary Robinson, aged 71, died Jan. 1, 1884." It was reported that the corpse was shrouded in white satin, and that round the head was a white wreath. The funeral car was covered with expensive wreaths and crosses. There were in the procession, besides the relatives and friends of the deceased, a great number of pony-carts, key-barrow and cabs, all being overfilled with costermongers. The deceased, it is said, left a sum of £10 to be spent in drinks, and 10 shillings for pipes and tobacco after the funeral.

Women.

The common objection among woman-kind to letting their ages be known is not shared by the ladies of Japan, who actually display the facts as to their age in the arrangement of their hair. Girls from 9 to 15 wear their hair interlaced with red crape, describing a half-circle round the head, the forehead being left free with a curl at each side. From 15 to 30 the hair is dressed very high on the forehead and put back in the shape of a fan or butterfly, with interlacings of silver cord and a decoration of colored beads. Beyond 30 a woman twists her hair round a shell pin placed horizontally at the back of the head. Widows also designate themselves, and whether or not they desire to marry again. One may compare with this the remarkable honesty of the Japanese a story told in one of the American papers of the reluctance of American women to adopt any such candid policy. A theatrical manager was producing a farce in which one of the characters was to be a bald-headed woman, and it so happened that the actress cast for that part had no hair on the top of her head. But instead of availing herself of this natural advantage she wore a wig over the bare spot, and laid thereon some palpably false baldness.