

Resignation.

Beneath the sheltering fern full long ago
The violet lay faded,
And by the brook-marge now the asters glow,
By flame-leaved maples shaded;
Withered the grass and flowers, fruit fallen,
Branches bare—
But who will care?
From these dark clouds, this dreary woodland
scene,
With heedless haste receding,
Toward skies that ever smile, bowers ever
green,
The birds their flight are speeding;
Only the rook's harsh cry sounds on the
shivering air—
But who will care?
Where joyous youth once loved and dreamed,
and aye
Some high ambition cherished,
There lie but sadness and despair to-day,
And hopes forever perished;
Fires now within the heart leave only ashes
there—
But who will care?
Friends fall—a sickle throng—and plume
their flight
Toward fortune's happier greeting:
Their flattering tones are still, a gruesome
sprite
Alone is aye repeating
Despair, despair, despair! and yet again
despair!
But who will care?
Who care? Not I, forsooth! Beside the
brook
A snowy shroud is falling;
Upon the leafless bough the uncanny rook
Ceaseth his dreary calling;
And weary hearts oblivion's peace and rest
shall share:
Then who will care?
W. F. JONES.

HALF A LOAF.

"Half a loaf is better than no bread, Charlie."

Little Mabel Castleton said this wistfully, her eyes, as she spoke, wandering to the cradle, where two curly heads were lying.

"But when one has had the whole loaf, May, one does not exactly relish the half rations you mention," said Charlie moodily. But his eyes followed his wife's to the cosy nest of the twin babies.

"It is a bad time of year to be out of a situation," said Mabel, after a long silence, "and many of whom we know are idle. It would not be very easy to find employment now."

"You think I had better remain with Mr. Milfin?"

"I do. Tell me exactly what he said to you."

"The substance of what he said was simply this: Business is so very dull that he is obliged to curtail his expenses, and he must discharge some of his clerks. I have been with him for ten years, and he was pleased to say I am very useful to him, and he is very unwilling to part with me. But he can give me but half my present salary, though he promises to raise it when business prospects brighten. I don't know what to do. We are none too rich at my present salary."

"Yet we've saved something each month. Besides, dear, we have not tried to be economical. There are many ways in which I could save."

"And make a perfect slave of yourself."

"Not a bit of it. I have plenty of leisure time now that May and Bella can amuse each other. Come, Charlie, accept Mr. Milfin's offer. You may hear of something better, even if you remain there; but don't throw yourself out of a situation in the dead of winter, for my sake and the children's."

The last argument conquered. Charlie knew too well that it would be almost useless to look for a new situation for the whole town was echoing Mr. Milfin's cry of hard times. The small nest egg in the bank would soon melt away when it became the sole support of four, and so, kissing Mabel, he promised to follow her advice. But it cost his pride a sore wrench.

He had entered the service of his present employer at seventeen, and slowly, steadily gaining favor by dint of faithfully performing every duty, he had won his way to the desk of head clerk. Not until he had acquired this position and the handsome salary accompanying it would he ask Mabel to become his wife, furnishing a pretty cottage home from his savings, and giving her a thoroughly comfortable income for housekeeping expenses. He was not extravagant, but it pleased him to see his wife well dressed, to give her an efficient servant, to have his twin girls ever presentable, his table well appointed. All this had been easy enough upon his salary, and there had been something added for three years to the little bank fund.

But to do all this upon half the present income was simply impossible.

House rent must be paid, and the sum remaining each month would have to be carefully calculated to meet all the expenses, leaving but little for pleasure or extravagance of dress.

"Then what would Will say?"

Will Castleton was Charlie's cousin, who had been his life-long companion. Together they had left the school room for a business position, Will entering the grain store of Harvey & Russell at

the same time Charlie had taken the place in Mr. Milfin's dry goods store. Shoulder to shoulder the young men had worked their way, till this financial crisis had brought all business men into temporary difficulties of greater or less magnitude.

Will had expressed the warmest indignation at the proposal made his cousin, strongly advising him to throw up his situation and "see how old Milfin would get along without him," and Charlie, before seeing Mabel, was quite ready to follow his advice.

He knew Will would think him mean-spirited to remain upon half salary and yet Mabel was right. Half a loaf is better than no bread.

And while Charlie Castleton was thus weighing the pros and cons of his decision, Mr. Milfin was listening to the counsel of his old friend and chum, the senior partner of the firm that had been Gardner & Milfin, and who, though he had retired years before, was still the friend and frequent adviser of his former partner.

"It is a mistake, Milfin," he said. "You had better send young Castleton about his business and engage an entirely new book-keeper. You will find that half pay means half service, mark my word."

"But I might search C—— from end to end and not find a clerk competent to take his place."

"Then pay him full salary."

"I cannot do it unless I reduce the number of salesmen, and I am short-handed now. There is but one way to keep my head above water. You see Clark's failure involves me very heavily and—"

And the worried man of business entered into explanations of his difficulties not necessary to repeat here.

It touched Charlie Castleton deeply when entering the counting house to announce his determination to remain in his old position, to see the face of his employer brighten. And as Charlie spoke the large eyes grew brighter and he smiled pleasantly as he said:

"Thank you, Charlie. It would have caused me serious embarrassment to lose you, and I am heartily glad you will stay. I trust you will not long be obliged to take a small salary, but circumstances compel me to economize."

"You have been a kind employer to me for ten years," replied Charlie, "and if I am really of any more value to you than another would be in my place, I will not desert you."

And looking into the careworn face that trouble was marking more deeply than age, Charlie resolved to serve Mr. Milfin more faithfully in his perplexities than in his more prosperous days.

It was not long before the old gentleman felt the sympathy of his young clerk, and looked to him as he never did before for advice as well as service. He admitted him to confidential relations, explained to him the difficulties caused by the failure of other firms, some heavily indebted to the firm of Joel Milfin, others upon whom he had depended for goods obtained upon credit.

Day by day, as the hard, trying winter wore away, the two friends grew faster, and, so far from lessening his work, Charlie found himself willingly lifting some of his employer's burdens upon his own shoulders.

He gave more time to business, and he was gaining an insight into it of which an opportunity had never been given him.

And Mabel at home was bravely taking her share of the diminished loaf with a smiling face and a cheerful heart. As far as might be she kept from Charlie a knowledge of her domestic economies, but some of them were apparent.

The woman whose competent aid demanded high wages was dismissed, and a half-grown girl engaged to mind the babies while Mabel cooked and washed and ironed and sewed, meeting difficulties with a courageous heart. She had never been a drone in the world's hive, having been a busy little dressmaker before Charlie Castleton won her heart and took her to preside over his pretty home.

But for three years of her married life she had been much petted, and there were many pleasures to put aside—many dollars well weighed before they were spent.

It was with a heart full of pardonable triumph that the young couple, at the end of the year of reduced pay, found they were still out of debt and had not touched the nest egg in the bank.

"You see, Charlie, we made the half loaf go round," said Mabel, as they went carefully over the year's expense book.

"There are no crumbs," he said, with a weary face.

"Never mind that; it was better than idleness."

"You are right; and there was more than that, Mabel. I have been able to help Mr. Milfin more than I could have done in our old relations to each other.

His complexities made him long for some one to whom he could speak confidentially, and when the ice was once broken he took me fully into his business confidence. I could often suggest a way out of difficulty that had not occurred to him, and even when I was not of actual use to him it was a relief to pour out his troubles to some one who was in full sympathy with him."

"But you have worked very hard, Charlie. I never saw you so tired as you often have been this year, and your face is more careworn than it has ever been."

"Well, it is some comfort to know that business prospects are growing brighter. By closest economy Mr. Milfin has managed to meet the obligations he was afraid would ruin him, and there is a good outlook for the coming year."

"Will he give you a whole loaf yet, Charlie?"

"Not yet, I think. Never mind. We will not respond yet."

"Despond! I guess not. I am going to have some of those crumbs you were speaking of next year. I have learned some valuable lessons in saving."

The second year was certainly not an easy one to Mabel. A wee baby, in addition to the three-year-old twins, kept the mother's hands busy, while there was no decrease in the household work. Many articles of clothing and housekeeping, too, that lasted well one year, were past service in the second, and it was not so easy to replace them.

Often Mabel feared that the saving for a "rainy day" must be broken in upon, but she kept all such fears shut up in her own heart, and always had a bright word of cheer for tired Charlie when he came home.

She never told him that the late breakfast that she had planned to let the babies sleep while he ate his early one, comprised none of the little tempting dishes of his own meal, but was literally bread and milk six mornings out of the seven. She never let him know that the reason she suggested his lunch down town, to save the long walk home, was really to save the price of that meal toward the dinner, the dainty little parcel he carried never costing the price of a regular meal for them all.

She did not tell him that she was cutting up her old dresses to clothe the twin girls, and sewing busily every leisure moment to keep all the little ones tidy.

And yet there came a day in June, when six months of the second year were almost gone, when she spent the last dollar of the week's money while the week was half gone. Charlie had given her, long before, some signed checks to meet such an emergency, but it was her pride to think that not one of them had been presented at the bank.

She took one from the desk where they had lain so long and spread it out before her, calculating, with puckers on her pretty face, how small a sum she could stretch over the necessary expenses.

"I hate to begin," she said half aloud; "if once we break in upon that money it will melt away like snow before the sun."

There was no alternative but debt, and Mabel knew that Charlie would never be willing to owe any man a cent while he had a cent with which to pay him. So, with a great sigh, she dipped the pen in the ink to fill out the blank check. Before it touched the paper, however, she paused, listening. There was a step in the hall that was not that of the nurse or her charges, a voice ringing out full and clear, calling:

"Mabel! Where are you, May?"

"Here in my room," she answered.

"Oh, Charlie, what is it?"

For the face at the door was so radiant that all care seemed to have slipped from it forever.

"Good news, May! And yet—perhaps I should feel sorrow, too, only I did not know him."

"What are you talking about?"

"Did you read this morning's paper?"

"Yes."

"Did you notice the death of Amos Gardner?"

"No. Is that the Mr. Gardner who used to be Mr. Milfin's partner before you went into the store?"

"Yes; he has left his whole estate to Mr. Milfin except a few legacies. The store will be closed till after the funeral, so we have three days' holiday, May."

"I am glad you will be able to rest!"

"But that is not all. Do you guess the rest?"

"You are to have your old salary again!"

"More than that, Mr. Milfin took me to his house this morning and told me all his plans. He will enlarge his business and take on all his old salesmen who are willing to come. He has given me permission to offer a position to

Will Castleton, who has been nearly a year out of employment because he would not accept your theory of 'half a loaf better than no bread.'"

"I know. Poor Will! I am afraid that Maria had a worse year than ours has been, Charlie."

"Nor is it all, May."

"More good news still?"

"More still! Mr. Gardner, Mr. Milfin says, did me some injustice some time by supposing that I would proportion my work to the decrease in my salary. To atone for this he has left me \$5,000."

"Oh, Charlie!"

"Hold on, little woman; he also advised Mr. Milfin in their very last interview to reward me for my faithful, disinterested devotion to him in his late difficulties by taking me as a partner in the business."

"Charlie, oh, my Charlie! I must either laugh or cry," said Mabel, almost hysterically.

"Laugh, then, by all means. The new firm of Milfin & Castleton must not be christened by tears, even happy ones! Hurrah! who says after this that half a loaf is no better than no bread?"

Roof-Top Life in New York.

What do you think of the queer lives led by janitors' families? I know a janitor who has charge of a big building down Broadway who has four little tots of children, and they don't get down into the street more than once a week or so. Two of them were born in the seventh story of an immense iron building, just under the roof. One of them to my certain knowledge has never been down in the street at all. That's a fact. It will be down some day. It was born only last week. Where do you think the children's playground is? It is the roof, and a rare, good yard it is, too, with flowers growing on it, and everything just like a good, big, paved yard. There is a high ledge around the four sides, so there is no danger of the youngsters' falling off. And there are clothes-lines there, and tubs standing about, and clothes-pins lying on the ground—everything so natural you might easily imagine yourself in somebody's backyard. The children seldom see anything of the world down below; and their mother hardly ever does, for she has her hands full taking care of the youngsters. There is a nice secluded life for you, with no danger of annoyance from prying neighbors. There is something attractive about it, too. Just think of the janitor at dark shutting up the whole place and barring the big iron doors with himself inside. There he is, with his family about him, and all the world securely locked out. It is as good as living in a castle with the bridge drawn up and the moat full of water. But even when the outer doors are locked the janitors are not always shut in from the world. There is a block of buildings in one of the principal business centres of the city all about the same height. Each building has its janitor, and each janitor has his family. When the outer doors are shut and locked and no outsider can by any possibility make his way in, the janitor's families begin to visit. The roofs form their avenues and boulevards, their grand promenade. There is something slightly curious about that way of living, isn't there; having your neighbor dropping in through the roof instead of coming through the door? It is something like the way of living of the old cave-dwellers in the Southwest.—*New York Times.*

Relative Longevity in Various Occupations.

An interesting exhibit of the mortality in the different walks of life was furnished by the general register in report on the death-rate of the whole population of England in 1851. From this it appears that out of every thousand persons between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five, forty died on an average. Classified according to the most favorable mortality, and increasing downward, we have the following tables:

BELOW THE AVERAGE.	ABOVE THE AVERAGE.
1. Merchants.	7. Miners.
2. Weavers.	8. T. Jors.
3. Cobblers.	9. Bakers.
4. Carpenters.	10. Butchers.
5. Blacksmiths.	11. Liquor Dealers.
6. Laborers.	

The mortality of the eleventh class is so great that in good companies they are only admitted with great caution, and on short endowment or term policies.

Mariners, also, are considered poor risks, as thirty-five per cent. of the deaths among them are attributable to accidents. Among miners twenty-five per cent. among machinists fifteen per cent., and among painters, well-diggers and glaziers ten per cent. die in consequence of casualties. The callings of brewer, typesetter, tinsmith, lithographer and stonemason are also in a measure detrimental to a prolonged duration of life.

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

An important decision was rendered by the Supreme Court in Illinois recently, to the effect that States have the right to regulate rates of freight on lines within their bounds.

It is asserted that the results obtained at the French Palace of Industry in the experiments with electric light in conservatories were not favorable. The naked rays were found, as discovered previously, to be injurious to plants, and when passed through glass globes did not appear to affect them. The abbe finds no proof that nocturnal illumination is beneficial to plants.

In reply to a suggestion that raw meat should be more generally eaten, a leading English physician points out that at least seven diseases are known to be communicable from the lower animals to man, and that eighty per cent. of the animals eaten in London are said to be diseased. The unsound meat cannot be distinguished by inspection, and cooking is the only safeguard against infection.

The Marquis Tseng, the new Chinese minister accredited to France and England is reported to have a fortune of \$100,000 a year, but he lives without ostentation, and his revenues are devoted to the support of his clan in the province of Hon-Nan. This obligation is imposed on all great families in China. His salary is regulated by the government upon the same scale as that of the French ambassador at Peking. He has acquired great influence at the Chinese court for having conducted with so much skill the diplomatic negotiations with Russia on the subject of the territory of Hy.

In Germany, in 1881, a census was made of the condition of trades. From an abstract published recently of the results of this statistical inquiry, it appears that women are taking a more active part in trades and industries. Most of the female working people are engaged in the textile branches, in virtual trades, and in leather and paper manufactures. The age of those females is between twelve and twenty-seven years. In all 345,753 female laborers are engaged in the 93,554 German manufacturing, which also give employment to 1,636,099 men; There is no manufactory in which female workers are not engaged.

A foreign letter says that "this strange and horrible scene enacted nightly in some of the ordinarily frequented quarters of Paris would make one imagine that the most civilized people of the universe had suddenly become more savage and lawless than the ku-klux klan of America. It is not an uncommon thing for a foot passenger returning home from the theatre to be staid in his promenade by a human form flung from an upper window and falling lifeless at his feet. Nor is it rare to be accosted by a group of brigands who pinion their victim behind, while the accomplice rides his pockets. Even in the aristocratic streets it is dangerous to remain out late at night, and the police are becoming less and less able to compete with the dangerous organization of thieves who usurp the pavement."

A strange accident, arising out of a previous accident, happened recently in the Alps of Upper Savoy. The road between Giettaz and Flumet skirts a deep abyss, known in the neighborhood as the precipice of Bellavard. Early in the year a man named Lansard, while walking along the road, made a false step, fell down the precipice, and was killed. Thereupon, in accordance with local custom, a wooden cross was erected on the wayside, in memory of the defunct and as a warning to passers-by. On October 4 a gentleman named Bibollet, a native of Savoy, but a resident of Turin, was returning by the same road from Flumet to Giettaz, accompanied by two Jesuit school-teachers from Clusaz. When they reached the cross, all stopped to look at the place where Lansard lost his life. "I can not understand what Lansard was doing to lose his footing here," said Monsieur Bibollet, "and still less how he should have been killed. Why did he not see this point of rock which juts out at the foot of the cross?" As he spoke these words, Monsieur Bibollet stepped forward, as if to examine the place more closely, and, before his companions could raise a hand to help him, overbalanced himself, and fell headlong down the precipice.

In a recent sermon the Rev. Dr. James M. King, of New York city, preached on the subject of "Harmful Literature." He alluded to a certain class of newspapers which gave prominence to stories of crime and immorality,

putting startling headlines to them to attract the attention of their readers. Then there was the class of vile literature intended especially for boys, books which either contain improbable stories of Indian life, or make heroes of the worst and most depraved characters in cities. This was a matter which ought to be fully discussed by the press and pulpit. There was no danger of saying too much on such a subject; the danger was in saying too little. If the tender mind of youth is bent by the too popular boys' weeklies and books into channels of vice, who will straighten the gnarled limbs and twisted branches of the tree? He urged parents and teachers of youth to use every influence to counteract the effects of the evil. The man, he said, who places an obscene work in the hand of your boys or girls is more than a thief. He appealed to the young to seize the opportunities offered them of reading literature. There was the right kind of reading in science, history, literature and poetry. He had no condemnation for rational fiction.

Owing to the widespread interest created by the publication of the reports of the United States consul at Buenos Ayres concerning the introduction of ostrich farming into the Argentine Republic and its possible introduction into this country, the department of state forwarded instructions to the American consuls at Cape Town and Algiers to investigate the subject and report at length thereupon. The result is a pamphlet, recently issued by the department, entitled "Ostrich Farming in the United States." This contains full information concerning ostrich farming at the Cape of Good Hope and Algeria, from the hatching of the eggs to the export of the feathers, together with the estimated expense of importing birds into the United States and the probabilities of the experiment's success. In connection with the foregoing, it is interesting to note that recently a paper on the culture and propagation of the ostrich was read by Mr. C. J. Seatchley, of London, before the Farmers' Club in Cooper Institute, New York. Mr. Seatchley said that it was a very easy matter to raise ostriches. They are very healthy and few diseases are known to exist among them. The mortality among them is only ten per cent, and they live to the age of eighty or one hundred years. The older they grow the better they lay and breed. A full-grown ostrich is from four to four and a half feet in height, but the birds can extend the beak to eleven feet above the ground. The profits derived from one pair of birds—valued at \$1,000—were in four years \$25,500. The value of feathers in four years was \$12,900. Each bird lays from forty to ninety eggs a year. Ostriches begin to breed at the age of six years, and continue to the age of eighty. The young birds are first plucked when six months of age. Feathers are worth from \$600 to \$700 per pound. Six million dollars' worth of ostrich feathers are imported from South Africa.

Routine.

A tired housewife complains that her work is never done; that her days are filled with drudgery; that even on Sunday she has no time to rest, for the children claim her attention; and that she is tired and discouraged. Very likely; but, my dear madame, what is everybody's life but a monotonous round of duties? Queen Victoria, intensely weary of court ceremonies, withdraws from the public eye, retires to Balmoral or Osborne to get away from the dreary drudgery of a queen's life. Officials of every grade groan under the irksome monotony of their duties and take vacations whenever they can. Employes who can't get away from their posts make that defect up by doing as little as possible, and have an easy time as they go. Such is life. What we haven't, we want; what we have, we find unsatisfactory and full of discounts. Now, what is the course of wisdom? Is it not to dwell on the sweet and ignore the bitter; to be thankful for the good and resigned to the evil? A keen observer of human nature, and one who had himself tried various forms of life, both from observation and experience, said that he was satisfied that day-laborers are the very happiest class of people. Why? Because they are not tormented by aspiration for things beyond their reach. Labor gives them a sharp appetite for their simple fare, and their sleep is sweet. Content reigns in their hearts, and restless ambitions do not disturb their peace. They accept without question the lot assigned them in the universal frame of things, and are happy in it. Somebody must do the drudgery of the world. Few can sit idle with folded hands. Life means work; let us do it as bravely as we can.

Six million yards of netting are annually used against the raids of the lively mosquito.