

**Windless Rain.**  
The rain, the desolate rain!  
Ceaseless and solemn and chill!  
How it drips on the misty pane,  
How it drenches the darkened sill!  
O scene of sorrow and death!  
I would that the winds awaking  
To a fierce and gusty birth,  
Might vary this dull refrain  
Of the rain, the desolate rain.  
For the heart of the heavens seems breaking  
In tears o'er the fallen earth,  
And again, again, again,  
We list to the sadder strain—  
The faint, cold monotone,  
Whose soul is a mystic moan  
Of the rain, the mournful rain,  
The soft, despairing rain,  
The rain, the murmuring rain!  
Weary, passionless, slow;  
'Tis the rhythm of settled sorrow  
The sobbing of careless woe!  
And all the tragic of life,  
The paths of long ago,  
Come back on the sad refrain  
Of the rain, the dreary rain;  
Till the graves in my heart unclose,  
And the dead who are buried there,  
From a solemn and weird repose  
Awake, and with eyes that glare  
And voices that melt in pain  
On the tide of the plaintive rain,  
The yearning, homeless rain,  
The long, low, whispering rain!  
—Paul H. Hayne.

### SAVED BY A PIGEON.

It was the sweetest little thing you ever saw—a wee carrier-pigeon, with pure white breast, its wings a soft pearl-grey, and its arching neck gleaming with iridescent hues.

A boy had brought it over from Elmwood that morning in a dainty willow basket, lined with pink cotton-wood, and its handle adorned with bows of pink ribbon.

"From Larry, of course!" cried Aunt Judith, as I entered the breakfast-room. "I don't believe earth ever produced so gallant a lover!" she continued in her teasing way. "I believe he sends you a present every day. Yesterday it was a beautiful bouquet of flowers, the day before a box of bonbons, and the day before that—well, let me see—he came himself! And what have you now, pray, a turtle-dove?"

"No; a carrier-pigeon, and Larry says it is a trained one, too," I replied, referring to the letter, a dainty billet which had accompanied the gift.

"Aha! Now we shall have tender missives flying over our heads, I presume! Away with prosaic postage-stamps, and all that!"

"I wish Larry had sent her a big bull-dog instead of the bird," said papa, as he helped himself to the toast.

"Why, papa?" I gasped. "How unpoetical!"

"Very useful, my dear. Especially just now when there are so many burglars about."

"I hear Mr. Sayre's house has been robbed, and Golden's jewelry store, too," said Aunt Judith. "Goodness me, I hope they won't come here! We're in such a lonely, out-of-the-way place, too! Thomas!" turning to my father, "don't you think that you had better take the spare silver and the family diamonds to a more secure place?"

"I've been thinking about that very thing," said papa. "We shan't need them till Meg here," turning to me, with a smile, "becomes Mrs. Lawrence Carroll. So I might as well take them down to the bank and lock them up in the safe."

"But what if they break in the bank?" I asked.

Papa laughed derisively. He was always boasting of the safety of the bank.

"They couldn't open the safe unless the cashier and I were both there. It's one of the best combination locks made. I'm positive that anything put in that safe is perfectly secure."

Poor papa! "How little he thought—But there, that's just like me, always getting ahead of my story!"

Larry didn't spend that evening with me, and so I went to bed quite early. I soon fell asleep, but somehow I didn't rest very well, and was glad when I awoke, for I was dreaming that Larry and I had an awful quarrel.

But the sick, wretched feeling didn't pass away with my awaking. I had a smothered, suffocated feeling that made me actually gasp for breath. Thinking that the bedclothes were lying across my face, I reached up my hand to draw them away, and found there, instead, a handkerchief saturated with a subtle, overpowering scent.

Chloroform! Yes, that was it. But what did it mean? Shivering with a nameless terror, but with my senses all aroused, I sprang from the bed and went to the door.

It was slightly ajar, and through the opening a light shone faintly. I crept softly out into the hall, and leaning over the railing, looked down. Oh, heavens! what did I see?

Four strong men, wearing black marks, and armed with revolvers, dragging along my dear old father!

"You villains! What is the use of this?" I heard poor, dear papa say. "I shall never, never do it!"

"You won't see the sun rise again,

then!" said one of the men, with an oath.

"I'd rather die than have you succeed in your nefarious plan!" was papa's reply.

"That's game, boss," said another rough voice. "But wait till we get there. We've got the cashier in our clutches, and when he caves in you will, too."

"Gag him, boys, before we put him in the wagon!" ordered the leader.

Papa's struggles were of no avail, and gagged and bound, he was carried out of the house, and soon I heard wheels rolling away.

Two of the burglars stayed behind to ransack the house, I supposed. Hearing their voices, I turned and fled into my room, locking the door behind me.

Oh, what could I do? At that moment I realized how weak a woman I! Oh, if there were only some way whereby I might save my father from death or infamy!

Crouching upon the floor, I wrung my hands in agony of spirit, striving to think of some plan.

Footsteps were heard coming up the stairs. I held my breath in suspense. Would the ruffians try the door, and finding it locked, force it open? No, the passed on.

Just then a little rustle in one corner of my room made my heart beat with renewed terror; but relief came instantly, when I perceived that the noise was made by my little pet, the carrier-pigeon.

I knelt down beside its cage, sobbing softly.

"Oh, you poor, little thing!" I whispered. "Helpless and tiny as you are, you are safer than I am!"

Suddenly, like a divine revelation, there came a thought:

Could not Bijou, the pigeon, carry a message to Larry? Larry had said that the little creature could do such a thing. Why not try him?

With trembling fingers, I seized pencil and paper, and wrote the following words:

"Larry! Larry! for God's sake go to the bank. Take plenty of men with you. Burglars have carried papa there to compel him to open the safe. Hurry! Your MEG."  
"P. S.—I send this by Bijou."

This I put in an envelope, and tied the latter around the bird's neck. The little creature did not seem the least bit frightened, but looked intelligently at me with its bright, gentle eyes. As quietly as possible, I opened the window and set the bird on the sill.

For a minute it stood there, turning its pretty head irresolutely; then spreading its wings, it slowly rose and soared away, oh, heaven be thanked! in the direction of Elmwood.

Just then there was a violent racket at the door, a succession of kicks, which soon splintered the panels.

An instant later, as I stood there paralyzed by terror, the two burglars burst into the room.

"Curse it!" cried one, "that chloroform didn't fix her, after all."

"Bind and gag her like we did the old lady; then she'll be safe," said the other.

When my senses came to me, I found myself lying on the couch in the sitting room down stairs.

It was bright daylight, and the soft summer wind, laden with the breath of flowers, was stealing in at the open window. Larry's face, kind, loving, anxious, was bending over me. Then I heard dear old Doctor Rogers' kindly voice say, "Drink this, little girl, and you'll feel better," pressing a tumbler to my lips.

"Where's papa?" I murmured, faintly.

"Your father's all right, darling," said Larry.

"And did Bijou come to you? Oh, I prayed that the bird would carry the note! Did you get it?"

"Yes, love; but never mind it now. I'll tell you all about it when you get stronger."

"Tell her now, Carroll. She is all right. It will do her good to hear all about it," said the doctor, patting my cheek; and he continued: "I'll leave you two together, while I go and see to Miss Judith. Oh, you needn't be frightened!" seeing my anxious look. "There isn't anything the matter with your aunt. Only she's been pretty badly scared, that's all!"

"Well, you see, Meg," Larry began, when we were alone, "I happened to sit up rather late last night. I had been away all day, and when I returned home at tea-time, I found some law business awaiting my immediate attention. As I sat writing in my room, it was after midnight I think, suddenly I heard a tapping at the window-pane. At first I paid no heed to it, thinking it to be only the wind blowing a twig or bit of vine, but as the sound continued, I arose and went to look.

"I beheld something white fluttering against the glass. What was my surprise to find that it was little Bijou! I opened the window and hurriedly read

the letter he brought; and it wasn't long before my father, Uncle Henry, the three men-servants, and a couple of policemen and myself, were hurrying down to the bank.

"We reached there just in time, too; had a grand scuffle, in which we came out victorious, I'm glad to say, and well, the result is that four of the burglars are in jail, and the other two, whom we found here, have gone to render up their final account. The safe is unharmed, and none of us are injured, except a few scratches and bruises."

I will end my story by saying that Larry and I have been married two years now. We are keeping house in a cozy, comfortable way, and most important of all our articles of furniture is a cradle; but, after all, I don't know which is the greatest pet, baby or my little feathered postman, Bijou!

### Fishing With Cormorants.

In Nieuhoff's account of the embassy of Peter de Goyer and Jacob de Keyzer to the Dutch East India Company to the Emperor of China, in 1665, it is related that at Si-ning-chew, in the province of Shantung, on an artificial channel of the Yellow river, the ambassadors witnessed the natives fishing with cormorants. Here they saw them catch fish with a bird called Lou-wa, somewhat less than a goose and not much unlike a raven. It has a long neck and a bill like an eagle. They go out in small boats made of bamboo canes, placing the bird on the outside, which on sight of a fish shoots down and swims after it under water. As soon as she has caught her prey she rises, and the fisherman, having taken it from her, sends her out to seek more. To prevent the bird from swallowing her prey they put an iron ring(?) about her neck. If the fish is too big for her to bring up she makes a noise in the water for the master to come to her help. When they have caught enough for their owners the ring is taken off, and they are left to fish for themselves. In case they are averse to diving they are brought to it by beating. The fishermen pay a yearly tribute to the Emperor for the use of these birds, which are much valued by the Chinese. One of those which are well taught is often sold for fifty tael of silver, which is about 150 guilders.

The Chinese method of fishing with cormorants differs but little from that employed by English and French amateurs at the present day. In China, however, the birds, smaller than ours, and of a different species, called by the Chinese "Leutze," are carried on light, shallow punts or rafts, and are commonly employed, not as here for amusement, but as a matter of business to supply the markets with fish. Twenty or thirty cormorants, it is said, will catch six frames worth of fish a day—fish being very cheap there. Their owners club together, their respective birds being marked, and divide the profits proportionately. A cormorant may be used until ten years old, and when well trained, they fetch as much as sixty tael, or 160 francs a pair.—*London Field.*

### How It Feels to Fall 1,000 Feet.

With regard to the recent sad suicide of a girl by leaping from one of the towers of Notre Dame, Paris, Dr. Bronardell's expressed view that asphyxiation in the rapid fall may have been the cause of death, has given rise to some correspondence in *Nature*. M. Bontemps points out that the depth of fall having been about sixty-six meters, the velocity acquired in the time (less than four seconds) cannot have been so great as that sometimes attained on railways, e.g. thirty-three meters per second on the line between Chalons and Paris, where the effect should be the same; yet we never hear of asphyxiation of engine drivers and stokers. He considers it desirable that the idea in question should be exploded, as unhappy persons may be led to choose suicide by fall from a height, under the notion that they will die before reaching the ground. Again, M. Gossin mentions that a few years ago a man threw himself from the top of the Column of July, and fell on an awning which sheltered workmen at the pedestal; he suffered only a few slight contusions. M. Remy says he has often seen an Englishman leap from a height of thirty-one meters (say 103 feet) into a deep river; and he was shown in 1852, in the island of Oahu, by missionaries, a native who had fallen from a verified height of more than 300 meters (say one thousand feet). His fall was broken near the end by a growth of ferns and other plants, and he had only a few wounds. Asked as to his sensations in falling, he said he only felt dazed.

Mr. Farnach, of Raleigh, N. C., reports that in April and May, he, with his daughter and an ordinary laborer, gathered a crop of 200 dozens of silkworm eggs, worth \$1,000, from a four-year's orchard of 3,000 white mulberry plants.

### A NIGHT IN PEKIN.

**Curious Sights in a Chinese City.**  
At set of sun life in Peking, as far as the streets are concerned, ceases to exist; doors are closed, shops shut, and the inhabitants retire within their houses. Not even the most important thoroughfares are illuminated; at certain corners, where the police have their stations, miserable dirty paper lanterns are lit up, which shed no light whatever. Every one who goes abroad, whether on foot, in Sedan-chair, or by cart, must carry a lantern. The streets of the Imperial and Tartar cities may be said to be entirely deserted; it is in the Chinese city only that there is anything going on at night. Each city is shut off from the others at sundown, and the gates are not again opened under any circumstances until daybreak. I resided in the Tartar city, and it was in the Chinese city that I wished to make my nocturnal ramble, so that there was no remedy but to make a night of it. My companions declined to accompany me, so I had reluctantly to undertake the excursion alone.

My guide hired a cart for the whole night, and we started from our hotel at about half-past six in the afternoon. It was necessary to set out thus early in order to pass through the gate before it was locked. I had not yet dined, so I directed my interpreter to conduct me to the best hotel in the place, and gave him carte blanche to order for me and himself the best dinner procurable. I need scarcely add that an inn of European character was entirely out of the question; the only European hotel in the whole of Peking is that kept by M. Vrad, in the Tartar city, where I was staying. I knew this perfectly well, and had made up my mind for a Chinese repast, served in Chinese fashion. It was in the narrow courtyard, then, of a thoroughly native rest-house that the cart stopped. My conductor, a most excellent and thoughtful fellow, had taken the precaution of bringing my travelling-rugs, which, if useful to alleviate the bruises caused by the jolting of the cart, were now equally so to obviate the hardness of the brick couch in the rest-house. He spread them then on the kang, and I was not sorry to lay me down and take a short repose after a long ride. With book and cigar I whiled away the time until my dinner should be ready. In about half an hour it was served, and copious enough it was in its way; fish, chicken, mushrooms, *beche de mer* (a species of edible sea weed, brought, I believe, from Japan, of which the Chinese are exceedingly fond), all in separate dishes, or rather small basins, with two sorts of gravy in little bowls, two kinds of pickles, and soft, unleavened rolls of white flour, quite hot. The drinkables were *samsu* of two different strengths, the one to imbibe while eating, the other at dessert—the former was flat, mild, and rather flavorless, the latter rough and potent—both, to my palate, disagreeable. *Samsu* is a spirit distilled usually from rice, although it may be made from potatoes, beans, or sugar-cane; it is of a whitish color, and not altogether unlike bad whiskey much under proof. It serves the Chinese in lieu of wine, which they never make from the grape. Some fruit was brought, and the repast concluded with the inevitable tea. Chopsticks were the only implements supplied, but as I had already become tolerably adroit in their manipulation, I was quite able to get my victuals into my mouth without the use of any other instrument. I can not say that I enjoyed my meal. It was not the first time that I had tasted pure Chinese cuisine, so that the food was not altogether foreign to me, nor were the viands in their way badly cooked, but the taste of almost everything one eats is more or less acquired, and a matter of education; as my tongue was uneducated in the language, so my palate had not yet been taught to appreciate the cooking.

Anything more primitive, strange, and weird than the Chinese quarter of Peking by night can hardly be imagined. "Dim darkness" in the tortuous streets, unbroken by a single ray from the sombre houses, and unrelieved by the paper police-lanterns, posted at rare intervals, looking in the distance like spectres, or by those of the few pedestrians, which, bobbing up and down in the obscurity, have the appearance of so many will-o'-the-wisps; the rumbling of an occasional cart, for which one has to make way at the risk of falling into a yawning cess-pool, the black depths of which, as I held my lantern over the brink, looked still more horribly black in the gloomy night; the monotonous sound of the watchmen striking together the pieces of bamboo with which they announced their presence; the groans of the mendicants crouching in the doorways; the cries of the ambulant vendors of food who wander through the street, or attract stray passers-by to their temporary stalls, pitched for the nonce in some out-of-the-way nook or corner—

all these strange sounds and apparitions suggested to my mind a home of evil spirits, the departure of demons after a Sabbat meeting, or the breaking up of pagans on a dark Walpurgis night. A thunder-storm now burst upon us, and added its effect to the lugubrious scene. The lightning was vivid in the extreme, and the rain came down in such torrents that the thoroughfares were soon converted into muddy water-courses, and further exploration was rendered impossible. My conductor proposed that we should return to the rest-house, but as it was already long past midnight, I ordered a trial at the gate. My suggestion proved to be good. A mandarin on his way to the palace had just passed through, and the custodian, caring more for his comfort than for orders, or thinking perhaps that no one would be stirring in such terrible weather, had omitted to close the portals after the official. We got through, then, without hindrance. The storm had rendered the morning air very chilly, and I was not sorry to regain my hotel and creep into bed.

### The Hospitable Poles.

The Poles are extraordinarily hospitable. They entertain without grudge. At every table in the large houses some extra places are laid ready for unexpected guests—as they say, "for the traveler that comes over the sea." It is possible in Poland to go uninvited to visit your friend, taking your children, your servants and horses, and to stay five or six weeks without receiving any hint to go. The Poles are fond of gaiety, of amusement and of society. They love pleasure in all its bright and charming forms. The country houses are constantly full of visitors, and in the winter there is often the "Kulig," a gathering which increases as it goes from house to house. It is taken from a peasant custom, and the nobles, when they get up a "Kulig," wear the peasant costumes, very beautifully made. They go over the snow in sledges from house to house, dancing for two or three days at one and then going on to another, taking the people of the house which they leave with them. At last, there are perhaps twenty sledges all full of people, dressed in bright colors, and singing the songs of the "Kulig." At every house they dance the characteristic dances of the occasion—the Krakowiak, the Mazur and the Oberok. The first is a very pretty and peculiar dance, in which the partners continually turn away from each other and then come face to face; the Mazur is something like the quadrille, though it is by no means the same; the Oberok resembles a waltz danced the reverse way and with a very pretty and characteristic figure, in which the man kneels on one knee and kisses his partner's hand. These are all most charming and pretty, and the Poles dance with enthusiasm as well as grace. They have many national customs and ceremonies which are occasions for dancing and pleasure. Then, in the autumn and winter, there is bear-hunting. In this way, with these varied amusements, the time passes in the country houses, and visitors will stay six weeks or perhaps six months.—*Temple Bar.*

### Masculine Jewelry in Europe.

Observing Americans note a rivalry of rings, bracelets and lavish colors in continental society. Young men at the theatres are conspicuous when they stand, as is the custom on the continent, with their opera glasses leveled at the house, for bracelets on their wrists, jewels on their hands, with the slender golden chain which became the fashion among ladies not long ago. In the revived frescoes of Pompeii the same thing may be seen. Young Romans fastened the sleeves of their togas with gems, and covered their bare arms from the wrist to the elbow with fillets of gold and jewels! The craving ambition of every man under a monarchy is for a decoration. A meeting of parliament is a spectacle of such personal bedizenment as the wildest caricature could not surpass. So great a mind as Disraeli's could not be weaned from the craving for adornment. As a youth he was plastered with jewelry in the house, as an earl he was covered with the most extra insignia of his order in the peers. A session of any one of the great orders of the Bath, the Thistle the Garter, the Golden Fleece, St. George, the Black Eagle, or the hundred score different companies invented by sovereigns to stimulate the ardor and flatter the vanity of the noble and aspiring, presents more theatrical gorgeousness than an oriental pageant.—*Philadelphia Press.*

A new book is called "How to Keep a Store." It is a work of several hundred pages, and life is too short to read it. The best way to keep a store is to advertise judiciously, and thus prevent it falling into the hands of the sheriff.

### Elisabetta Sirani.

Among the followers of Guido Reni, this young woman, who died when but twenty-five years old, is conspicuous for her talents and interesting on account of the story of her life. She was the daughter of a reputable artist, and was born at Bologna about 1749. She was certainly very industrious, since one of her biographers names one hundred and fifty pictures and etchings made by her, and all these must have been done within a period of about ten years.

Much has been said of the ease and rapidity with which she worked; one anecdote relates that on an occasion when it happened that the Duchess of Brunswick, the Duchess of Mirandola and Duke Cosimo de Medici, with other persons, all met at her studio, she astonished and delighted them by the ease and skill with which she sketched and shaded drawings of the subjects which one after another named to her.

The story of her life, aside from her art, gives an undying interest to her name, and insures her remembrance for all time. In person she was beautiful, and the sweetness of her character and manner won for her the love of all those who were associated with her. She was also a charming singer, and was ever ready to give pleasure to her friends. Her admiring biographers also commend her taste in dress, which was very simple; and they even go so far as to praise her moderation in eating! She was well skilled in all domestic matters, and would rise at daybreak to perform her lowly household duties, never allowing her art to displace the homely occupations which property, as she thought made a part of her life.

Elisabetta Sirani's name has come down through two hundred and seventeen years as one whose "devoted filial affection, feminine grace, and artless benignity of manner added a luster to her great talents, and completed a personality which her friends regarded as an ideal of perfection."

The sudden death of this artist has added a tragic element to her story. The cause of it has never been known, but the theory that she died from poison, has been very generally accepted. Several reasons for this crime have been given: one is, that she was sacrificed to the jealousy of other artists, as Domenichino had been; another belief was that a princely lover, whom she had treated with scorn, had taken her life because she had dared to place herself, in her lowly station, above his rank and power.

A servant girl named Lucia Tolomelli, who had been long in the service of the Sirani family, was suspected and tried for this crime. She was sentenced to banishment; but, after a time, Elisabetta's father requested that Lucia should be allowed to return, as he had no reason for believing her guilty. And so the mystery of the cause of her death has never been solved; but its effect upon the whole city of Bologna, where it occurred, is an exact matter of history.

The entire people felt a personal loss in her death, and the day of her funeral was one of general mourning. The ceremonies of her funeral were attended with great pomp, and she was buried beside her master, Guido Reni, in the chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary, in the magnificent church of the Dominicans. Poets and orators vied with one another in sounding her praises.—*St. Nicholas.*

### CLIPPINGS FOR THE CURIOUS.

Professor Virchow of Berlin owns nearly 6,000 human skulls of all ages and nationalities.

The wealthiest man in Mexico is Patricio Milmo, an Irishman, whose estate is valued at \$10,000,000.

A mosquito has concealed in its bill six complete surgical instruments, each so minute as to be indiscernible to the naked eye.

Abbe Moige, of Les Mondes, believes that the ancient cubit, which is ascertained to be the ten-millionth part of the polar axis of the earth, is preferable to the metre as a standard of measurement.

Continuous baths, as carried out in Vienna, are reported unofficially by M. Lenoir as very efficacious in the treatment of skin diseases, and he warmly recommends their introduction into the hospitals of Paris.

Isabeau of Bavaria, queen of Charles VI, sent a collection of dolls, dressed in the latest French styles, to the queen of England, thus introducing the latest French fashions in a way which has been imitated of late years as a novelty.

In Russia, on March 3, the day on which the larks are supposed to arrive, the rustics make clay images of those birds, smear them with honey, tip their heads with tinsel, and then carry them about, singing songs to spring, or to Lada, their vernal goddess.