

ORCHARD LANDS OF LONG AGO.

The orchard lands of long ago!
Oh, drowsy winds, awake and blow
The snowy blossoms back to me
And all the buds that used to be!
Blow back again the grassy ways,
Oh, truant feet, and lift the haze
Of happy summer from the trees
That trail their tresses in the seas
Of grain that float and overflow
The orchard lands of long ago!

Blow back the melody that slips
In lazy laughter from the lips
That marvel much that any kiss
Is sweeter than the apple is.
Blow back the twitter of the birds;
The lip, the thrill, and the words
Of merriment that found the shrill
Of summer time a glorious wine
That drenched the glories that loved
It so

In orchard lands of long ago,
Oh, memory afloat and shag
Where round and rosy pippins cling
And golden russets glist and gleam
As in the old Arabian dream—
The fruits of that enchanted tree
The glad Aladdin robbed for me!
And drowsy winds, awake and fan
My blood as when it overran
A heart ripe as the apples grow,
In orchard lands of long ago.

A QUIET LIFE.

It was the third of December, and the fourth was fixed for my wedding day. For some weeks the weather had been bitterly cold, we had had one heavy fall of snow, then a few days of hard frost, and now the air was again filled with large feathery flakes. At four o'clock, when I went to my own room, I was nearly dark.

My uncle's house, of which I had been an inmate for many years—for I was an orphan—was in a remote part of Cambridgeshire, five miles from a town, and it may be easily imagined what an event a wedding was in such a quiet village. Everyone, including myself, the bride elect, had to work hard for days beforehand, and my aunt had little sympathy for the weak or idle.

Two or three guests had arrived, and as there now seemed nothing more to be done excepting to entertain them, I was sent up stairs to rest until seven o'clock, when my intended husband and his groomsmen were expected. The dog-cart was to be sent to meet them at Eldon station, about three miles off.

I found the unusual luxury of a bright fire burning in my grate, and an easy-chair cozily drawn up to it. For a moment or two I warmed my frozen fingers, and then I went up to the window, and leaning my cold forehead against the colder pane, looked out upon the dreary landscape. Now the moon was come in which to realize my position.

For weeks I had been in a dream—a passive, hopeless creature, carried along, as it seemed, by the will of others to a certain end—now on the eve of my wedding day I felt miserably awake. Could there, then, be no respite—nothing to hope for?

"Ah, Harry! Harry!" I exclaimed, "where are you now? Why this long, long time without a word? Have I not, in spite of taunts and entreaties, waited the seven years I promised and more? Was it not only when the bread of charity grew too bitter, and no means permitted me for earning my own livelihood—when no hope remained of seeing you again—that I gave way?"

Twice I had refused Mr. Denton's hand. What could I do when he offered it the third time? Heaven knows I mean to make him a good wife. I am grateful to him, for why should he choose me—a girl without a penny, and no heart worth having? They say I have a pretty face; I suppose it was that. Harry used to like my blue eyes and wavy hair years ago.

"This is the last night I may think of you, Harry, the bonny lad I loved so well! Where are you now? Still beyond the wide Atlantic, striving for the money to enable us to marry? or, as they would wish me to believe, dead? I am in sore distress, Harry. Surely, bound up as we were in one another, my spirit can hardly thus be moved without stirring some chord in yours, wherever you may be—whether in far America, or in that still stranger and more unknown country from whence no traveler returns?"

"God help me!" I cried in my anguish; "God help me, I sorely need it!" Then I opened the window and looked out over the flat country lying so still in its white shroud; and I gazed up into the gray, stony sky, but it was obscured by the flakes of snow, which came down thicker and thicker until at last nothing else was to be seen in earth or heaven.

taken ill. Had I not had pains in all my limbs, and was not my head burning already?"

I rose several times during the night, and looked out. Still snowing heavily, as far as I could see. In the morning there was no change, and a very gloomy and depressed party met at the breakfast table. A few unsuccessful attempts were made to be cheerful during the meal, but when it was over all was silence, except an occasional whisper from one of the anxious faces at the windows, trying vainly to peer through the thick white veil.

That it was useless to dress all had agreed, and, wrapped in a large shawl, I lay down on the sofa by the fire, with my eyes fixed on the clock. Ten o'clock—eleven. At the half hour my heart almost stopped beating. Twelve o'clock at last—and so the reprieve had come. But hardly had the stroke sounded when a maid-servant burst into the room.

"Come quick, sir; there is a messenger." My aunt and uncle followed her quickly. I rose also, but staggered and sank back on the sofa. "Sit still, Nellie," said my bridesmaid, Mary Lee; "I'll come and tell you all about it," and she ran after them, followed by the other guests.

They seemed a long time away, and at last I got up and like one in a dream groped my way to the kitchen. "It was a large, gloomy place at any time, and that morning there was no light from without, the panes were so blacked up with snow; only the fire lighted up the group before me. The messenger—a tall, strong navy, but evidently much exhausted—sat by the hearth, the melting snow forming a pool around him. My aunt, seated at the table, looked as if she were fainting, while my uncle questioned the man in a subdued voice. Every face looked pale and horrified.

"What is the matter?" I asked, and my voice sounded to myself as if it were a long way off. "There has been an accident with the dog-cart, Nellie," said Mary Lee, gently putting her arm around me. "Is any one hurt?"

A pause. "Mr. Denton is hurt, my dear," said my uncle. "Much?" I whispered, for my voice seemed to have gone from me. I looked from one to the other as no answer came, and then my uncle tried to lead me away.

I understood how it was. "He is dead!" I said, and I fell heavily on the stoic floor. It is about two years since I wrote anything in my diary, for I seem now too busy to attend to it, and yet things have altered very much in the last two years. My surroundings are changed, and I trust there is a change for the better in myself. During that awful storm, my aunt heard of the death of her son-in-law in India, my cousin Edith's husband, and it was arranged for the widow and her only child to return to the old home. This rendered my presence even less necessary than ever, and made it all the more easy for my dear old friend and doctor to propose a scheme he had formed for the mutual benefit of his wife and myself, as he kindly put it.

It was for me to live with them as companion, housekeeper, and in fact daughter, for they never had children of their own, and his wife was a confirmed invalid. With this new home, health returned to body and mind. For some years I had lived in a world of my own, with but one object and one end in view. I thought I tried to do my duty—to bear patiently the monotonous routine of my uncle's house—not to reply to my aunt's harsh words, I taught in the schools, made dresses for the poor, and yet I lived really and truly for myself, with but little sympathy for those immediately around me.

There was a different atmosphere in Dr. Fanshawe's house. His noble, untrifling work among the sick and suffering filled me with wonder and admiration, and so did the patience and usefulness of his gentle, ladylike wife, who had been confined to her couch with a spinal complaint for many years. In a few months, however, came a great trial. The strong man fell sick, and died; I nursed him to the last, and I promised never to leave his poor wife. It was a sad blow to her at first, but borne with her usual quiet resignation. Now she is quite cheerful again. I know she thinks her time here will be but short, and the hope of a happy meeting with him she loved is her chief solace. I, too, am resigned and happy. The doctor's will has removed one source of anxiety as to the future, and I am now eight and twenty, and feel that I can settle down thankfully in that state of life in which it has pleased God to place me.

what an imprudent thing an engagement would have been."

I rose to go. "It is all over, Mrs. Leeton, I repeat. Right or wrong, what was then done can never be undone." "Stay a moment, Ellen. What I have to tell you is of such importance that I must beg you to hear me patiently." She took me by the hand and drew me to the sofa by her.

"At that time I acted, as I still think, for the best; but two years ago, I fear I made a mistake that is, your aunt and I. Soon after your engagement to Mr. Denton, I received a letter from my son, considerably after date, inclosing one for you. He told me that he purposed coming home in a few months, and, as he had now an appointment which would enable him to marry, he hoped to persuade you to return with him as his wife. As your uncle had forbidden any correspondence, he inclosed the letter for you in mine."

I sprang to my feet. "And why did I not have that letter?" "Be calm, Ellen. Indeed, my dear, I am now very sorry. I took my letter to show to your uncle and aunt, and, by their advice destroyed the inclosure. They thought you were at last settled in your mind, and happy, and, of course, wished to avoid such a terrible upset as a renewal of the past would have caused."

Her eyes were full of tears as she accompanied me to the door. "Try to forgive me, Nellie. I would give much for you to meet each other again. At all events, he knows the truth now. Don't think too harshly of me!"

As I crossed the field which lay between Mrs. Leeton's house and the high road my mind was full of confusion; grief and indignation predominated, and then a wild hope suddenly sprang up, but that brought me to myself. "This madness," I thought; "I am but laying the foundation for future disappointment and sorrow."

Before I passed through the gate I folded my hands upon it, closed my eyes and muttered "Thy will be done"; then I dried my eyes and walked quickly homeward. As I gazed round on the wide, flat fields and the straight road, I could not help likening the landscape to my life. Sameness, monotony, and, when it should please God to take my one kind friend from me, great loneliness. And yet I need not be unhappy; summer would come in its season to brighten the fields, and even now the hour-frost was sparkling in the sun. And-then I had the privilege of a straight path of duty which could not be mistaken.

The road seemed long to stretch on to the horizon, and straight before me the sun, round and crimson, had just touched the earth. The road was very lonely, and as I could only see one solitary human being approaching me in the distance, I quickened my steps, for Mrs. Fanshawe was apt to be nervous when I was out late. As he approached I perceived it was a tall man, wrapped in a plaid. My eyes were too much dazzled by the sun for me to see his face, but I thought he was looking earnestly at me. He walked a few steps past me, and then returned, saying:

"Will you kindly direct me to Mrs. Leeton's cottage, at Earlswood?" I turned round and looked at him, then involuntarily held out my hands. They were warmly clasped, and in a moment I was pressed to his breast. "Harry!"

"Nelly, darling, are you glad to see me again?" "Yes," I answered softly. And so we met after many long years, never to part again.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

WELCOME CALLER.
Jack Frost came to the window-pane
And softly tapped with his icicle cane;
"Excuse me," I said, "the doors are tight,
And I'd rather you wouldn't come in to-night."
So he scratched his name over the glass,
And the baby smoozed as she heard him pass.

HOW A CAT COUNTS.
The cat is less expert in arithmetic than the dog, not being capable of counting farther than six. A writer in our Animal Friend says that he used to hold a piece of meat to his cat's nose and draw it away suddenly, always repeating the action five times before allowing the animal to take the morsel. Pass so on grew accustomed to the performance, and waited with calmness and dignity until the sixth offer was made, when she sprang up and seized the piece of meat with her teeth.

For some weeks the doctor repeated this experiment, and the cat did not make a single mistake. When, however, he tried to increase her knowledge by making four more approaches and I retreated before letting her take the meat, she lost the count completely and I jumped at the wrong moment.

JAPANESE POCKET PRAYERS.
Japanese folks say a traveler in this country have six or eight pockets cunningly inserted in the cuffs of their wide-sleeves. These pockets are always filled with a lot of things that would surprise any one who took a dip in one of them. A note; the things they carry are the prayers which the priests compose, and which are written on little squares of rice paper. They carry plenty of these pocket prayers, for they use them like medicine. If they feel distressed in mind or body they wrap out a prayer and swallow it. As soon as it is done they will feel better at once. The prayers are of a silky paper, and they use them for various things, never using only but once. As soon as it has done one service wrap out a tea leaf, drying a tear, or what it may be. It is thrown away.

A COW'S MOO.
A very small girl was learning to write. Her teacher said the slate and set her to copying. "I copy," she said, "I copy, I copy." "Well, I think you are doing well," said the teacher, "but you must copy the words as I have written it. So—moo."

"What is it?" asked Lucy, with a puzzled look. "That is moo," the teacher said. "It is the sound a cow makes. It is the sound of moo, moo, moo, just what you have been learning to do." So Lucy sat down and prepared to copy "moo." But she did it in a queer way. She made an M at the beginning of each line, and followed each M with a whole string of o's all across the slate, like this, Moooooo.

"But that isn't right, Lucy," said the teacher, when the little girl showed her the slate. "You must copy the words as I have written it. So—moo." "Well, I think mine is right, Miss Jones," she said. "For I never saw a cow that gave such a short 'moo' as you wrote down."

SAND SERPENTS.
This name was given by an imaginative traveler to the wonderful columns of swirling sand that are so frequently seen on the great plain of Central Asia. Fancy what a terrible country to journey through! For miles and miles one unbroken stretch of dreary sand, nothing to break the monotony, nothing to rest the eyes, unless one of those fantastic exhibitions, which, knowing the discomfort and the danger, a traveler would rather not see, takes place.

The first signal is a puff of wind followed by various slight disturbances in the loose soil round about; then it blows harder, and, as if a legion of evil things had been called from the center of the earth, tiny columns of sand lift themselves, and grow larger and larger and rise higher and higher, like the mighty giant Shalhad the siltor loosed from the great caldron he found in the sea.

These columns have the form of serpents, and all the waving sinuous motions of those terrible creatures. Sometimes they will rise to a height of fifty, sixty, and, if we may believe the testimony of some writers, even two hundred feet. They swept over immense stretches, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups, gathering size and force as they go, and then, as the wind lowers, diminish, and dwindle into nothingness.

portunity, and just as the traveler looked around it spring full upon the poor bird's breast, chased its hairy arms around the little fluttering body, and buried its horrible fangs in the tender throat.

For an instant the observer stood still, too much startled to move, while the little head of the bird drooped helplessly, and it ceased to struggle, then, recovering himself, he hastily prepared his chloroform, and brought it gradually near. So intent was the creature on holding the bird until it was quite dead that it did not attempt to escape. Its legs relaxed a little presently, but its fangs remained buried in the bird's throat, and so it died and was caught. He had the sections of the trunk carefully cut above and below the opening, and that section stands in his cabinet now, with the strong white web, the two poor little withered birds entangled in it, and the great hairy spider still clinging to the breast of one, its fangs never releasing their hold even in death. This hairy monster is known as the Mygalé avicularia. Its body is two inches long and its great legs cover an expanse of seven inches. It has terrible fangs folded under its head, and when in pursuit of prey or angered it will leap great distances and sink these fangs in the object of its attack.

A SHORT BEAR STORY.
It was my fortune to spend the first twenty years of my life in a region where black bears were quite numerous, writes a correspondent of the Detroit Free Press. Our little community was often thrown into excitement by the discovery that bruin had been engaged in some before-unheard-of mischief, and not infrequently were all the men and boys in the neighborhood mustered to surround a piece of woods, and capture a bear that was known to be there hidden away. Some of these occasions were full of excitement and danger, and maybe I shall one time tell about them, but just now I want to relate an experience with a bear that happened when I was but twelve years old.

It was part of my business in summer time to drive the cows to pasture every morning, and home every night. Like most boys, however, I loved play a little too well, and sometimes it would be very late before the cattle would be safely shut up for the night.

One day I had played about longer than usual after school, and when I reached home it was almost sunset. I persuaded a playmate of about my own age to accompany me and started for the pasture. It was something more than half a mile away, and in getting to it, we followed down an old road which was now partially fallen. But barefoot boys are nimble fellows, and before it was dark we were at the bars of the pasture. There stood the cows, as usual, waiting patiently for some one to come for them, and a little way out from them were the young cattle in a group. Down went the bars, and the cows started out, when all at once there was a great confusion among the young creatures. They ran in every direction, and appeared terribly frightened at something.

In a moment we saw what it was. A large black bear was coming across the pasture near them. I don't suppose he meant to trouble the cattle, but that was his nearest way to pass from the woods to a corn field which he had in view, and he happened to come along there just as we did.

It required no long council of war for us to decide to retreat as fast as possible, and I taking to the road, we made the best time we could until we came to the top of a little hill. Here we mustered up courage to stop and I look behind us. But there was the bear coming right up the road after us. We did not look back a second time, you may be sure, and in a very few moments we burst into my father's kitchen, and when we could get breath, exclaimed: "A h—a bear! A great big black bear chased us, and he's coming right up here!"

All that night we dreamed of bears. The cows did not come home, nor did the bear come after us, as we expected he would; but when father went down the next morning, he found the bear's tracks in the road, and following them up, he found where the old fellow had entered the corn field and taken his supper. Shortly afterward he was shot near the same place.

Electric Tugs.
The proposed new departure in the propulsion of tugs by electricity on the river Spree, at Berlin, is assuming practical shape. The scheme is to establish a service of tugs on the seven and one-half miles of the river which passes through the capital, by connecting the boats to a trolley line. The present freight charge for covering the distance is \$7.50, but it is estimated that by the aid of electricity this charge will be reduced about one-half. The success of such a scheme would be quickly reflected in this country, where the use of electric launches for both pleasure and commercial purposes has been retarded from the fact of the scarcity of charging stations for the renewal of the necessary storage batteries. As soon as people begin to find that they can be fairly sure of being able to recharge their batteries whenever they are in the neighborhood of a trolley car line, an extraordinary impetus will be given to the summer business in electric launches.

THE JOKERS' BUDGET.

JESTS AND YARNS OF THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

His Companion—No Room For Doubt—He Cuts It—Mother-in-Law—While You Wait—Often Enough—Not to Kill, Etc.

HIS COMPANION.
"Last night I took a long stroll with the one I love best in all the world."
"I should think you would get tired of walking by yourself."

NO ROOM FOR DOUBT.
Arthur—"Are you sure she loves you?"
Jack—"Yes; when I told her I had no money to marry on she asked me if I couldn't borrow some."

HE GETS IT.
She—"I think your young friend is entitled to great credit for the way he is doing."
He—"Yes, and the fellow gets it. He owes more than he can ever pay."

HIS PREFERENCE.
Mother-in-law—"Don't you know that cropping your hair so tight as that will make it fall out?"
Son-in-law—"Oh, yes; but that's the way I prefer to lose it."

WHILE YOU WAIT.
Customer—"You have a sign in your window. 'A suit of clothes made while you wait.' Do you really do that?"
Tailor—"Yes, sir. You leave your order with a deposit, and then wait till the garments are finished."

OFTEN ENOUGH.
Little Johnny—"What is your papa's business?"
Little Clarence—"My papa is a post."
Little Johnny—"Huh! That ain't a business—it's a disease."

NOT TO KILL.
"I met Willie Bushtop going along the street yesterday."
"Dressed to kill, as usual?"
"Oh, no; merely dressed to maim. He had on his football armor."

Employer (hastily resuming his dictating as somebody comes into the office)—"What was my last word?"
Typewriter-girl (somewhat rattled)—"Your last word was 'darling.'"

AS IMPORTANT INDUSTRY.
Traveler (in parlor car, passing a health resort)—"That is a remarkably picturesque village we are passing. What is its principal industry?"
Porter—"Embalming."

AN ALTERED CASE.
Magistrate—"Do you mean to say such a physical wreck as he is gave you that black eye?"
Complaining Wife—Shure, your Honor, he wasn't a physical wreck till after he give me th' black eye."

MOST CONVENIENT.
Mr. Ireland—"This book on swimming is very useful in sudden emergencies."
Mrs. Ireland—"Is it?"
Mr. Ireland—"I should say so. If you are drowning turn to page 103 and you'll see how to save yourself."

MATRIMONIAL AMENITIES.
"I have a very bad taste in my mouth," complained Mr. Snuggs.
"Your bad taste is not confined to your mouth," replied Mrs. Snuggs.
"That's true it isn't. I also displayed it in my selection of a wife."

SAME OLD PERSECUTION.
"Mabel, wouldn't it be jolly if we could ride through life like this together?"
"Now George, if you're going to be spoony for goodness' sake turn down the lamp."

THE PERSON INDICATED.
"I want to see the boss," he said to the chief bookkeeper, as he entered the counting room.
"You'll find the typewriter in that little room to the left," replied the man of figures.

STILL LACKING.
Railroad President—I am delighted to hear that you took a trip on our Great Western limited palace car-hotel-barber shop-library-bathroom-Pullman express. Nothing lacking, was there?
Old Friend (who had an upper berth)—Yes—elevators.

A DIFFERENT KIND.
"That," said the Buffalo man, "is our financial school."
Just then a couple of aldermen came out, each of whom would weigh 250 pounds.
"I'm glad you told me," said the Rochester visitor. "I should have taken it for a school of whales."

BOTH TWINS.
Chatty old bachelor—Most remarkable likeness between those two children, nurse.
Nurse—Yessir, twins, sir.
Old gentleman—What, both of 'em?

ANCIENT WIT.
Jinks—Can you give an instance of female wit mentioned in the Bible?
Blinks—Yes; Herodias, when she got a head of John the Baptist.

NO DANGER NOW.
Mr. Spoonmover (in the parlor)—"What is that noise overhead, Miss Agnes?"
Miss Agnes (listening a moment)—"It's papa. Mr. Spoonmover, but you needn't be scared. He's snoring."

NOT A REAL ONE.
"Great Scott!" shouted the dime museum manager, as he started upright from sleep. "I just dreamed of a three-headed girl with seventeen toes on each foot."
"Hush, my dear," said his wife, soothingly. "you will wake the neighbors. That was only a freak of fancy."

Quaint English Regulation.
No part of a tree can be removed from the grounds of Holywood Palace without the permission of the Queen of England. One, dating from the reign of Queen Mary, was recently blown down, and before the gardeners could touch it, a photograph had to be forwarded to the Queen, who formally ordered its removal.

The number of inhabited houses in London is said to be about 446,300.