

Of Cupid going A-Maying.

Once on a time Dan Cupid, playing, Would like my Lesbia go a-Maying. And, finding sweet the dowers, He pulled and plucked the snowy May, Until to bear it all away Was quite beyond his powers.

MIDSUMMER FIRES.

To-morrow would be midsummer's day. The sun was high its setting. Out over the level, shining sea he seemed to lie; blood red and ruddy purple gleamed the throbbing waves of the horizon; rosy and golden came the rippling wavelets from that distant path of the sea to the yellow sands of the Manx coast.

A path, winding up a headland, led from the various shores to a white road. The red gleam of the sunset was upon it, and the sparse heather landward glowed ruddy, as some girls sauntered loitering along the path.

There were three of them, sisters. One was a child, Nessie, the others, Meta and Kate Quatrough, were on the happy borderland of girlhood and womanhood.

We have no picturesque national garb of a foreign land wherewith to set them forth—they were dressed as hundreds of girls in London might be dressed, though they came of so pure a Manx race as to be proud of the days when English people were looked upon as foreigners in Man.

Nessie was full of life; she danced ahead, or she lingered behind; she sprang to right or left over the broken ground of the headland, what her sisters waited for had evidently no strong hold on her thoughts. At last she struck in with this:

"You'll be utterly foolish, you girls, idling here any longer for those lads." Her accent bore the North Country lilt, and the soft, sweet tones of the Manx people. "Do you think they'll be leaving their fishing for the—"

"Hist!" commanded Meta. The girls were all at play in a sense, but it was with a serious vein in it to Meta.

"Eh?—I'm full of respect!" and wild Nessie threw out her arms and made a gay, bowing reverence in a circling fashion to the hills and the green mountains. "But the boys are not so, and I'm thinking they'd only be hindering us if they were here."

"And they promised, too; and if they break their promise we'll be free from ours, I say. Do come we'll be awfully late, and there's a lot to do."

Then they walked on a bit faster. Nessie was out of sight, but yet they were closely following on her steps. So many bends and turns and shoulders there are to these Manx headlands that one may be easily out of sight.

the brave outer world of which she dreamed; the faithless outer world which she knew ridiculed any ancient fancy of custom. Should she be silent, or should she be brave and show that she was not too weak to acknowledge her weakness? One second she had for hesitation, but no more.

"Will you?"—came the question pointedly put to her—"lay your commands upon me, Miss Quatrough, and tell me while I obey?" How light and yet how true did he look as his clear-browed eyes met hers.

Meta flushed with pleasure. Was there really a sensible man going to listen to her old wives' fables, and listen with respect? The delight of this flashed through her and made the delicate Manx face of the girl radiant. Manx feminine beauty has not had much ecology, very likely; but, where will you find more delicate features, brighter intelligence, and purer expression than in the faces of the girls of Man? Meta Quatrough was a picture, with all the loveliness of those island women.

"You mean it?" was her cry, and her face was full of enthusiasm. Her blue eyes took a fire of brilliancy, and the clear delicate pink of her complexion heightened its color with one quick flush, gone as soon as it was seen.

"Assuredly I mean it. Ignorance has no charms for me as it has for your cousin here. But I do not promise faith, mind you."

A shadow fell over Meta's radiance. A very quick-eyed young man was this. He saw it, and read, too, in his kindly, sympathetic soul the measure of her trouble. So reading, he at once set himself to gladden her again. He was thinking what a lovely study her radiance would make some girl saint of Middle Age religion.

"Every one has a chink in his armor, you know; and though I am matter of fact personified, you may—just may"—he smiled, "find me vulnerable somewhere."

The rest were ahead, every one of them laden with green or sun-dried stuff for the burning. These two gathered up their burdens and followed, talking all the way.

From the gorse common the track was homeward for the girls, and they crossed a meadow, stopping at its further side by a brook, where green clumps of golden marsh marigolds. These were wanted as much as the dry stuff, but not for burning.

"I thought not," said Edgar, the younger of the Philipsons. "They're far too pretty. You have some in a bowl at your house. They come far before the lilies of the London esthetics, in my opinion." This young man was not, like his brother, an artist, but a trader. To put his status quite plainly, he was a clerk in a tea merchant's office. And here he was treading on the debatable ground of lily worship!

"Very well out here," said young Quatrough, rather testily; but not the things for girls to wear on their dresses. "You don't mean that?"

"I was thinking of that," and the other marked the word. "Miss Quatrough"—he turned to Kate—"do not let him talk you out of wearing them."

Kate had worn some only the evening before.

house and through the unkempt, luxurious flower garden; then through the kitchen garden, where monstrous cabbages sheeted the beds with their crumpled outer leaves; where the strawberries blushed rosy from amid a tangle of long suckers; where alleys were made by trained apple trees, whose green young fruit promised joys to lads and maids in the days to come.

"Ah!" suddenly young Philipson exclaimed. "The Corrin's fire at Ballasegan!" and Mr. Quatrough turned round. There had come a golden, springing, flashing light on his glasshouses.

"Horrid!" Nessie exclaimed angrily, "and ours not aught yet. Jim is horrid! I specially gave him orders to light up early, because Mona Corrin declared they'd have the finest show. I'll be speaking to him to-morrow morning."

"No, dear, do," Willie, her cousin said. "I will." And she ran on. In a moment she was seen flying up to the wooden ladder which led up to what they called their "lookout," a square miniature tower which gave a grand view over miles and miles of farmlands, of distant mountains, of western sea, and—a sight of all for strangers—of one bit of savage, storm-battered Calf of Man. "Grand!" she cried joyously. "Grand! We're aight now! Eh! I'll not heed Mona having the start, we'll be far the finest."

A pale golden fire began to shimmer on a near-by hill, it spread until verily the whole of the hillside was a tricky flashing dance of fire.

"Our gorse is not there?" Doyle wondered. "Eh? No. This is my private business, Jim and I did this in the morning."

"So! That is how Jim does his weeding?" her father began. "Yes. That'll be his manner of weeding on Midsummer Eve! He couldn't do less than obey his mistress!"

"No, Mr. Philipson," she went on. "The bits of fuel we got this evening are on the other side. Look! I saw Jim run across only two minutes ago; he'll be lighting it up now."

"She was right." A hillocky lift of the land was spangled all at once with patches of flame, ruddy flame, golden flame, flame that sputtered and fizzed as it mastered the juices of the green bracken.

"We have an extra grand show to-night, girls," Mr. Quatrough began. "Who shall say our old customs are dying out? But I expect it is as much in your honor as in that of the fairies and witches," he nodded to the young men.

They, seated like the girls, on the battlements of the miniature tower, were gazing here and there, as one quarter, and then another was made alight. Beacons, like stars, blazed out far away. Evidently the whole neighborhood was of one mind.

"We'll not accept that idea to-night, Sir," Doyle answered. "No, no; let us not tempt the powers. But can we not go among it all? Two minutes will take us where Jim is."

"Oh! if you like." So they left the gardens and tramped over a field to the hillocky ridge. There was a good deal of talking and laughing, as might be supposed, but among it all Meta was again silent. She was wearing her thin, as a girl might wear a brooch. She was very careful of it, keeping her light wrap well away from it. What danger of cold could there be on such a sweetly warm Summer night?

She lingered behind. But among such a gay string of merry folks who would notice one straggler?

heard Mr. Quatrough say to a dim, shadowy figure. The voice was low, and such as comes when a man's inner self is trembling.

Doyle made a light answer. Men do answer lightly, even when perhaps the gravest question of their life is fighting for its answer within them. He pushed his arms into his coat sleeves, and all at once he found that in crushing down the rising flame of Meta's dress he had got his hand burned.

A week hence the young men had to go away from Man. Willie Quatrough was to drive them to Douglas on the morrow, so as to be in time for the boat. A good hour's drive this was, and they must be up by times. He and his friends had strolled over the fields from his father's house; they were naturally say good-bye to the girls and the Quatroughs of Brae Hill.

Again it was a Summer night, again the girls were wandering about the old garden. Meta was aloft in the "lookout," Kate was below meeting the young men, Nessie was chasing a white butterfly.

Doyle Philipson had, many days back, come to the solution of one grave question; but, not being a rich man, and being honorable to what some folks might call an extreme degree, he had committed himself to hide the love he had for Meta Quatrough. Nay, he it was who had hastened the departure from the island because, seeing Meta day after day, he could not keep eye and tongue in cool obedience.

And the sweet, lazy hours of evening had come, and Meta had chanced to drift into the company of each other—who talks of chance?

The would-be matter of fact young artist was mastered. He told his story, and all his wise commands were scattered to the winds.

What they two said only the night heard. It was an old story made new, and there is always a golden originality about the telling of these old-new stories.

Meta and Doyle were coming down from the "lookout," the rest were in a group. "It is arrant nonsense, for you to drive into Douglas at such an hour."

So spoke Willie Quatrough, the girl's cousin. He and Kate often squabbled, cousins do so.

"Thanks," she pouted. "But I'll judge best for myself. I have shopping, and the shops are fresh in the morning."

"That are they. And the shopmen are sleepy."

"You shall wake them up for me," she was persistent. "Oh! Willie!"

The cry had actually trembling in it. Kate made a little start and again a second start, or rather doop, backward to Willie's side.

HAIR AND MOLES. Why the Coiffure Should Be Arranged According to the Shape of the Nose.

"Some freak of nature, I suppose, causes superfluous hair," said Dr. Henri Leonard. "I can not exactly tell what. Hair can grow on all parts of the surface of the body excepting the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet; but it is not frequently seen excepting on the parts where one usually expects to see it, and if a tuft of it is found growing in an unusual place it is called a disfigurement, and one finds some way of removing it. A great many apply to me. My method is electrolysis, or by means of a battery, which carries an electric current into the hair follicles, burning it out. I have taken out a thousand hairs from one society lady. Mole hairs are treated very successfully in this way, fifty per cent. being permanently destroyed with one current, and a second current destroys those left the first time."

"Does it hurt?" "Not much. The flesh is sore for a day or two like a little burn, but it seldom troubles one more than a few minutes. This method was discovered by Dr. Piffard, of New York. He uses a milder current than I, but the patients say mine burns no more. It is something, however, I do not care especially to practice. I studied up hair, 'tis uses and abuses,' and that brought me considerable correspondence from all over the world. I do not like the business; it tries my eyes and is a strain on my nervous system. Still, I remove a great deal."

"There are two kinds of hair—a soft down on the lower lobes of the ears that is difficult to remove. The coarser hair which grows on the ear can be easily destroyed."

"How about the hair on ladies' upper lips?" "They usually shave that off or use a French powder. Of course that has to be often repeated. Sometimes it is clipped, but that renders the next growth harsh. I have heard of belles singing the hair off their arms over a wax candle, but that was in the era of short sleeves and before these French powders were invented. But while young ladies may like the hair taken out of a mole on the neck or face they are very particular that the mole itself shall be left."

"Why so?" "O, there's more or less fortune in moles. One on the neck brings riches; on the face nearly all the blessings flesh is heir to, besides making a white complexion still whiter by contrast. I heard a young lady say the other day a mole she had on her arm had brought her heaps of luck. It is 'right on the line of life,' she said, and the nurse who saw it first predicted it would bring 'long life, riches, happiness, and, better than all, a good husband.' Yes, moles are treasures. I sometimes have applications to put them on, but never to take them off."

"Do you think baldness increases?" "I can not say that it does. If people would live more out of doors, or if they kept their heads uncovered, they would be less likely to get bald. The reason fewer ladies are bald is that they let the air on the roots of the hair. Hot rooms are death to hair germs. Then disturbances within the nervous system frequently affect the hair. Depression of spirits helps to make one bald."

"Are people bald at an earlier age than formerly?" "It is a hereditary rule that if the father is bald at thirty the son may expect to be at twenty-eight. When a man begins to grow a beard there is fifty per cent. drain on his blood, and if the system is allowed to run down the hair feels it in proportion to the other parts of the body, and the hair on top of the head grows thin and perhaps comes off. A large growth of hair certainly runs in families and often through all the branches."

"Is long, heavy hair injurious?" "Ladies often complain that it brings on headache, or that their strength goes to their hair, and it is certainly inconvenient often to dress fashionably very long, heavy hair, but I think people are guided more by style than comfort. If cutting the hair short is style, ladies and girls will follow it, even to the sacrifice of beautiful tresses. If large coiffures are the fashion, women will carry a bushel of false hair on their heads whether it suits their style of features or not. In 1777 the English and French women wore a mountain of hair, plumes or feathers and chains of beads hanging about their huge coiffure, on the top of which were worn models of coaches and horses blown in glass. In 1780 the Queen of France having lost her hair by illness, the ladies cut off all their locks and adopted a new coiffure called a l'enfant, and which brought out many satirical couplets."

"In the dressing of the hair the shape of the nose should be considered as the figure in selecting a becoming pattern. If the nose is large the hair may be dressed rather massive, or else the large nose will make the head look small and out of proportion. With a Greek nose one may venture on a classic knot but with the many varieties of American noses, the childish shapes of some, and the 'tip tilted' form of others the present infantine bangs, or short, fluffy curls, are especially becoming. I do not know what the next season may bring."

What a Man Eats in a Lifetime. There is a man in Pittsburg who has been estimating the cost of living to a man eighty years old. He says: "In the past seventy-five years I have partaken of 82,125 meals, consumed 61,595 pounds of solid food, drank 51,100 cups of tea and 18,250 cups of coffee. I have not lived extravagantly, and my meals have cost me on an average eight cents each. Therefore, the 82,125 meals have cost me \$6,580." The cost of his clothing makes up for the remainder of the \$8,000.

Recent German researches show that the purification of natural waters is effected almost wholly by plant and animal agencies, the chemical action of oxygen of ozone, peroxide of hydrogen and atmospheric oxygen exerting but a feeble influence.

THE ITALIAN CAFE. A Great Centre of Attraction for the City People.

The cafe is a great centre of attraction for the average city-bred Italian. Like the Parisian, he patronizes such an establishment for business purposes during the day and in the evening for his pleasure. Here he discusses the probable consequences of a rise or fall in prices, or plays at dominoes with equal zest and interest; here he perpetrates his periodical jokes, champions his favorite deputy, and lands to the skies the worth and talents of the tenor or ballet girl who may have caught his fancy. The cafe is, after dinner, the chief resort of amateur musicians, who come to listen to the orchestra; and of newly married couples, who dream over the pleasant souvenirs of the honeymoon—lulled to sweet repose, as some poet has it, "on the lap of harmony." Cafes are also the rendezvous for clubs of ten or twenty spruce-attired wits, each of whom is, generally speaking, an aspiring senator or prime minister. These folks enjoy themselves in their own peculiar fashion. The master of the drinking feast, or chairman, opens the ball by reciting a line from Dante or Petrarch, and each of the company in turn must improvise a line of the like number of feet to rhyme with it. The number of feet to rhyme with is one or two conviviales, who fail to be up to the mark on the occasion must "tip up" for the entire drink consumed during this pseudo-literary tournament. After the impromptu verses are disposed of, rebuses, charades, and acrostics go the round of the table, puns are given and exchanged, wags break humorous lances with wags, compliments are bandied about, while everything serious is as carefully avoided as if it were so much gall or arsenic.

These tomfooleries suit the character of this gay insouciant people. Was it not one of their countrymen, Horace, who said that it was delightful to play the part of a clown sometimes? The roystering Italians are, in a sense, somewhat like those Edinburgh renewists of old, whose proud boast was that they cultivated literature on a very small amount of oatmeal. Italian wit and humor do not require any intoxicating stimulants to give them the rarest and spiciest of flavors. The notes connoiseur deum of Frazer, under whose hospitable board, Carlyle and Thackeray and Macleise and O'Mahony crossed legs, were washed down with draughts of fizzing champagne, and were characterized with all the gay rollicking fanfare of jokes and satire, bantering fun and badinage which are usually evoked by Bacchanalian orgies; but the Italian Frazeres keep too firm a grip of their purse to be tempted into paying a louis for a champagne-bottle when they can pour forth their witty grape-shot without having recourse to such an auxiliary. Here in the swell cafes they usually indulge in lemonade, or in a mixture of bitter-vermouth seltz. A decoction of Alpine herbs is also very much in fashion, and the ordinary red wine of Piedmont and Barolo forms the staple drinks for déjeuner and dinner. Brandy in Lombardy is of such a wretched character that it actually goes down one's throat like so much vitriol, while the beer is stale, flat and unprofitable. Strong alcoholic drinks are very much at a discount, and are consequently very vile commodities indeed—to be palmed off only on the British or American tourist who is foolish enough to call for them.

The Thinnest Man.

Instances of remarkably thin men are not uncommon, but Claude Acaubrose Seurat, who was in England in 1825, was such an extraordinary personage that during the time he was exhibited at the Chinese Saloon, in Pall Mall, no fewer than 70,000 persons visited him in a few weeks. Seurat was born in 1797, and was therefore, 28 years of age when he made his appearance.

Sir Astley Cooper, the famous physician, was among the throng who poured into the building in which Seurat received those who were anxious to see him, and wrote: "Seurat is, without doubt, the most mysterious being I have encountered. His face is that of an ordinary man, somewhat emaciated; perhaps, but not remarkably so. His eyes are bright and his voice pleasing. Seen in the ordinary costume of the day he in no way differs from the average foreigner. But stripped of his padded clothing he presents an astounding spectacle. His arms are mere bones covered by parchment-like skin, and muscles or flesh he appears to have none. He is, therefore, scarcely able to move his arms and legs, and walks, though with out apparent effort, with extreme difficulty. On measuring him and weighing him, I found that his chest measurement was thirty and three-quarter inches, which is fair; that his height was five feet six inches, but that his weight was not more than forty-five pounds, the bones being much smaller than those of an ordinary man of his stature who might weigh 150 pounds. In appearance, indeed, he so much resembles a skeleton that a short sighted person might easily mistake him for one." Seurat's food consisted of two or three ounces of bread and meat daily, and sometimes he took a little wine. He was remarkably intelligent and well read, and picked up English rapidly. On arriving at places where he was not known, he was accustomed to walk out in his padded clothes, and did not attract any particular attention. He said that until the age of ten years he resembled any ordinary boy, but that he suddenly wasted away. He died in 1840, aged 52 years.

Divine vengeance comes with feet of lead, but it strikes with the hand of iron.

A great many new dresses have simply plated skirts, but there are not a few the upper skirts of which are draped; the plaits generally go across the front from right to left; and the back they fall loose from the waist. As the weather grows colder, instead of the bodice opening over a plastron it will be made high and the plastron fastened over it, and will be often made of striped or brocaded silk over a cloth or cashmere dress. The underskirt need not be of the same material as the plastron.