

The Word.

Today, whatever may annoy,
The word for me is Joy, just simple
Joy;
The joy of life;
The joy of children and of wife;
The joy of bright blue skies;
The joy of rain; the glad surprise
Of twinkling stars that shine at
night;
The joy of winged things upon their
flight;
The joy of noon-day, and the tried
True joyousness of eventide;
The joy of labor, and of mirth;
The joy of air, and sea, and earth—
The countless joys that ever flow
from Him
Whose vast beneficence doth dote
The lustrous light of day,
And lavish gifts divine upon our
way.

Whatever there be of Sorrow
I'll put it till Tomorrow,
And when Tomorrow comes, why
then
I'll be Today and Joy again!
John Kendrick Bangs, in the Atlantic
Monthly.

Which was the Coward

BY HELEN FORRESTER GRAVES,

"Don't you think he is handsome, Marguerita?"

"Handsomer? yes," Marguerita Lee answered, with a curve of her scarlet upper lip, "after an effeminate fashion. I like a man who has some manliness about him!"

"And do you mean to say that Sydney Delatour has not?"

Marguerita laughed, and only held her handsome head a little higher than usual.

"At all events," persisted her cousin Nina, "he loves you, Marguerita, and you ought not to treat him with such icy coldness. I am very much mistaken if he does not regard you with truer devotion than that felt by Gerald Markham."

"What an enthusiastic little advocate you are, Nina," said Marguerita. But your arguments will scarcely convince me. Were my two swains knights of old, you would soon see which would enter the field of combat most valiantly and do battle most bravely for the fair name of his lady-love!"

"Gerald Markham?"

Marguerita nodded, with a kindling cheek.

"And all this," said Nina, reproachfully, "because Mr. Delatour is slender and quiet, and rather pale, not gifted with a bragart tongue like Gerald Markham, nor given to laudation of his own exploits. Rita, I have no patience with you."

"Then let us change the subject," said Marguerita, with provoking calmness. "See how gloriously the sun is sinking in a perfect sea of golden vapor. And—can it be? Yes, that is Uncle Rudolph climbing the path from the depot. I did not expect he would be home until a later train than this!"

She sprang up from the rustic seat in which she had been reclining on the piazza, and went in to give the requisite orders to the maids concerning prompt refreshments, for Rudolph Lee was a strange, eccentric old man, who would permit not a single domestic in the house, wealthy as he was known to be, and scarcely tolerated the presence of his niece's visitors, Mr. Delatour and Gerald Markham.

"You are earlier than we expected, uncle," said Nina, running down the walk to meet him. "Let me relieve you of your parcels."

"No, child, no," said the old man, wearily, as he resisted her efforts to take from him the little leather bag he carried in his hand; "this mustn't go out of my possession. It's money, Nina."

"Money, uncle!"

"The five thousand dollars I drew out of the bank to invest tomorrow, child. Ponce & Redtape wanted to take charge of it, but I thought it would be safer in my own hands."

"Uncle, were you wise?"

"Of course I was," said the old man, pettishly. "What do women know about business? Let me have my supper directly, and then I'll find a snug place for the money until tomorrow morning."

And Uncle Ralph did not make his appearance that night again, preferring the quiet of his own apartment to the moonlit veranda where Mr. Markham and Sydney Delatour were sitting talking with his two nieces.

"I'm glad they're in the house, though," thought Uncle Ralph. "If anybody should have tracked me from the bank—although it is the most improbable thing in the world—it might be just as well to have somebody here besides helpless women and a feeble old man, who isn't much better. Of course, there is no sort of likelihood of danger, but it makes one feel safer."

Meanwhile cruel Marguerita was alternately torturing and encouraging the hearts of her two devoted cavaliers, and Nina, sitting quietly by, with her pure, transparent complexion, looking paler than ever in the moonlight, marveled to herself over the wonderful spell which beauty has power to exercise; while handsome Gerald Markham, conscious of his Apollo-like perfection of face and form, rattled carelessly on, and Mr. Delatour's low, calm voice sounded now and then.

"I don't half like that Markham,"

thought Nina, with the observant shrewdness which is often discovered in people who are unusually quiet. "I wish Marguerita would make up her mind to prefer Sydney Delatour."

"Yes," Marguerita's voice was saying at the same instant, "of all faults, I detest cowardice the most heartily—especially in a man."

"So do I," chimed in Markham. "A coward—fought! The creature has no right to exist."

"Is not timidity sometimes constitutional?" asked Delatour, "and in that case, should we judge it too severely?"

"Nonsense! nonsense!" cried Markham, arrogantly.

"A coward scarcely deserves the name of man," added Marguerita, with sparkling eyes.

"The question is, what is cowardice?" went on Delatour, musingly.

"A question, I think, which no brave man needs to ask," said Marguerita. "That is scarcely a fair argument," interposed Nina, smiling. "You are illogically, Marguerita."

"There can be no logic about such things," said the young beauty, impatiently. "Suppose we talk about something else?"

And she changed the subject with the pretty, imperious manner which no one cared to resist.

And all the time, lurking behind the shadows of the evergreen hedge there were unseen auditors of the careless conversation—auditors who would have made Marguerita's blood run chill and checked the gay current of her girlish chatter, could she but have caught the gleam of their watchful eyes or seen the expression of their brutish faces. For old Ralph Lee's sanguine confidence was misplaced. His exit from the bank had not been unnoticed, the leather bag in his hands had been carefully scrutinized, and his footsteps had been dogged all the way from Burydale, and the stealthy ruffians only waited a fitting season to possess themselves of the coveted treasure.

"He's only an old man, and there's no one but women about the house," one had assured the other.

"There is, too," Black Hill had sulkily answered. "There's two city chaps staying there."

"The deuce there is!" growled his companion. "Then we must take Jim Allen along with us, that's all. We shan't have no such chance again in a hurry. The old rat's gone to put it in a mortgage tomorrow—I heard him tell the cashier so."

"It's now or never," assented Black Hill, who was less verbosely inclined than his friend, Striped Charley, so called from two ghastly scars across his cheek.

The young people sat late on the veranda—so late that Black Hill swore oaths under his breath, and the patience of even Striped Charley began to wax slender. And finally, when they went in, and the lights one by one died out of the windows, it was necessary to wait until the senses of every member of the household should be lulled in slumber.

"It's cloudin' over," said Jim Allen, "and we're goin' to have rain. All the better for us. I do despise these ere palaverin' moonlight nights."

It seemed to Marguerita Lee and her cousin that they had been asleep for hours, when a maid came to their bedside, pale, and trembling so violently that she could hardly speak.

"Miss Marguerita! Miss Nina! there's some one workin' at the back dinin'-room windy! I heered it with my own ears, me and Jemima, and some one a whisperin' like!"

Marguerita sat up in bed, pushing her hair back from her forehead.

"Nina, they are after Uncle Ralph's money. We might have known it would be so."

But Nina did not stop for argument.

"Alicy," she said to the girl, "go and knock very softly at the young gentlemen's doors, and tell them what you have told us; I will rouse Uncle Ralph."

"Let me go, too," faltered Marguerita. "I dare not stay here alone."

"Be quick, then!" whispered Nina. And then the two cousins, hurrying on their wrappers, crept side by side to their uncle's room.

"Burglars? Oh, nonsense, Delatour! It's—it's only rats. Go back to bed, my good girl. It's only rats, I dare say, or the wind in the chimney."

Whether it was rats or the wind that made Mr. Markham's teeth chatter so violently might have been a mooted question.

"At all events," said Delatour's low firm tone, "we are the only men in the house, save Mr. Lee, who is old and infirm. It is at least our duty to ascertain whether or not the maid has any grounds for her terror. Come on Markham—he a man! Would you leave the women to themselves at such a time as this? Be a man, I say!"

"If it's burglars, they're always a determined lot!" stuttered Mr. Markham, suddenly changing his base. "Give 'em what they want and let 'em go. There's no use resistin' 'em, and makin' 'em savage."

"Markham, are you a man?" Delatour scornfully asked.

"You are a Quixotic idiot!" retorted the other. "We haven't any firearms; we—"

But Delatour, firmly clasping his arm, dragged him silently but forcibly along, and noiselessly unfastened the dining room door, just beyond the low French window which formed the scene of the villains' operation, they stood almost face to face with the three burglars.

A tremendous execration broke from Black Hill's lips at this unexpected reconitre.

Jim Allen rushed forward, pushing

the slide over his dark lantern as he did so.

"Back, or you are both dead men!" he exclaimed; and the click of a trigger sounded sharply and distinctly.

"Back yourselves, scoundrels!" echoed the voice of Delatour, clear and undaunted, as he wrestled with the foremost of the three.

"I say, Delatour, this is very foolish," faltered Markham. "We can't attempt to resist these men. Give 'em the money—what is the money to our lives? They will come in."

"They must have the satisfaction of walking over my dead body first!" muttered Delatour between his clenched teeth, as he still struggled fiercely with his opponent; and a strange thrill ran through Marguerita Lee's veins, as she heard the brave words, so bravely spoken.

A sudden flash through the pitchy darkness—the report of a revolver—and Jim Allen fell back, with the cry of a baffled wild beast.

"You said there were no firearms, Bill," he muttered, with an oath. "I'm winged."

The second shot, following almost instantaneously, filled the assailants with vague terror and panic. Were there others in the house whose presence they had not calculated upon? "It's no go, Bill," whispered Charley. "Let's cut, Jim's hurt, and there ain't no use tryin' longer."

But Mr. Sydney Delatour had no idea of thus easily allowing a retreat in good order, and although Bill and Striped Charley escaped, Jim Allen was left a most unwilling hostage. And when Uncle Ralph, whose pistol from the second-story window had caused such a timely diversion, descended, he found the huge burglar lying on the dining-room floor, safely secured by bonds improvised out of the curtain tassels and cords.

"You're as strong as Samson, for all you look so slim," growled the burglar, with a sort of unwilling homage to his captor. "My eye, but you gripped hold of a fellow like you was made of iron."

"My boy," said Uncle Ralph, earnestly, squeezing Sydney Delatour's hand, "it is to you that we owe our protection, perhaps our safety, tonight. As for Markham—"

"I—I did the best I could," faltered that doughty knight.

"You're a cowardly sneak!" enunciated the old man, and Marguerita's glance of silent scorn confirmed the unpleasant import of her uncle's words.

"What did I tell you, Rita?" triumphantly whispered Nina in her cousin's ear. "Who is the craven knight now, and who the recreant slave?"

"I shall thank Sydney for myself," was the low-uttered reply.

She did—and she did it so earnestly that Mr. Delatour took courage on the spot to ask her to be his wife. And Marguerita said "Yes."

Jim Allen, being duly tried and convicted was sent to prison, but for that other burglary—Mr. Delatour's cool theft of Miss Marguerita's heart—there was no penalty, the law not regarding it, possibly, as a punishable offense.—From the New York Weekly.



With the Funny Fellows

Jim,
I know a certain clerk
Named Jim,
He ain't in love with work
Not him.

No matter what may be the task,
"Is this my work?" he'll always ask

When told to make a case
Or such,
Does Jim for lumber race?
Not much.

At such a time he's always said:
"You oughter call on Bob or Fred."

Jim to his same old job
Seems wed.

The boss advanced both Bob
And Fred.

But Jim's chance looks a trifle slim;
He says the boss is down on him
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

NOT TRUSTING TO ANOTHER.

Swedish Servant (who has just received a tip)—"Ay tank you, sir."

Bibulous Guest—"No, you won't. Just show me where it is and I'll do my own tanking."—Baltimore American.

HE WAS NOT.

The poet had just recited his best contribution to the field of literature.

"Do you compose on a typewriter or with a pencil?" asked an interested listener.

"When writing anything I deem worthy of consideration, I first use a pencil in setting down my thoughts," replied the poet.

"Yes, and did you use a typewriter or a pencil in writing the piece you have just recited?"

Question: Was the poet pleased with the interrogation?

Answer: Does a rolling stone harvest any moss?—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

AT JAMESTOWN.

A newly-married couple was taking in the Jamestown Exposition.

"There's our biggest man-of-war, dear," said the husband, pointing to one of the vessels in the harbor.

Just then a little tug was seen puffing around the big ship.

"And is the little one a tug-of-war, Tom?" asked the wife.—Success Magazine.

AN OBSERVATION.

"Do you think there are any great orators left?"

"Yes," answered Senator Sorghum. "My observation is that great orators are nearly always left."—Washington Star.

JUST BEFORE THE FIGHT.

Grad (entering the Alhambra) to old Farmer—"Hey, you; can we borrow your horse and wagon outside?"

Farmer—"No, dum ye, ye can't."

Grad—"You're a liar. We have."

—Cornell Widow.

BAD NEWS.

"How are you, Mr. Myers, this inclement weather?"

"Just managing to keep out of the undertaker's hands."

"Oh, I am sorry to hear that!"—Southwestern Presbyterian.

WHEN IT BECAME PERSONAL.

Mrs. Vick-Senn—"I had ever so many chances to marry somebody that amounted to something, and I threw myself away on you!"

Her husband (unexpectedly spunking up)—"In my case it was quite different, madam. You were absolutely the last resort. Every other girl had refused me."—Chicago Tribune.

PERSONAL REASONS.

"So you have put a mortgage on the farm?"

"Yes," answered Farmer Cortosel.

"I didn't know you needed money?"

"I didn't. I put that mortgage on so's to have the satisfaction of knowin' the farm was still good for a loan, jes the same as I got my life insured for the comfort of having the doctor tell me I was healthy enough to pass the examination."—Washington Star.

NO MONEY ADVANCED.

"For 2 cents I'd knock your block off," said the angry man.

"Well, you don't expect me to furnish your working capital, do you?" responded the other and calmer one.—Philadelphia Ledger.

WORKING UP AN ATMOSPHERE.

"Mercy on us, man! Three stoves and all red hot? You'll burn to death!"

"Can't help it. Just got a December order for a summer magazine poem!"—Atlanta Constitution.

NO KIDS WANTED.

Sunday School Teacher—Now, children, who was Herod?

Chorus—He was a man wot wanted ter get rid of all de children.

S. S. Teacher—Yes, but what was he?

Youthful voice—I guess he wuz de landlord of a flat.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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CORNER IN WILD PEPPER.

Evidently Americans were hustlers and strategists of commerce from the beginning. For witness a good story of fact as told by Ralph D. Paine, in The Outing Magazine, under the title of "Pioneers in Distant Seas."

"In 1793, Captain Jonathan Carnes, of Salem, was looking for trade along the Sumatra coast. Touching at the port of Bencoolen, he happened to learn that wild pepper might be found along the northwest coast of Sumatra. The Dutch East India Company was not as alert as this solitary Yankee shipmaster, roaming along strange and hostile coasts.

"Captain Carnes kept his knowledge to himself, completed his voyage to Salem, and there whispered it to a merchant, Jonathan Peete, that as soon as possible a secret expedition should be fitted out. Mr. Peete ordered a fast schooner built. She was called the Rajah, and carried four guns and ten men. There was much gossiping speculation about her destination, but Captain Carnes had nothing at all to say. In November, 1795, he cleared for Sumatra and not a soul in Salem except his owner and himself knew whither he was bound. Her cargo consisted of brandy, gin, iron, tobacco and dried fish to be bartered for wild pepper.

"For eighteen months no word returned from the Rajah, and her mysterious quest. Captain Carnes might have been wrecked on coasts whereof he had no chart, or he might have been slain by hostile natives. But Jonathan Peete, having risked his stake as Salem merchants were wont to do, busied himself with other affairs and pinned his faith to the proven sagacity and pluck of Jonathan Carnes.

"At last, a string of signal flags fluttered from a station at the harbor mouth. Jonathan Peete reached for his spy-glass, and saw a schooner's topsails lifting from seaward. The Rajah had come home, and when she let go her anchor in Salem harbor, Captain Jonathan Carnes brought word ashore that he had secured a cargo of wild pepper in bulk which would return a profit of at least 700 per cent. on the total cost of the vessel and voyage.

"In other words, this one 'adventure' of the Rajah realized what amounted to a comfortable fortune in that generation.

"There was great excitement among the other Salem merchants. They forsook their decks to discuss this pepper bonanza, but Captain Jonathan Carnes had nothing to say and Mr. Jonathan Peete was as dumb as a Salem harbor clam. The Rajah was at once refitted for a second Sumatra voyage, and in their eagerness to fathom her dazzling secret, several rival merchants hastily made vessels ready for sea with orders to go to that coast as fast as canvas could carry them and endeavor to find out where Captain Carnes found his wild pepper. They hurried to Bencoolen, but were unsuccessful, and had to proceed to India to fill their holds with whatever cargoes came to hand. Meanwhile the Rajah slipped away for a second pepper voyage, and returned with a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of the precious commodity."

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