Long, Long Ago.

Hark! 'tis the ring of the merry sleigh bells!
Over the hills and down through the dells,
With the speed of the hind or the bounding deer,
Onward they go, with a ringing cheer—
Where the light falls whitest,
Where the stars shine brightest,
Where the snow lies clearest,
Where the frost bites keenest,
Over the hills and down through the dells,
List to the ringing of the tinkling bells!

See where the flash of the glittering steel
Follows the track of the coursing heel,
On rivers of glass, in the dancing light,
Where eyes of lovers are sparkling bright;
Where the ice grows strongest,
Where the moon stays longest,
Where the hearts beat lightest,
Where the eyes shine brightest;
There is the track of the coursing heel
Lit by the flash of the burnished steel!

I hear them again, as the years go past,
Blithesome and gay in the winter's blast;
The clattering footsteps come and go,
With a swift, light tread on the glist'ning snow;
Where the heart is boldest,
Where the love is oldest,
Where the faith is newest,
Where the trust is truest,
They come again, in the wintry blast,
And sing of days—the days that are past.

And the white cottage down under the hill,
The light in the window guiding still;
As I turn me back from the giddy whirl,
To stop and look for a shining curl;
Where the throng is thickest,
Where the heart beats quickest,
Where the love holds strongest,
Where the days seem longest—
Ah! never again, as guide to me,
Will flashing light in that window be!

—*Philadelphia Inquirer.*

THE BEST OF IT.

"CEDAR, June 15.

"DEAR PHIL—When are you coming? Cedar is in full feather. Picnics set in to-morrow; strawberries just right; two delightful widows; lots of girls; and the whole house crying for you. Come along by return mail. I meant to say the picnic was day after to-morrow. I shall be at the late train to-morrow.

"Yours, as usual, HARRY."

Philip Norton laughed as he read this letter. It was so like Harry Clarke—"Hal Headlong," his father used to call him—the brightest, handsomest, gayest fellow of his class at Yale, now a country doctor at Cedar, a town in the western part of New England. Having lost all his property by rash speculation, except his wife's farm at Cedar, which her father left her, the elder Mr. Clarke went there to live, and one of the local physicians being near death with old age, Harry thought it a good place to begin what he called his "medicinal career," being a young man who had no reverence for the English language, but made light of it, and used it in his own way as another outlet for the overflowing fun of his nature.

Philip Norton had been his chum at college, and his friend ever since. He was of graver nature, and had gone into the ministry. With the gifts of keen intellect, ready language and good looks, he found life easy enough, and his first parish was in New York, where, in a first-class boarding-house, he did not seem so much a modern apostle as a very lucky man. But good fortune could not spoil his earnest and truthful character. He preached as sharply to his flock of sinners as if he had five hundred a year instead of five thousand, and did as much hard work among the city outcasts as if he headed a mission to the Digger Indians, and lived in a shanty instead of Madam Ralston's elaborate establishment.

He had just recovered from a severe attack of typhoid fever, consequent on some of these excursions into the dark places of the earth, when Harry's letter came, and was glad enough to accept his invitation. There were only three children in the Clarke family besides Harry—twin girls of twelve and a younger boy—and they all loved Philip as well as if they were his brother and sisters instead of his friends. There is something in a sudden journey of pleasure that is inspiriting, and when Mr. Norton left the train at Cedar he felt stronger and better, in spite of the long day's ride, than for many weeks, and the next morning declared himself quite ready for the picnic, though Mrs. Clarke, a motherly soul, always devoted to her "other boy," scolded him well for the idea. But being a persistent man, he went his way, and by ten o'clock had joined a gay party in the car they had chartered for the day and attached at Cedar station to the train going to Patton, a little village above whose quite street towered Gray Mountain, their place of destination. The day was a "day in June," fair as ever poet celebrated. There were fifty pleasant people—pleasant for a picnic, that is—and Philip was put in charge of a Mrs. Boyd.

"One of the widows," Harry whispered in his ear; a very bright, agreeable woman, with a pleasant face, dressed neatly enough in brown holland and a black hat—a costume adapted to the occasion, but not becoming. She was evidently not vain. A few seats before them sat a beautiful young woman, daintily dressed, though evidently she considered herself in mourning; but the shower of soft, fair curls that drooped from the back of her head, the sparkling ornaments of cut jet, the rings on her little white hands of pearl and diamond and onyx, all seemed out of keeping with the crape on her dress and hat; and when that coquettishly-looped head-gear was laid aside, a triangle of crape, with the conventional widow's ruche about it, pinned on with diamond and onyx pins, looked a real absurdity, and every woman in the car laughed at Nan Boyd's attempt to assert her widowhood; for this was the other of the two widows. Yet if she was a little absurd, who cared? When one's skin is tinted with the warm glow of pink apple blossoms, with lips scarlet as fresh strawberries, great clear blue eyes, delicate features, teeth of pearl, and abundant gilded-flax hair falling everywhere in long loose curls, what does it matter what one wears! Nan Boyd would have been lovely in brown holland and a cheap black hat, though her cousin and sister-in-law was not.

Nobody had ever supposed the Reverend Philip Norton was susceptible. He had never given a tenderer glance to any lovely girl in his congregation than to the old woman who swept the crossing before his church; but he fell in love like a schoolboy during the next six hours with Nan Boyd. Courtesy obliged him to attend to the lady placed in his care, and the obligation was not disagreeable. She was natural, intelligent, kindly, with an artist's eye for the wonderful scenery about them, and moreover a generous woman; for when Philip asked her, as carelessly as he could put a question that thrilled his lips, who the beauty before them was, she answered, quickly:

"My cousin and sister-in-law—another Mrs. Boyd. Isn't she lovely? I like to look at her as I do at a flower: she is so exquisite."

Mr. Norton assented gravely, and turned the conversation. His head whirled, his eyes wandered; he could not talk with any sort of fluency; he was bewitched by the pretty widow. She, however, had her own court to hold. Butterflies never fluttered more thickly about the gay weed that bears their name than the gentlemen of the party about Nan Boyd; for, to tell the truth, this lovely creature was a native coquette. It was as much a matter of course for her to flirt with every man who came near her as it is for a rose to be fragrant; and she had that charm, subtler than beauty, which is potent without but irresistible with it.

It was a proverb in Cedar that no youth ever grew to manhood there who had not adored Nan Boyd. Her cousin Anne was very different. She had come to Cedar on a visit when Nan at last made up her mind to select Will Boyd as a permanent victim from the crowd about her, and she found her own fate in Will's twin-brother James. The cousins, however, were not married at the same time. Anne could not leave her father, for her mother had died just after her return from Cedar; but before many months her father went too, and there was a very quiet wedding at her lonely home, and a brief journey back to Cedar, where Nan, already a six months' wife, was ready to welcome them. Anne Boyd found too late that she had made a mistake. She could not be happy with her husband. He was ungracious—harsh, indeed—though he had seemed to her only reserved and fastidious; selfish, penurious, at times ill-tempered. When he died, a year after their marriage, and from the curious physical sympathy common with twins, Will died too, neither of the widows was heartbroken—Nan from pure levity of nature, Anne from no sense of loss, but rather of relief. Since they both lived at Cedar, there had been much confusion of names between them, Anne Boyds both; but Will's widow was always called Nan by her old friends; and bearing her grandmother's full name of Anne Hart, while her cousin was Anne alone, there was a way of escape for those who were well informed; the others took their chance.

As the lovely summer days went on, and Philip Norton was involved more and more in the simple gayeties of Cedar, whose inhabitants consoled themselves for their long cold winters with plenty of out-door life and enjoyment in the brief summer months, he became more and more bewitched with Nan Boyd. Her beauty stood the test of sun and air, heat, fatigue and daily observation; it was as genuine and real as the roseate splendor of the mountain laurel, whose pink bells illustrated and illuminated every hill about the village, and shone with a light like dawn through the edges of the dark woods.

Then she was graceful, genial, kind; always ready to get up or to join a party of pleasure; willing to sing if singing was wanted; to make wreaths for other girls—wreaths she could not wear, for the sake of that typical triangle; she never seemed tired, dull, or ill-dressed; in short, Mr. Norton believed her a real angel, and threw all the strength of his honest, deep nature into his passion for this lovely little creature. An unprejudiced observer—of course a woman—might have decried the sharp thin voice, the shallow laugh, the *naïve* selfishness, of this angel, and suspected that this gay blossom would show no adequate fruit when its petals fell; but Philip Norton had no such slanderous thought in his heart. Such external charm was to him only the expression of inward beauty. Experience might have taught him better, but he was not just now amenable to experience—he was in love. He liked Mrs. Anne Boyd much; as he became better acquainted with her, her really sweet and fine character had its effect on him, and he enjoyed an hour's conversation with her—when Nan was not at hand—thoroughly. She was one of those people who have that rare charm, a delicate and melodious voice, with wonderful command of language, and being withal perceptive, highminded and of deep feeling, she was a most fascinating companion even to a man in love. Harry Clarke, too, was devoted to Nan Boyd. He had been a childish lover of hers during his youthful visits to his grandfather's farm at Cedar, and now the first love seemed to have re-awakened. He was at her side everywhere, and if his professional life had been anything but that of a beginner, his practice would have suffered; as it was, his rivals suffered instead, for either out of the familiarity of old friendship or the mere caprice of her disposition, Nan chose to parade Harry as her cavalier more and more frequently.

Philip Norton was plunged in despair by this state of things; he could not in honor or decency come forward as a rival to his best friend in that friend's house; his affection for Harry, his sense of the proprieties, all forbade his expressing in any way his passion for this enchantress. He kept away from her charmed circle as far as possible; he talked much to Mrs. Annie Boyd, because she was Nan's cousin. It is well to be near the rose if you are not a rose yourself, for there is at least the neighborhood of its bloom and perfume to attract adorers. Still, he plunged daily further and further into this gulf of bitter-sweet passion, till one moonlight night his mind was set at rest concerning Harry. They sat on the steps of the south door, tired with a long day's drive to Bashbish and back, and the two little girls were hanging about them, anxious to hear some report of the day's enjoyment, for to them a picnic of grown people was an unattained paradise. There had been much whispering between Ruth and Rachel for a few moments; but at last Ruth took courage, and looking up shyly at her brother's face, spoke out: "Hal, dear, *are* you going to be married?"

"I hope so, ma'am, at some period of my existence," he answered, gravely.

"Oh, I don't mean that! Are you going to, pretty soon?"

"Not this week, Miss Inquisitor."

"Hal, you're an awful tease—there!" burst in Rachel, out of patience.

"My dear girls, in the words of the lamented Artemus, 'Why is this thus?' What has got into your small heads in that vacant place nature intended for brains?"

"Why, Jack said Tom Green told him you were certain sure going to be married right away to Mrs. Nan Boyd."

"Not much!" ejaculated Harry.

"Oh, Hal, that's slang!"

"Well, what if it is? Slang is the language of the coming man; slang is universal word-painting; slang—but I wander from the subject. Listen, listen, ladies gay, and I will point a moral and adorn a tale for your infant minds. I fell in love over head and ears and the top of my tallest hair with Nan Boyd when I was twelve years old and she was ten. I spent my little all in candy and peanuts for her sweet sake; I wrote her a valentine, and made her a string of bird's eggs three feet long—a rosary o despair to the gentle birds I robbed; I paid for a tin-type of her sweet face with my last copper and a jackknife that I loved like a brother; but she refused me after all, though I implored her to elope with me in the milk wagon. Lo, as the Yorkshire man said, only t'other end first, 'She wouldn't have he, d'ye see? for why now, he won't have she!' The moral of all which is, Rachel, don't snub Tom Green too much now, lest he should turn and rend you by-and-by."

"I hate Tom Green," retorted Rachel.

Harry laughed. But Philip Norton could not speak; he fairly trembled with a relief of mind almost painful in its intensity. Harry did not notice his silence, and Ruth went on:

"But I should think you would want to marry her, Harry. She is awful pretty."

"Oh, Toot! 'awful pretty!' and you talk to me about slang! My dear, your glass house will become fragmentary in about five minutes if you go on."

"Don't you like her, Harry?" asked Rachel, always direct.

"Yes, miss, I like her, but I don't wan't to marry her."

"Don't people ever marry people when they don't wan't to?" said Ruth.

"Perhaps they do, ma'am, but I don't consider that I am people. By Jove! I'd rather spin ropes out of sea-sand than tie myself up that way. Ask the minister here if he don't agree with me."

Philip roused himself from his dream at the appeal, but the question had to be repeated.

"I'd rather do anything else, Miss Ruth."

"But what if you'd got married by mistake, just as those people did in the newspapers, for fun—but really they were married—what would you do?" asked Rachel, persistently.

"Make the best of it," laconically answered Philip.

"Bad is the best of such a mistake, Phil. Are there no divorce courts, my friend and pitcher?"

Philip's face darkened. "Not for me. If I had married Hecate 'by mistake,' as Rachel says, I would try and make the best of her. Anything rather than divorce; that is unchristian and unmanly both."

"Good for you, parson! You haven't forgotten your old trick of accepting the position. 'Make the best of it,' was the theme of this distinguished gentleman's valedictory address, my dears, on that glorious day when he became the proud possessor of a sheepskin, like the immortal Brian O'Lynn, only the woolly side was out; he pulled that over the professor's eyes, and thereby got all the honors, while my modest worth went unrewarded."

Here the gate swung open, just in time to prevent further burst of Harry's eloquence, and a boy with a telegram came up to them. It was for Philip. One of his most valued friends and supporters in the church was dying, after a brief illness: he must see Mr. Norton. There was no delay possible, and in the morning, very early, Philip went, leaving such adieus as he could for Harry to deliver, and carrying with him a triumphant sense that neither honor nor honesty need seal his lips now; he could tell Nan Boyd the love that possessed and consumed him, and surely so stringent a passion must compel return.

But he found his friend in the very agonies of death; and in the atmosphere of grief and pain that surrounded him, after the solemnity of death, in the care and help of the forlorn family, and the services of burial, more than a week passed away before he could write the important letter, and when it was once gone his courage failed, suspense racked and tortured him, he could not eat or sleep, and on the fourth day he sat before the beginning of his sermon totally unable to get further than the first sentence, waiting feverishly for the letter to bring him life or death. But the message was merciful; a sweeter letter, to his thought, was never written; modest, reticent, yet with a tone of deep feeling, it promised to the heart far more than it said to the eye, and put him into a state of grateful rapture that crept into the delayed sermon, and made a sensation in the parish when that precarious discourse was at length finished and delivered. For a few weeks frequent letters were exchanged, but, at the lady's request, nothing was said of any fixed engagement; she wished, she said, to know a little better the man to whom her future life must be bound. Philip had heard that Will Boyd had not been altogether devoted to his wife, and appreciated at once the sense and delicacy of her reserved expression of feeling in the matter. In September he received a brief note, following a long letter, to say that she and her cousin had both been called to California to a sister-in-law's hurried wedding. Dr. Clarke was to go with them as escort and groomsman to his old friend Dr. Eldridge, and Nan wished Mr. Norton to know that they were going—would be gone when the note reached him—in order to account for his own letters being unanswered for their brief stay in San Francisco would not permit the mails to be useful to them. It seemed as if fate sported with poor Philip, for not two days passed before he, too, received a summons to travel directly the other way; his only relative, an aunt in Europe, was seized with severe illness, and telegraphed for him at once. He sailed by the next steamer, and found Mrs. Warne at the point of death; but the pleasure of seeing her nephew seemed to rouse her and waken her vitality; she grew a little better week after week, but was sent southward as she recovered, and at last to Egypt. It was May before Mr. Norton brought her back to New York; but by this time it had been agreed in the few letters that had been received by him in his constant transit from one place to another, that without any formal announcement of engagement, Nan should be ready to marry him at once on his return. So having previously telegraphed her, he arrived in Cedar the last of May, late in the afternoon, and instead of going to Mr. Clarke's, went to the little hotel, and as soon as might be betook himself to Mrs. Boyd's house.

He stood a moment after being shown into the parlor, his heart wildly throbbing with hope and agitation, when the door opened and in walked Mrs. Anne Boyd. She glided up to him with a face so full of blushing emotion, he thought she came to congratulate him, and with the abounding affection engaged people have for all their relatives in prospect, he stooped and kissed her fresh, sweet lips.

"How did you know where to find me?" she said, blushing. "I forgot to tell you in my letter that I had been living here the past year. When Nan was married she left me in charge."

"Married!—Nan!" echoed the gentleman, aghast.

"Oh, you must have missed the letter I sent to Nice telling you all about it. She married an Englisman, living now in Boston, and they went abroad to see his friends."

The truth flashed on him like a stroke of lightning: it was Anne with whom he had corresponded; Anne to whom he was engaged; Anne he was expected to marry. Nan was lost to him forever. He turned very pale, and reached his hand toward the table for support. Anne thought he was faint; with tender haste she pushed a chair toward him, gently put him into it, and poured a few drops of cologne from a flask on the table on his head; the fresh, delicate perfume made him shudder for years afterward. He saw in one glance the position before him; one life must be ruined, his or hers. The moment that passed over him, as he leaned back, sick and faint, conscious that Annie's eyes were fixed on him anxiously, was long as some placid lifetimes. Thanks to a constant habit of self-control, the dizzy whirl of emotion was conquered quickly; the color returned to his face; he said to himself that the life already wasted could find no help in destroying another. Annie was innocent of any intent to harm him; she was a woman, too; both as a man and a Christian minister it was his duty to protect and honor her. He looked up quickly and smiled.

"Excuse me, dear," he said, hoarsely. "I was very tired."

He told the truth and no more. Had he been capable of deceit, Anne's honest nature would have detected it; but of an untruth he was incapable; and now, as he sat beside her, and his mind returned to its own balance, he involuntarily began to weigh the possible ameliorations of his dreadful mistake. He could not marry Nan now; she was hopelessly beyond his reach. One factor of the problem was forever set aside, and that the greatest. Then he recalled the letters that he had received from Anne, what fine and lovely traits of character they disclosed. Here his head began to whirl again; for it seemed impossible to separate the vision of Nan he had built up on that very foundation from the reality which belonged to Anne. Nan would have thought his love-making cold indeed; but Anne was shy and reticent herself. She could feel, and feel deeply; but she could not be demonstrative, and she dreaded demonstration in others. It was quite in accordance with her nature that, after a long, quiet evening of conversation, Mr. Norton should part from her with one grave kiss on her forehead. Nan would have clung about his neck, and put her peach face up to his for caresses, as a flower seeks the sun. He knew how it would have been, and for one mad moment sickened with thwarted passion; but Annie never saw it. She trusted him implicitly, and after her pure prayers fell asleep, like a happy child and dreamed of him and her future. But what a night awaited him! Sleep fled far away. He had in her presence been able to preserve calmness at least, and resolved to accept the situation; but when he was alone, all the past came back on him like an armed man. It was a night never to be forgotten. In the morning he went to Mr. Clark's and told them of his engagement, and asked them to the quiet wedding next day. They were all surprised, and congratulated him with such warmth and sincerity, lavished such love and praise on Anne, that he felt almost guilty in accepting the pleasant words, conscious how little they delighted him. Harry, as soon as they were alone, proceeded to enlarge on Anne's charms.

"To tell you the truth, old fellow, I have been mightily smitten with that lady myself; but she has behaved like a lay nun the past year. I couldn't understand it. Somehow or other I got it into my head you were sweet on Nan. I even went so far as to feel sorry for you when she married Dalrymple—what a waste of the raw material!—and all the time you were cutting me out with Anne. You had not heard of that marriage till Anne told you. It was a nine days' wonder here; he is fat, fifty, and rich as Crœsus; that was his charm. Ducats, my lord, ducats! Nan loves a shining mark; she inherits old Madam Hart's tastes as well as her name, only the madam loved to save, and Anne to spend."

Here it flashed across Philip that his letters had all been mistakenly addressed. Nan was Anne Hart Boyd, and he had thought the initial belonged to Anne. From the very first those letters had gone wrong, and in his own dislike of nicknames he had never used hers, but called her Annie always—a tender softening of the monosyllable that seemed to express more than the cold stiff name. The day after, the wedding was celebrated. Very quietly and simply Philip Norton and Anne Boyd were made one. He could not help owning that the soft folds of dark rich silk, illuminated with fresh white roses on her breast and in her hair, the warm color on lip and cheek, the soft hazel eyes, dark and clear as the brown water of a forest brook, and the expression of deep emotion on her face, made her a very attractive bride; but even at the altar a glimpse of blue, bewildering eyes, floating gold-lit hair, ineffable witchery and sweetness, seemed to dazzle his eyes and constrict his heart, but he repelled the dream sternly, and it fled.

Had Anne been more selfish and Philip less strong and sensible, here now was place and room for a real domestic tragedy, of all tragedies most vital and least dramatic; but each began the new life in devotion to the other, one from love, one from duty. But if it was Anne who kissed and Philip who bent the cheek, was she less happy? The giver is more blessed in all things; and in time Philip learned to love Anne as fully as her heart could ask. He was mightily assisted, no doubt, by the career of Mrs. Dalrymple, who soon returned to America, and asserted herself, in the right of beauty and money both, as a queen of society. She did not pretend to care for the stout, stupid, brusque man of business who supplied her purse, but ran a wild course of folly and fashion year after year, as only a loveless and childless woman can. Ten years after his marriage Philip met her, faded, rouged, overdressed; her laugh false and hollow, her smile forced, the childish ringlets waving in soft mockery about the worn face, and even her smile mechanical. His heart reverted with a glad leap to the wife he had left at home, a calm, sweet-faced, gracious woman, with lovely children clinging about her, the color of health and happiness richly glowing on her cheek, and the love and admiration of all who knew her making a halo about her noble character. He owned to that remorseless inquisitor, his own heart, that he had indeed made the best of it in a fuller sense than the poor allowance of the proverb, that Anne was as far beyond Nan as the star beyond the clod, and that the true failure of his life would have been the result of the success he had longed for and missed. Yet all his life he hated the smell of German cologne.—*Harper's Bazar.*

Trials of a Telegraph Operator.

New telegraph operators have to undergo a reception which borders on the treatment known to college freshmen as hazing. The *Operator* thus describes it: The new man walks into an office full of strange faces—not a friendly hand to shake—with nothing to recommend him but his ability as an operator and his implicit confidence in that ability for his only encouragement. He approaches the manager's desk, and after five or ten minutes the manager condescends to glance upward, and, in a tone full of thunder, bluntly inquires: "Well, sir, what is it?" The "freshman" states his business, and the manager proposes to give him a trial. Accordingly he is assigned to an instrument and told that he is to "receive a special." His feelings at this juncture are about the same as those supposed to be experienced by a man who is about to be hanged. Nervously grasping the pen, he begins to copy. The perspiration trickles down his hand, which makes that member adhere to the blank; his pen sticks fast, the ink is the thickest ever encountered, and there is nothing left for him but to break. Casting a guilty glance about him to see if any one is looking, he reaches for the key and explains to the sender that he is a new man—"please take it steady;" but this only makes matters worse. The sender begins to "whoop 'em up," and as the cold chills run down his spinal column the "freshman's" pen indites characters upon the blank resembling the Chinese hieroglyphics on a tea-box. This torture usually occupies about half an hour, when the welcome "n. m." (no more) falls soothingly upon his ear. He breathes a sigh of relief and looks about him. Behind him stand half-a-dozen operators with grinning countenances. In a moment light begins to dawn upon the "freshman"—he is the victim of a joke. A glance in another direction discloses the fact that the most rapid sender in the office had been transmitting to him from the columns of a daily paper for the amusement of the "boys." If he accepts the situation as a joke, he is initiated; but if he becomes angered, he is still a "freshman."

Romantic Meeting of Father and Son.

Who says that the days of romance are ended needs to read the strange history of a Scottish plowman who has returned to his native heath after a long exile. Twenty years ago a farmer in Orkney hired a young man to do farmwork. The plowman touched the fancy of his master's daughter, and the result was that in a runaway fashion, and in opposition to the will of the patriarchal farmer, the two became man and wife. The old gentleman was furious, and turned his back determinedly on his son-in-law. The young plowman kissed his wife, left her in her father's arms and sailed for Australia, whence he soon ceased to write. His wife became a mother, and remained in a state of such wretched suspense that her father began to repent of the treatment to which he had subjected her husband. Efforts were then made to trace the whereabouts of the latter by means of advertising in colonial papers and otherwise, but all to no purpose. He had gone to America. Years passed. The grandson grew up to manhood, and, not liking farmwork, bade adieu to Orkney, took ship last year to the United States, and after some knocking about found employment in a mercantile house in Illinois. In the course of business he discovered that the gentleman at the head of the firm was a native of Scotland, hailing, indeed, from the same district as himself. Occasional meetings led to more minute inquiries as to dates, names of places, persons and the like in the old country, and after being six months in the establishment the youth found—however wonderful it may appear—that he was actually serving as a clerk with no other than his own father! The effect of this discovery on both may be left to the imagination of the reader. Father and son are now in Scotland. The man who went away a penniless plowboy, but returns rich, has been welcomed with much emotion by his venerable father-in-law, who is still hale and hearty, as well as by the wife whom he left many years ago in her youth and beauty, but who is now a middle-aged matron.

How to Clean Carpets.

If the carpet is to be taken up and beaten, the job had better be intrusted to some man who makes it his business. If this cannot be done, lay it on the grass or hang it on a clothesline and beat it on the wrong side with canes, taking care that the canes have no sharp points; then spread the carpet out and sweep well on the right side. There is more art in sweeping a carpet than a novice is apt to suppose. An old broom should never be used, and a new one should be kept especially for the carpets. With Brussels and velvet carpeting there are two ways to the pile—just as in velvet—and they should always be swept with the pile. If a carpet is swept against the grain, it soon looks rough and scratched up. After being swept and laid down on the floor, the carpet should be wiped. Have two pails, one of clean soapsuds, the other with lukewarm water, a clean flannel cloth and two coarse, clean towels. Take the carpet by breadths, wring the flannel out of the lukewarm water and hold it so that you can turn and use it up and down three or four times on the same place. Rub both with and against the grain as hard as if you were scrubbing the floor, then throw the flannel into your soapsuds and rub the carpet dry with one of your dry towels. If you leave the carpet wet, the dust will stick to it and it will smell sour and musty. Wash your flannel clean in the soapsuds, wring it out of the warm water and proceed as before. If the carpet is very dirty or has much green in it, use fresh oxgall in the lukewarm water, in the proportion of a quart of gall to three quarts of water, and rub the carpet dry, as already directed. This rubbing a carpet raises the pile and freshens the colors.—*Philadelphia Times.*

If you find a burglar on your premises under the sofa, don't trouble him. He is already under a rest

A Milliner-Senator.

"I made a surprising discovery the other day."

This was the remark made by a business man, a new arrival in the community, to a reporter for the *Tribune*. Ripe for anything calculated to disturb the stifling serenity of local affairs, the intelligent news collector was moved to ask, "How so?"

"Take a seat and I will tell you," and thereupon the merchant who, by the way, is a New Yorker, proceeded as follows:

"I ran away from home when I was fifteen years old. Thought I was restrained at home and needed more scope. I was living near Hornellsville, N. Y.; and on my first launch for freedom reached Adrian, Mich., a then quite remote city. This was in 1851, I believe. I roamed around the town for two or three days before I found anything to do. Finally, one afternoon, without the least idea that anything would come of it, I dropped into a little store—a sort of ladies' furnishing store; that is, the stock consisted of collars and cuffs and lace and neckties and thread and yarn and all such little truck. The store was a small affair—hardly eight feet wide by perhaps fifteen feet deep. I walked in and accosted a small, thin, white-haired and fair-complexioned young man, with an application for employment. I must admit that the proprietor—for the young man was the proprietor—did not seem to care much whether I went to work for him or not. But after a little talk, mostly on my part, I was 'engaged' at $3 per week, with the privilege of sleeping in the store."

Something in the expression of the reporter's face suggested to the narrator to say that "the point of the story was to come." So the yarn was continued:

"My proprietor did not do a very heavy business, and did not seem to care much either. He belonged to some secret society or other, and was constantly called upon by brother members. On these occasions the proceedings were quite mysterious, and a little sort of a wash-room in the back part of the store was used for consultations. My 'boss' seemed to be the head ring-master of the concern, and, though his store was a small affair, I noticed that the leading men of the city sought his guidance. He paid little attention to the customers—I had most of the 'waiting on' to do, and nearly all day when not engaged in those—to me—singular conferences, my employer would stand in the middle of the store thinking, thinking, thinking, while he kept constantly rapping his front teeth with a pencil. He was troubled a great deal with pain in his back, and complained of an affliction of the kidneys. I had only been with the pale-faced young man a few months when I was prevailed upon to return home, and never gave my casual employer at Adrian a thought till within the past few days. The other evening at the hotel I was glancing over the advertising columns of the *Tribune*, when among the bank advertisements I noticed the name of Jerome B. Chaffee. It jingled familarly in my mind. Where had I seen or heard that name before? I could not help its running through my head. All at once it came to me. Jerome B. Chaffee was the name of the young fellow I worked for in Adrian, Mich., so long ago. I could hardly believe that my old Michigan employer and the noted bank president and United States Senator were one and the same. But as all my time was then my own (I had not got into business) I happened into the First National bank one morning and made a few inquiries, in about this style:

Anxious Inquirer—Is Jerome B. Chaffee connected with this bank?

Bank Man—He is, sir, slightly.

A. I.—When did he come to Colorado, and where from?

B. M.—He came here in 1857, I think, and lived previously at or near Adrian, Mich.

A. I.—Is he of fair complexion—very fair—and is he troubled with kidney complaint?

B. M.—He has an exceedingly fair complexion and, I believe, is troubled somewhat with chronic disorder of the kidneys.

"This was all that I wanted. I was and am satisfied that my quondam employer of long ago was identically the same person who is the richest man and the keenest politician in Colorado. Now, is not that a rather funny thing, anyhow?"

The reporter, somewhat weary, admitted that it was.—*Denver (Col.) Tribune.*

The Music of the Nightingale.

Philomelia is the classic name of the nightingale, as our readers are generally aware. Due honor in all ages has been given to this bird as a songster. The Germans have not only been the admirers of its melody, but some of them have attempted to interpret its songs. Bechsten, a German rhapsodist, had a pet nightingale, whose song he interpreted as follows:

Zo ro zo ro zo ro zo ro zo ro zo ro zirrhading!

Ae re re ze ze ze ze ve veve ve ve;
conar he dzo hoi.
Higa iga iga iga iga iga iga iga, guaiagai corico dric dzio pi.

Of which all we have to say is that we hope that the song of the bird was more melodious than the translation looks to be. In the year 1740, the Prussian authorities being in want of money, ordered the trees around Cologne to be cut down and sold. The entire city of Agrippina was alive with terror at the movement; the whole wood was filled with nightingales, and the few burghers living near them, though extremely poor themselves, actually bought the trees standing, and thus preserved the woods for the nightingales, and the nightingale music for the inhabitants of Cologne.—*American Monthly.*

Dr. Rabelais' Free Journey.

The learned and famous Frenchman, Dr. Rabelais, once found himself in Marseilles without money. He wished to travel to Paris, but could not contrive a way to do so. At last, however, he hit upon a plan.

He started one first of April carrying with him some full phials labeled "Poison for the King and the Royal Family." At the city gates, according to the custom in those days, the traveler was searched, and these suspicious-looking bottles were found, as he intended. The officials were horrified, and they promptly arrested him and hurried him off as a state prisoner to Paris, there to be tried for treason.

Not long after his arrival Rabelais and his bottles were taken before the judges. Then the doctor, who was very well known as a wit, made a little explanation, showed that the phials contained nothing but brick-dust, and was at once released—the court, the accusers, the lookers-on, and all Paris convulsed with laughter at the oke.—*St. Nicholas*