

MOTHER AND I.

Mother has gone, and the house is lonely,
Here lies her book where she read one day.
Here is the chair, and the foot rest yonder
Sits as she pushed it from her way.
Only a few short miles between us;
Just a short journey by rail—and then
Back to the cottage home so humble
Mother and I can live again.

Oh, I know I know I can soon be with her.
'Tis not her absence that pains my heart—
'Tis but the thought that sometime, somewhere,
Mother and I will drift apart.
She has grown old,—so old and feeble!
What will I do with the dreary day—
What will my heart do with its sorrow—
After my mother "goes home" to stay!
—Jessie L. Field, in Good Housekeeping.

The Cyclone.

By Major Hamilton.

The long, weary day was drawing to a close. Away in the distant vault of the western sky the great sun hung round and golden, shedding his burning rays upon the brown and parching earth; no sound of bird nor breath of air disturbed the dread oppressiveness of the atmosphere, while under foot the prairie scorched and cracked, and covered with a matted carpet of dead and dried grasses, stretched for many a mile on either hand to the far-off level horizon, that waned and flickered in the terrible heat. Above, the bending blue of a pitiless heaven; below, the dull desolation of uninhabited earth; on every side, silence.

In the foreground of this picture were two men—frontiersmen evidently—tattered, worn and travel-stained, haggard and wild eyed, both on foot, and both half staggering as they pressed onward beneath the weight of their rifles—men who had passed some great danger, saving life only—men who were now face to face with utter exhaustion and despair, but who, from very habit, would plod forward until death's arrow struck them down—men who knew all the joys and terrors of this untamed Western land, but who grappled with or enjoyed the same to the final end with an equanimity that is seldom to be found except among Indians—true advance guards in the great march of civilization.

At length one paused with a half-muttered curse, and dropping his rifle butt to the ground, leaned heavily upon it, and turned to view the path over which they had come.

Long and earnestly he looked, his bronzed face as immovable as though carved from the knotted wood, his deep-set eyes free and hunted, but desperate withal. His companion lay prone beside him. At length the latter spoke:

"Well, Tom!"

"Thar's naught," returned Tom, with a sigh of relief, as he seated himself at his comrade's side—"naught but the dry prairie, the parching heat an' the sky. They are following, no doubt, but a long way behind yet."

Both men were quiet for a little space, and the declining sun fell athwart them as they sat, casting long, dark shadows before them upon the dry earth, hardly more silent than themselves. The shadows lay close together, as graves might. After a moment one of them noticed it.

"Look, Dan!" and with outstretched finger he pointed to the grim reminders, "thar's the end!"

"I don't much doubt it," Dan returned; "but it's not yet," and he thar's life thar's hope. Come on."

Again shouldering their arms, after a long look behind, they turned once more westward, and plodded wearily forward.

Three days before, Dan Taylor and Tom Burt were as happy and prosperous as men need be whose "claim" was a good one and whose every "pan" showed color.

Located in a narrow gulch in the Willow Hills, securely screened, as they thought themselves from wandering Blackfeet, with three comrades they had been placer-mining for a month most successfully, and had stored in their lowly cabin more than ten thousand dollars' worth of the yellow dust for which men strive.

Then came a night of blackness and blood, and fire—a night of fighting, and horror, and death—and as it were by the very hair of their heads, stripped of all but their clothing and weapons, their comrades killed, these two had escaped, only to fly hour after hour out across the desolate prairie unsheltered, unfed and pursued by the most pitiless of all enemies, a war party of savages.

Slowly the day waned, and, urged by a common desire to find shelter of some sort ere night should fall, the men hastened their weary steps toward a far-away fringe of low trees, yet some miles distant, that promised a running stream and the chance of concealment.

A single prairie dog, shot and eaten raw, had constituted their entire rations for almost forty-eight hours.

As they strode onward, Burt looked sharply about him.

"More game?" queried Tyler.

"Aye—I'm starving!" replied his friend. "I fear to shoot; but, even if the reds hear it and find us, it's better to die fighting than gnawed to death by hunger."

"True," replied Tyler; "we must have meat."

Hardly had the words passed his lips than he suddenly paused, touched his comrade, and both sank quickly to their knees.

Rounding a slight knoll a hundred rods away was a herd of antelope.

"Them's better'n dog!" whispered Burt. "Lie still an' I'll stalk 'em."

And, suiting the action to the word, prone upon the earth he began to writhe toward the game, who were uneasily nibbling at the scant herbage. Tyler remained behind.

Slowly but surely Tom advanced, the dry bunch brass affording in places a slight cover, until he was perhaps within sixty rods of the antelope and forty rods from where Dan sat.

Then, seeing no opportunity of further concealment, he paused, waiting for the best and surest possible shot.

And as he lay thus, watching the deer, with rifle at his face, his comrade saw this:

Away behind them, bobbing up and down upon the dim horizon, now a faint purple from the coming night, were a score of more of black blot against the sky, growing each instant more and more distinct as they drew nearer. The Indians were coming!

Not far in front and just at the side of the unsuspecting hunter—so close that the waving head cast a baleful shadow across the bronzed cheek of him who watched the deer—there coiled a rattlesnake, disturbed, doubtless, in its afternoon nap, and now threatening a swift and terrible revenge.

These things say Tyler and knew that safety for himself lay in silence; for, if the snake struck and no shot was fired, the dusky pursuers might miss the trail and pass him by—and knowing this, his life against a double death, with renewed strength and nerves like steel he tossed his rifle to his shoulder, aimed carefully at the angry reptile before him just as its head was poisoning for the fatal blow, and fired.

There was a cry of surprise followed by an exclamation of horror, as Burt sprang to his feet and beheld the dying reptile, for the bullet had cut it almost in twain; and then, following with his eyes the direction in which Dan pointed, the fleeing antelope possessed no further charms for him, nor the rattlesnake any fears, but with a sudden indrawn breath he cried hoarsely, "Come," and turning, closely followed by Tyler, who was now at his side, the two sped away toward the distant timber far faster than ever before.

"It's a bit duskish," whispered Tom as they ran; "mayhap the devils won't see—Ah!"

He was interrupted by a far-away cry, a voice of the night almost that rose and fell, weird and terrible, ringing down the twilight behind them—the war-cry of the Blackfeet! They were discovered!

Thar's but one hope now," panted Dick, as, with firm-set teeth and straining muscles, the men dashed on, "to reach the timber and fight them off!"

On, on through the fast-falling gloom, across the crisp, brown grass, above the baked and crumbling earth, they fled, while behind them rags clear and still clearer in their ears the distant following hoof-beats and in front the trees of refuge loomed each instant higher against the darkening sky.

"If we can but reach the cov—"

The sentence was not finished, for, with a cry, Dan stumbled heavily forward, staggered, and fell at length upon the ground. Instantly Tom was at his side.

"I'm not hurt much," whispered the fallen man, striving to rise. "I caught my foot."

Cold sweat rose in beads upon the sufferer's forehead; a dull, leaden hue spread over his brown and wrinkled face. He clutched at Bert's hand.

"Good-by, old man, and God save ye! My leg is broken! Empty my rifle into my heart an' go, quick!"

Tom looked at him a moment in silence, then at their coming enemies, and a strange light burned on his cheeks and in his eyes. He seated himself at Tyler's side.

"Pard, we've an' lived together many a year, he said, "now, ef needs be, we'll fight an' die together. Not a word! Ye kin shoot?"

"Yes," whispered Dan.

"Then we'll catch a few of 'em before they gather us in. But look, Dan—look!" continued Burt, suddenly, with intense eagerness. "Look yonder! What comes?"

With brightening eyes Dan turned. Away in the northern sky there hung a strange, funnel-shaped cloud, broad above, but narrowing toward the earth, that, even in the fast-thickening twilight, they could see was in rapid motion, and was approaching them. At the same moment, a dull, roaring—the sound of an unseen sea upon an unseen shore—fell upon their straining ears.

Tow drew nearer and touched his half-fainting friend's hand.

"Old boy, the Injins 'll never get us! Heaven is about to bury us! That yonder is a prairie cyclone!"

Dan quivered, but, despite his pain, the terrible, swift certainty of their fate overcame all else, and true to his nature, he waited in silence with his comrade for the end.

It would not be long. Faster than the fastest horse the great demon of the air swept down upon them, and as it advanced the chill horror of its breath touched their long locks and waved them gently, the dense, whirling blackness of its mighty bulk blotted from their sight both sky and prairie, and the thrilling, majestic roar of its voice shook the very earth.

Nearer and nearer yet it drew, until the mighty engine of Nature's wrath fairly overshadowed them, and with bowed heads they bade life farewell, until the matted grasses and the dry and should wind a shroud and grave about them, and then came an instant of utter blackness, of demoniac tumult, of crushing horror, when

the hand of Nature's God seemed to press them to the ground—and the cyclone had passed!

It had passed, and the two white men still lived. Touched only by the hem of the garment of the wonderful whirling death, they had escaped, but their dusky pursuers had been in the very center of its furious brasp.

To search for them, scattered, strangled, and buried deep beneath the mounds of weeds and earth, would be like searching for graves at sea—the war party was gone, and Burt and Tyler were saved.

Two days later, a wandering party of huntsmen found them encamped near a river's brink, and conveyed them to the nearest settlement, where, as the day passed, the broken leg was made new again, and the wild light died from the eyes of the rescued men; but so long as they live, neither will forget that summer afternoon long ago, and the cyclone of the prairie.—Saturday Night.

AN ARTIFICIAL INFERNO.

Risks Attending Certain Departments of Steel Making.

Waldon Fawcett pictures very vividly in the Century the special risks attending certain departments of the work of steel making at Pittsburg.

The mode of operating one of the older furnaces, although it was the accepted method only a few years ago, seems crude enough now. Workmen with shovels transfer the fuel and raw material from the railroad-cars to novel iron wheelbarrows which are loaded on a rickety-looking elevator that creeps creakingly up the outside of the furnace to the top, a hundred feet in the air. Perched up on this chimney-like structure, with the molten pool directly below,—standing above the crater of a volcano, as it were,—are workmen whose daily occupation is as dangerous as that of a steeple-climber.

The deadliest danger is from the great wave of poisonous gases which rushes up with terrific force whenever the "bell," as the top of the furnace is called is opened to admit a fresh supply of fuel or ore. As a rule, the escaping gases become ignited, and woe betide the unfortunate workman who is tardy in retreating before the sheet of flame that momentarily illuminates the whole country-side.

At times, however, the gases do not pass off in flame, and the effect upon the workmen at this terrible rush of carbonic acid fumes is very much the same as that which might be expected from an over dose of whisky. Sometimes a severe attack of hiccoughs and a violent headache warn the worker that he must quickly seek a clearer atmosphere, but more often the laborer falls in his tracks as completely overcome as though a heavy dose of ether or chloroform had been administered. So many men have lost their lives or been terribly burned by pitching headlong within the zone of heat and flame when staggering from the stupefying odor that, nowadays, an extra man is stationed at the top of the old-fashioned furnace, back where he will not be reached by the gases, whose duty it is to drag to the elevator and take to the ground as quickly as possible any of the men who may be overcome. It is not an unusual sight, at a good-sized blast-furnace plant of long establishment, to see half a dozen dazed men stretched side by side upon the grass, the ghastly pallor which the gas has wrought intensified by the blotches of grime which partly obscure it.

More terrifying even than the menace of the gases is the ever-present possibility of an explosion that will toss the massive cover of the furnace into the air. Sometimes this giant lid rises only a few yards and then falls back into place, but there have been instances when it landed on the ground many rods away. Whatever be the force of one of these sudden upheavals of the lava-like mass, the laborers on top of the furnace have no warning of its approach, and their chances of life, when flames burst forth as though from a cannon's mouth, constitute the most uncertain of problems.

A Slip of the Pen.

"A recent experience has taught me that people should avoid carelessness in their handwriting," remarked the society girl with the troubled brow. "Last week I gave a little informal tea, to which I invited a number of my intimate friends. Among others were a brother and sister. I wasn't sure that both of them could come, so I wrote, or intended to write, 'if both of you cannot come, either of you will do.' But somehow or other my pen played tricks on me (perhaps it was absent-mindedness on my part), and the latter part of the invitation read, 'neither of you will do.'"

"Well, neither one appeared at my little function, and when I met them on the street a few days afterward I was surprised at their coldness. The sister didn't speak to me at all and the brother raised his hat stiffly and was about to pass on. I saw that something was wrong and asked for an explanation. The brother showed me the unfortunately-worded invitation, with the remark that he and his sister had concluded I was trying to be funny at their expense. I managed to convince them that it was purely a clerical mistake—and hereafter I am going to use a typewriter."—Detroit Free Press.

A hornet's nest usually contains from three to four hundred perfect males and females and an indefinite number of workers.

The sum of \$8,800 was collected last year from commercial travellers who visited Prince Edward Island. They are required to pay \$20 each.

FUBDS IN THE FOREST.

HOW MAINE GUIDES ARE PITTED AGAINST LOGGERS.

After Dammed Low Streams—They Want to Float Their Logs Down, but Their Operations Prevent Hunters from Traversing Water Courses.

The old guides in the wild woods of northern Maine are telling wonderful stories this season of the unprecedented number of deer which are roaming in the almost pathless forest. The farmers during September were kept busy driving the deer from barnyard and garden and the morning locomotives of the Maine railroad killed so many deer at night that the game warden of the great hunting belt complained to the railroad officials of the slaughter. The new game law enforced this season against the killing of deer during the first of the autumnal months was responsible for their great numbers when the first of October sportsmen appeared on the scene.

A hunting trip through the Maine woods this year reveals a condition of affairs which only the oldest guide can remember as having existed before in that section. The past summer has been the driest known in forty years. In consequence many of the famous streams which have been wont to flash and foam by logman's camp and sportsman's lean-to are now only shallow brooks which cannot even float the light draught canoes so necessary for expeditious travel to the heart of the hunting range.

These conditions have been responsible for almost nightly feuds between logmen and camp owners. The former have 3,000,000 logs at the head of the Aroostock resting hard and fast on the river bottom. Anxious to start the big booms toward the sea, the logmen have built dams well up toward the riverheads, hoping by easy stages to move them on their journey. The rivers have run almost dry below these dams, and the click of a reel, the swish of a line and the purling of water from the bow of a canoe, sweet music to the sportsman's ears, are unknown sounds these days; and the logmen are blamed for it.

The customary nightly quiet of the sportsman's camps has been broken. The camp owners have tried by force to carry away the logman's dams, and the latter are forced to keep guards on duty all night to ward against these depredations. Thus far victory has been with the logmen, because of superior numbers.

Returning sportsmen say that the feuds have not affected their sport in the least. The guides always report for duty in the morning, despite their nightly attacks on the enemy. They think that last year's record for the hunting belt of almost 4,000 deer will easily be eclipsed this season.

A party which returned to this city the last week in October reported six inches of snow in the vicinity of Munsungun River and deer tracks on every hand. Despite the heavy fall of snow, no reasonable amount of exposure to the weather in these latitudes seems to bring bad results. The man who at home must have his room heated, and three blankets on his bed, can sleep on a shakedown of boughs in a lean-to in the woods, and never mind the winds that play around him. With a camp fire at his feet and his arm wrapped in a blanket, he is protected from all ills and sleeps like a healthy child.

While the moose in Maine are not diminishing, according to the best authority, the old bulls, whose horns are coveted by the hunter, are hard to approach. The best of moose guides are having a hard time this year to run down the big game. When they fail, nobody else need expect to succeed. They know not only the habits of the animals they hunt, but are as familiar with the woods as with their own backyards. They live in the woods most of the time. The forest appeals to them as the sea does to the sailor. They trap in it, "spruce bum" in it and timber in it until they know its every feature. They are always interesting characters. They are always studying the ways of the great animals. They know the runways or ranges of the bull moose, and at what time the animals may be expected at a certain place.

The picturesque and nerve-trying method of moose hunting by attracting the bull with the simulated call of the cow cannot be practiced much in Maine this year under the existing game laws. The open season for shooting big game is so late that calling is futile. In the mating season the old guides can imitate the weird, screeching call of the cow moose so perfectly that the wildest old bull is deceived and will be drawn to the source of the sound, grunting responsively as he comes.

As far as can be learned, there have been only four cases of "buck fever" in the Maine woods this year. Four men are known to have been killed by mistle hunters mistaking them for the skulking deer.

Hunting in the great woods of Maine has become a fad with many New Yorkers, and many parties track the big game. Women, too, are enthusiastic hunters. Today there are many of the gentler sex in rough hunting jackets and boots braving the hardships and perils of this most exhilarating life.—New York Mail and News.

Child Wives at School.

Early marriages are customary among the mountaineers of North Carolina, and when the husbands are killed in the numerous feud wars or disappear to escape revenue officers, the young wives, or widows, as a rule, are entered on the roll of the industrial school at Asheville. Few of

these mountain girls when they come to the school have ever seen a looking-glass or a clothes brush, or even the most ordinary toilet or housekeeping implements. They have never held a pen in their fingers or taken hold of a book. A table set for a meal is a wonderful object, as is a two-story house. And most of them go up and down stairs for the first few weeks with all the awkwardness and caution of people undergoing a novel sensation. The only objects that would seem familiar would be guns and shooting and trapping apparatus or the heavily-lidded ovens for cooking over an open fire.

HISTORY OF MASSAGE.

The Real Originators Appear to Have Been the Chinese.

It is often impossible to determine the origin of our methods of treatment, particularly as most of them date back to the dark ages, when accuracy in detail was not a characteristic feature in medical records. Sweden is usually credited with being the place of origin of the scientific system of massage and physical exercises. This, says The British Medical Journal, is no doubt correct as far as modern Europe is concerned, but the real originators of massage and physical exercises appear to have been the Chinese. An interesting article appeared recently in the Deutsche Medicinische Wochenschrift, in which reference was made to a book lately published by Pan Wei, Governor of Hupeh. The author a great authority on massage, was consulted by the late Empress of China. The Chinese legends contain many references to various systems of physical exercises, and these are associated in a curious manner with metaphysical thought. Life, according to the Chinese traditions, is entirely dependent on "air currents," which are designated as the primary aura of the organism. So long as the body is permeated by the "air current" it is proof against disease. The object of physical exercise is to circulate the "air current." The Chinese system is divided into three periods, each period occupying one hundred days. The first period should commence at the time of the new moon. The patient must rise at 4 a. m. and walk outside his house, and take seven deep inspirations; immediately after this two youths, who have been specially trained, commence a gentle friction all over the body, starting over the cardiac area. At the time of full moon a further set of inspiratory exercises must be taken. Later on in the second period the various parts of the body are rubbed with wooden planks until the muscles are hardened. It is not until the hardening of the muscles takes place that the real physical exercises commence. Between the fifth and sixth months is the period of greatest activity; the European dumbbell is replaced by large sacks filled with stones. In the third period the back muscles are chiefly exercised. Great benefit is said to have resulted from this system.

How Philippine Women Cross a River.

Just beyond San Pedro we came to the Sibolao River, the bed of which is a mile wide, covered with big and white boulders, with here and there a swift running stream. The main river is probably two hundred yards wide and is easily forded, except after a heavy rain, when it rises rapidly and becomes a raging torrent. It usually subsides in a few hours after the rain has ceased to fall. When the river is up many people gather on either bank to await an opportunity to cross.

Our treasurer was once sitting on the banks with a lot of natives waiting for the river to subside, and had been there, wet, hungry and tired, for hours praying to get across. The river was boiling and foaming and no one dared make an attempt to cross. Presently an old woman came along, took a look at the river, gave a contemptuous glance on the many sex there gathered and then walked up the bank about a hundred yards, where she stripped off her clothing. She made a careful bundle of all her belongings, raised them above her head and entered the stream. The water was over her head, but she made no attempt to swim. She would sink beneath the water until her toes touched a boulder and would then give a jump. The current would give her a lift and send her diagonally down the stream a few yards. She kept repeating the operation until at last she had reached the other bank, far below where she had started.

She waded out with her bundle perfectly dry, donned her clothes and vanished through the thicket.—From a Panay Letter in the Mobile Register.

Fog.

The word "fog" has not been traced farther back than the sixteenth century, but the thing was known in the early years of the fourteenth. The commons, with the prelates and nobles visiting London for the parliaments and other occasions, united to petition Edward I. to compel the burning of dry wood and charcoal, as the growing use of sea coal corrupted the air with its stink and smoke to the great prejudice and detriment of health. In 1306 the king prohibited the use of coal; heavy ransom and fines were inflicted for disobedience; in the case of recalcitrant brewers, dyers and other artificers the furnaces and kilns were destroyed. But the restriction was evidently soon removed, for in 1308 £50 (probably equal to about £300 now) was paid from the exchequer for wood and coal for the coronation of Edward II.—London Chronicle.

Unless a letter has a stamp on it it remains stationary.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

While the proportion of male criminals has increased considerably in Germany since 1882, that of female offenders has remained stationary.

The discovery in Palestine of valuable mineral treasures make it probable that there will soon be an industrial awakening of the Holy Land.

Chicago is making a specialty of sending through the mails envelopes fastened with buckles. The buckles are of white enamel and old gold. They take the place of a gummed flap and a seal.

Eighteen thousand Americans have emigrated to Canada during the past year. As an offset however, about 100,000 Canadians have settled in the United States. Man for man, says the St. Louis Republic, the Canadians showed the better sense.

The Welsh language appears to be approaching extinction. At a recent esteddof at Dolgelly, according to a Cleveland Leader correspondent, one of the principal speakers stated that in 1871, as many as 1,006,190 persons spoke Welsh, but in 1891 the number had fallen to 911,289, a decrease of 95,811, though the population had meanwhile increased.

A physician, writing to The London Times, says: "Everything we eat and drink and wear runs the gamut of germs to an extent which nervous people had better not contemplate. Far too much fuss is made of them. If we listened to all these scares there would be nothing left to do but get into a bath of carbolic acid and stay there until starvation freed us from the dangers of life."

Students will no longer be given employment as waiters in the Yale dining hall. In years past service of this kind has afforded opportunity to many young men to partially pay their way through the college. The present superintendent of the dining hall, however, says that the student waiters were incompetent, and colored men have been given their places. About ninety are now employed.

The Prefect of Police of Paris has ordered a general round up of beggars and vagrants, who are to be arrested wherever found. At the station houses those who are really infirm and incapable of earning their living are to be sorted out from the rest and sent to places of public assistance. Those whose misery is caused by laziness or evil doing are to be committed to workhouses for long terms.

Bessinger, Fla., seems to be an ideal place for the raising of large families. It is only a frontier settlement as yet, lying in the heart of the great inland prairie, but there is no danger of the population diminishing. Among the families living there are six whose children aggregate seventy-one in number—thirty-two boys and thirty-nine girls. Bessinger challenges any place of equal size in the State to match these domestic figures.

The residents of Wilmington, Del., were aroused the other night by the continuous screech of a whistle. For more than an hour the noise was uninterrupted. Next morning it was learned that the whistle valve of a locomotive engine in the railroad yard had become jammed and the engineer was unable to release it. Not until the steam pressure was reduced by drawing the fire did the noise cease.

"The latest in 'yells,'" says the Kansas City Journal, "is that of the convicts on their way from the jail in the county in which they were sentenced to the penitentiary. A gang of fifteen of them from Buchanan County, the Sheriff's 'guests' on a special car, gave vent to this yell at each railway station they passed between St. Joseph and Jefferson City, the other day: 'Two years—five years—we will stay; didn't like St. Joe anyway!'"

Frenchmen, with a fair knowledge of their language, but comparatively ignorant of the management of automobiles, are securing high-salaried positions as chauffeurs for rich Americans mainly owing to the fact that they are French. Although armed with excellent credentials, it has been discovered in several instances, that their ignorance of even the first principles of mechanics has resulted in damage to the machines before the imposition was discovered by their employers.

An American sojourner in the Philippines says in a recent letter to friends at home: "I want to go home. I want some washing done. To show you how bad, I send you under separate cover a handkerchief and collar just back from the laundry. Take the handkerchief out and bury it and save the collar as a souvenir. They don't pretend to get the dirt out of your clothes here. They take them down to the river, hard water and partly salt, soak them in, take them out, lay them on boards, and with stones beat them full of holes and pound the buttons off. Then they smooth them out with a plank."

An Open Door Secret.

The new consumption cure requires the patient to sleep out of doors, so as to give the other microbes a fair chance to kill off the tubercular variety.—Washington Times.