

The Early Rain.

Down through the misty air,
Down from the gloom above,
Falling, pattering everywhere,
The rain comes quick with love.
Softly the mist-thrush
Sings in the golden storm;
The robin under a laurel bush
Waits for to-morrow morn.
Drip, drip, drip from the eaves,
Pit, pit, pit on the pane,
Swish, swish, swish on the drenched leaves,
List! 'tis the song of the rain.
Grasses are bending low,
Green is the corn and thick;
You can almost see the nettles grow,
They grow so strong and quick,
Soft is the wind from the west,
Softer the rain's low sigh;
The sparrow washes his smoky breast,
And watches the gloomy sky,
Stirred are the boughs by the breeze,
Scarcely a leaf is still,
Something is moving among the trees,
Like a restless spirit of ill.
Standing watching the rain,
Do you seem to hear
The voice of God outspeaking again
To man's ungrateful ear?
Promising plenty and peace,
Garners with treasure heaped,
That seed-time and harvest shall not cease
Till the harvest of earth be reaped.
—The Argosy.

NOT A SUCCESS.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Heatherley, "some folks do have all the luck! I thought when my Cousin Speakwell was appointed assistant bishop of the Cranberry Swamp diocese, that it was quite a social distinction. But here's Helen Jones's uncle been put up for Chinese ambassador! And I suppose she'll get all her tea and chessmen for nothing now, besides the credit of the thing!"

And Mrs. Heatherley actually burst into tears.

From the very first moment of her arrival in Cherry Hill, Mrs. Jones had been her rival. If she decorated her parlors in lotus-leaves and cat-tails, Mrs. Jones immediately ordered an artist from Philadelphia to paint her ceilings in peacock-plumes and half-open sunflower buds. If she gave a light tea, Mrs. Jones followed with a full-fledged dinner-party. If she had a fancy masquerade-party, Mrs. Jones issued cards for private theatricals. And now the glories of the assistant bishopric were entirely eclipsed by the ambassador to China.

Mrs. Jones ordered her white ponies and basket-phaeton, and drove in state through Cherry Hill, to invite all her friends and acquaintances to an evening reception.

"To meet my uncle," she said, graciously, "before he sails for China!"

For Mrs. Jones, albeit she never had seen her Uncle John Jones, was seized, all of a sudden, with the most affectionate devotion for him, and telegraphed him to come at once to Cherry Hill. And the letter which followed was full of niece-like devotion.

"I have always felt," she said, "that it was a cruel deprivation to see so little of my husband's relations. And now that we are so soon to lose you, I must insist on at least one visit. We have some charming people in Cherry Hill, who would esteem it a privilege to make your acquaintance. We shall meet you, without fail, at the six-forty train from Philadelphia, on Wednesday next."

Mr. Jones, a blunt, bullet-headed man, who was in the drug business, scratched his nose when he heard of his wife's prowess.

"It's all a puzzle to me," said he. "Uncle John never had any brains."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Jones, "what brains are needed to be a Chinese ambassador? It's all political influence and wire-pulling, don't you see?"

"Well," said Mr. Jones, "there's something in that. I remember Uncle John being president of a Polk and Dallas club, for years ago, or so, in the village. And he manufactured torch-lights for the political processions, and had a very good voice for a burrah. What puzzles me, however, is what on earth he will think of our getting so very affectionate all of a sudden, after neglecting him for all these years."

"No matter what he thinks," said Mrs. Jones, briskly. "I'll soon bring him around. Only think—ambassador to China! What will Mrs. Heatherley say? You must telegraph at once for plenty of pates de foie gras and cold, potted game. And I'll have two colored waiters from the hotel. Mary Ann is very well in her way, but she will need additional help on an occasion like this. I shall ask ex-Governor Philipstarbaugh and his wife—they are visiting the Whites; and an especial card shall be sent to that stupid, old assistant bishop that Charlotte Heatherley boasts so much about. Mr. Chimefield, the poet, is in town also, and I shall beg Miss Bulkeley to bring her violin and give us one of those sweet Scandinavian Dreams' that she improvises so sweetly. Let me see, there will be about sixty people here, unless I receive more regrets than I at present anticipate."

"Sixty people, eh?" repeated Mr. Jones. "Ain't that considerable of a

blow-out, Fanny? We haven't settled Spagnette's bill for that last tea-fight, you must remember."

"Tea-fight! Blow-out!" Mrs. Jones repeated, in infinite disgust. "Peter, I haven't any patience to hear you use those odious, vulgar expressions. How are Ethel and Constantia to get married, I'd like to know, if the dear girls never are to see any society? Are the ponies ready?"

"You can't have the ponies to-day," said Mr. Jones. "The livery-stable man says they don't stir out of their stalls until the whole account is settled—three hundred and odd dollars."

"How absurd of him!" said Mrs. Jones, with a shrug of her plump shoulders. "And now, of all times in the world! But never mind—I shall walk!"

And Mrs. Jones, nothing daunted, put on a rose-bud-trimmed bonnet, a pretty imitation cashmere shawl, and a pair of cream-colored kid gloves, and set forth to the florist's, where she ordered a profusion of flowers; and to the pastry-cook's, where she hesitated between water ices, and Neapolitan cream; and finally went home, wearied, but triumphant.

"I'll show the Chinese ambassador that there is some style about his country cousins," she declared, to Ethel and Constantia, who were remodeling their old dresses, to appear as new as possible.

And really Mrs. Jones's parlors did appear exquisitely tasteful and pretty when the eventful evening arrived.

The chandeliers—new for the occasion—were draped with smilax; the mantels banked with cyclamen and begonia leaves; the angles of the apartment filled with tall palms and stately ferns.

Miss Bulkeley was there, with her violin, and a package of music nearly as large as a Saratoga trunk; the ex-governor and his lady were on time, and the assistant bishop of the Cranberry Swamp diocese appeared, in a red-nosed and pompous manner, with his cousin, Mrs. Heatherley, leaning on his arm. And, as the room began to fill, Mrs. Jones waxed a little nervous.

"I do hope nothing has happened to the train," she thought. "If he shouldn't be here, after all, I should feel myself a social fraud."

But, as the old Antwerp clock in the corner struck ten, there was a little bustle, the sound of retreating carriage-wheels—Uncle Jones had arrived!

And the guests parted right and left, to admit of the entrance of a stout old gentleman in a suit of homely dyed-brown, a pair of silver spectacles, very red hands, entirely innocent of gloves, and a blue-checked shirt.

"Well, Niece Jones," said this remarkable apparition, grasping Mrs. Jones's pretty, little kid-gloved hands, "I'm dreadful glad to make your acquaintance. And this 'ere's Peter, is it? I hain't seen Peter since he was a boy."

"Uncle," said Mrs. Jones, with a sort of hysterical gasp, "allow me to present to you—"

"Oh, yes, I see," said Uncle Jones. "Company to tea, eh? Your servant, ladies and gentlemen, your servant," bowing comprehensively around the room. "And seein' we're all here together, so nice and friendly," he added, "I'll just ask you all to look at a new kind o' salve as I've took the agency of—the 'Electric Agony Eradicator,' only twenty-five cents a box, and five boxes for a dollar. Business is business, you know, and as I make my living this way, I'm sure my niece and nephew here won't object to my selling off the stock-in-trade to the best advantage before I leave the country. Perhaps the company don't know that I sail as skipper of the Lovely Louise next month—up to the Newfunlan' fish-banks, and round by way of Nova Scotia?"

"But," gasped Mrs. Jones, "we thought—that is, we understood—we read in the paper, I would say—that you were to be the ambassador to China."

"Me!" said Uncle Jones. "Not if I know it! Me go to furrin parts, to be eaten up with chopsticks, or burned alive by the coolies? I guess not! P'raps it's John J. Jones you're thinking about. He's from the same place as I am—a great friend of the administration—and I've heard as he's got a plump office from the big-bugs at Washington. I'm John J. Jones—Jacob, you know, arter my great gran'ther, as was in the blacksmithy bus'ness. Oh, I ain't no Chinese ambassador! I'm only a salve-manufacturer. It'd dreadful good for frosted feet an' ears, the 'Electric Agony Eradicator' is—and p'raps I may have a good chance to sell a few gross of boxes on board the Lovely Louise, if it's a middlin' cold trip."

Poor Mrs. Jones stood aghast at the distinguished guest of the evening circulated around amid the perfumed groups, with his "Agony Eradicator," selling off the precious panacea with great success.

Mrs. Heatherley giggled audibly, the assistant bishop elevated his Roman nose with an air of superciliousness; the fair violinist laid down her bow, and only the instant announcement of supper would have prevented a general dissolution of this social parliament.

Uncle Jones ate as if he were a starved wolf, and then drank as he had been transformed into a fish; and finally fell asleep on a sofa in the corner and snored aloud, with his pocket full of "salve-boxes" and a handkerchief over his face.

He went home the next day. The Cherry Hill Jones's did not urge him to stay longer; and Mrs. Heatherley called to console with Mrs. Jones in person.

"It must have been so mortifying to the poor thing!" said she, with simulated sympathy.

But Mrs. Jones did not see her. She was crying in her own room, and sent down a message of "Not at home."

"I don't care how soon we leave Cherry Hill," she sobbed. "I never can look any one in the face again. I never was so ashamed in all my life! And if ever anyone mentions the name 'China,' or 'the Chinese,' in my presence again, I'll commit suicide, that I will!"

For Mrs. Jones's party had not been a success.

Among the Mongols.

The Mongol of to-day is in many respects a separate man, timid, yet given to long, lonely journeys over pathless deserts; habitually abstemious, yet a drunkard; a controversialist, yet superstitious; a thief by instinct, yet law-abiding; rough, brutal, and cruel—yet in one respect gentler than any European. Nothing can induce him to hurt an animal, however low in the scale of creation. "Nowhere," says a recent traveler, "will you find less cruelty than in Mongolia. Not only do their cattle and flocks receive expressions of sympathy in suffering, and such alleviation of pain as their own kind hearts know how to give, but even the meanest creatures (insects and reptiles included) are treated with consideration. Crows perch themselves on the top of loaded camels, and deliberately steal before the very eyes of the vociferating owners; hawks scoop down in the market-place at Urga, and snatch eatables from the hands of the unwary, who simply accuse the thief of parricide, and pass on. My bald-headed camel driver was nearly driven to distraction one evening by a cloud of mosquitoes which kept hovering over and alighting on his shining pate. During the night there came a touch of frost, and when we rose in the morning not an insect was on the wing. Looking at them as they clung benumbed to the sides of the tent, he remarked, 'The mosquitoes are frozen!' and then added, in a tone of sincere sympathy, the Mongol phrase expressive of pity, 'Hoarhe! hoarhe!' There was no sarcasm or hypocrisy about it. This tenderness is the more strange because the Mongols in their few cities or standing camps let beggars die of cold and exposure, though they never display the complete callousness of Chinese. The Chinese government in Lama Miao, the great entrepot, punishes highway robbery with violence by a sentence of death from starvation; and our traveler saw this sentence carried out, the man being placed in a cage in the street, with his head outside, so that he might see the eating, shops, and die slowly of hunger and thirst. He was four days dying there in public. The Chinese citizens found this interesting, and strolled up every evening, laughing and jesting, to see the unhappy wretch suffer.

A Cheese-Making Berry.

A cheese-making berry has recently been discovered in India, which seems to be a capital substitute for rennet. Pueria, as the natives call it, is the berry of a plant known scientifically as "withania coagulans," a shrub which is common in the Punjab and Trans-Indus territory, and which has long been used by the Afghans and Belooches to curdle milk.

Experiments conducted officially on a farm belonging to the governor of Bombay have demonstrated the efficiency of the berry in the manufacture of cheese, a perfect curd being produced and the cheese turning out excellently; and, with a view to the more extended cultivation of the shrub, an experimental plantation is to be established at the government botanical gardens at Saharanpore.

The pueria, so-called from the Persian name of cheese, is prepared by placing about two ounces of the berries in a small quantity of cold water, and allowing it to simmer by the side of a fire for twelve hours. It is said that half a pint of the decoction will suffice to curdle fifty-five gallons of milk.—*Cassell's Family Magazine.*

GEN. SCOTT'S NARROW ESCAPE.

An Interesting Reminiscence from the Autobiography of Thurlow Weed—How the General's Legs Saved Him.

From the autobiography of Thurlow Weed, the following interesting account of an incident preceding the battle of Chippewa, in 1814, is taken:

One evening after our rubber, I said to the general, "There is one question I have often wished to ask you, but have been restrained by the fear that it might be improper." The general drew himself up and said in his emphatic manner: "Sir, you are incapable of asking an improper question." I said: "You are very kind; but if my inquiry is indiscreet I am sure you will allow it to pass unanswered."

"I hear you, sir," he replied.

"Well, then, general, did anything remarkable happen to you on the morning of the battle of the Chippewas?"

After a brief but impressive silence, he said: "Yes, sir; something did happen to me—something very remarkable, and I will now, for the third time in my life, repeat the story: The 4th day of July, 1814, was one of extreme heat. On that day my brigade skirmished with a British force commanded by General Riall, from an early hour in the morning till late in the afternoon. We had driven the enemy down the river some twelve miles to Street's creek, near Chippewa, where we encamped for the night, our army occupying the west, while that of the enemy was encamped on the east side of the creek. After our tents had been pitched I observed a flag borne by a man in peasant's dress approaching my marquee. He brought a letter from a lady who occupied a large mansion on the opposite side of the creek, informing me that she was the wife of a member of Parliament, who was then at Quebec; that her children, servants and a young lady friend were alone with her in the house; that General Riall had placed a sentinel before her door, and that she ventured, with great doubts of the propriety of the request, to ask that I would place a sentinel upon the bridge to protect her against stragglers from our camp. I assured the messenger that the lady's request should be complied with. Early the next morning the same messenger, bearing a white flag, reappeared with a note from the same lady, thanking me for the protection she had enjoyed, adding that, in acknowledgment of my civilities, she begged that I would, with such members of my staff as I chose to bring with me, accept the hospitalities of her house at a breakfast which had been prepared with considerable attention, and was quite ready. Acting upon an impulse which I have never been able to analyze or comprehend, I called two of my aids, Lieutenants Worth and Watts, and returned to the mansion already indicated. We met our hostess at the door, who ushered us into the dining-room, where breakfast awaited us, and where the young lady previously referred to was already seated by the coffee urn. Our hostess asking to be excused for a few minutes, the young lady immediately served our coffee. Before we had broken our fast, Lieutenant Watts rose from the table to get his bandana (that being before the days of napkins), which he had left in his cap on a side table by the window, glancing through which he saw Indians approaching the house on one side and red-coats approaching it on the other, with an evident purpose of surrounding it and us, and instantly exclaimed: "General, we are betrayed!" Springing from the table and clearing the house I saw our danger, and, remembering Lord Cheslerfield had said: "Whatever it is proper to do it is proper to do well," and as we had to run, and my legs were longer than my companions', I soon outstripped them. As we made our escape we were fired at, but got across the bridge in safety.

"I felt so much shame and mortification at having so nearly fallen into a trap that I could scarcely fix my mind upon the duties which now demanded my undivided attention. I knew that I had committed a great indiscretion in accepting the singular invitation, and that if any disaster resulted from it I richly deserved to lose both my commission and character. I constantly found myself wondering whether the lady really intended to betray us, or had been accidentally observed. The question would recur, even amidst the excitement of battle. Fortunately, however, my presence and services in the field were not required until Generals Porter and Ripley had been engaged at intervals for several hours, so that when my brigade, with Towson's artillery, were ordered to cross Street's creek, my nerves and confidence had become measurably quieted and restored.

"I need not describe the battle of Chippewa. That belongs to, and is part of, the history of our country. It is sufficient to say that at the close of

the day we were masters of the position, and that our arms were in no way discredited. The British army had fallen back, leaving their wounded in our possession. The mansion which I had visited in the morning was the largest house near, and to that the wounded officers in both armies were carried for surgical treatment. As soon as I could leave the field I went over to look after my wounded. I found the English officers lying on the first floor and our own on the floor above. I saw in the lower room the young lady whom I had met in the morning at the breakfast table, her white dress all sprinkled with blood. She had been attending to the British wounded. On the second floor, just as I was turning into the room where officers were, I met my hostess. One glance at her was quite sufficient to answer the question which I had been asking myself all day. She had intended to betray me, and nothing but the accident of my aid rising for his handkerchief saved us from capture.

"Years afterward, in reflecting upon this incident, I was led to doubt whether I had not misconstrued her startled manner as I suddenly encountered her. That unexpected meeting would have occasioned embarrassment in either contingency, and it is so difficult to believe a lady of cultivation and refinement capable of such an act, that I am now, nearly half a century after the event, disposed to give my hostess the benefit of that doubt. And now, sir," added the general, "this is the third time in my life I have told this story. I do not remember to have been spoken to before on that subject for many years."

He looked at me and seemed to be considering with himself a few moments, and then said: "Remembering your intimacy with General Worth, I need not inquire how you came to a knowledge of our secret."

"Well, general," I replied, "I have kept the secret faithfully for more than forty years, always hoping to obtain your own version of what struck me as a most remarkable incident in your military life."

Whistling Superstitions.

In whatever way regarded, either as a graceful accomplishment or as the spontaneous expression of light-heartedness, whistling has in our own and foreign countries generally attracted considerable attention. Why it should have been invested with so much superstitious awe it is difficult to say, but it is a curious fact that the same antipathy which it aroused among certain classes of our countrymen is found existing in the most distant parts of the earth, where, as yet, civilization has made little or no imperceptible progress. Thus Captain Burton tells us how the Arabs dislike to hear a person whistle, called by them el sif. Some maintain that the whistler's mouth is not to be purified for forty days; while, according to the explanation of others, Satan touching a man's body causes him to produce, what they consider, an offensive sound. The natives of the Tonga Islands, Polynesia, hold it to be wrong to whistle, as this act is thought to be disrespectful to God. In Iceland the villagers have the same objection to whistling, and so far do they carry their superstitious dread of it that "if one swings about him a stick, whip, wand, or ought that makes a whistling sound, he scares from him the Holy Ghost," while other Icelanders, who consider themselves free from superstitions, cautiously give the advice: "Do it not, for who knoweth what is in the air?" However eccentric these phases of superstitious belief may appear to us, yet it must not be forgotten that very similar notions prevail at the present day in this country. A correspondent, of *Notes and Queries* for instance, relates how one day, after attempting in vain to get his dog to obey orders to come into the house, his wife tried to coax it by whistling, when she was suddenly interrupted by a servant, a Roman Catholic, who exclaimed in the most piteous accents, "If you please, ma'am, don't whistle—every time a woman whistles, the heart of the blessed Virgin bleeds!" In some districts of North Germany the villagers say that if one whistles in the evening it makes the angels weep.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

A Fowl Ball.

Scene at the base-ball ground. A ball was knocked aside and caught on a fly. "Foul and out!" was the cry of the umpire. A charming high school girl looking at the game ejaculates, "Ah, really! How can it be a fowl? I don't see any feathers!" And she turned to her attendant with an inquiring look. "Well—oh! Yes, you see," he stammered, "the reason you don't see the feathers is because it belongs to the picked nine."—*Peoria Transcript.*

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

A watch like faith, is comparatively worthless without works.

Why are there no female bill-collectors?—Because a woman's work is never "done."

"There's millions in it," said Smith. "In what?" asked Brown. "Why in billions, of course, ha! ha! ha!"

Many a man thinks that the world has taken up arms against him when his stomach is struggling hard with a boiled dinner.

"You say your brother is younger than you, yet he looks much older?" "Yes, he has seen a great deal of trouble; but I never married."

"I am saddest when I write humorous articles," said a 'funny man' to an acquaintance. "And I," replied the acquaintance, "am saddest when I read them."

It is wrong to laugh at the crooked legs of the young man in tight trousers, but it is perfectly proper to laugh at the tight trousers upon the man with the crooked legs.

Medical journals continue to inform people "how colds are taken." The *Globe* gently imitates that a little information upon how to get rid of them promptly would be equally acceptable.

It gives a New York man an awful start to suddenly observe a clipping from the Chinese newspaper which has been left lying on his table by some mischievous friend. His first thought, of course, is that it is a wash bill.

Two young city ladies in the country were standing by the side of a wide ditch, which they didn't know how to cross. They appealed to a boy who was coming along the road for help, whereupon he pointed behind them with a startled air and yelled "Snakes!" The young ladies crossed the ditch at a single bound.

Lill asks her mother: "What do you like best, good dreams or bad ones?" "Good ones. And you?" "Oh, I like bad dreams best." "Why?" "Because when I have good dreams I find when I wake up that they are not true, and that annoys me; whilst when I have had bad ones I am happy when I wake, because they are not true."

Japanese Holidays.

The Japanese have more than twenty fanciful names by which they designate their beautiful country, but the sobriquet which to a foreigner seems most fitting is certainly the land of holidays. No excuse is too trivial for a Japanese to make holidays, and when he does not make them himself, the government politely steps in and makes them for him. Thus, one day in every six, called *ichi roku*, is a statute holiday; so is the third day in every moon, whilst the list of national festivals commemorative of great men or of great deeds is simply inexhaustible. If a great man dies in England, they commemorate him by a monument in Westminster Abbey; if a great man dies in Japan, he is remembered by a holiday; so that what with the mythical great men who are thus remembered and the historical great men who have died during the past five thousand years, it is a little difficult to find a day of the Japanese year which has not the name of a celebrity attached to it; just as, in glancing down a Roman Catholic calendar, we find that every day has its particular saint. But the greatest day of the year, the festival par excellence of the people, the festival into which is compressed the essence of the fun and enjoyment and happiness of all the other days put together, is the festival of the new year. We may be familiar with the celebration of the day in Paris or New York, but the proceedings there are tame and lifeless when compared with the spontaneous outburst of rejoicing which characterizes new year's day in Japan.

Pele's Hair.

A singular product of vitreous lavas is called in Hawaii "Pele's Hair." This silky, filamentous substance is described by Miss Gordon Cumming in her latest book of travels, as "of a rich olive-green or yellowish-brown color, and glossy, like the byssus of certain shells, but very brittle to handle." It is said to be produced by the wind catching the fiery spray thrown up from the crater, but the extreme fineness of its texture seems rather to suggest the action of escaping vapors within the lava itself. This view strengthened by the circumstance that a perfect counterfeit is fabricated at iron-works by passing jets of steam through molten slag, when a material resembling vitreous cotton-wool, admirably adapted for packing fragile articles, results. The chief seat of its natural production is the great Hawaiian crater of Kilauea (personified as the Fire Goddess Pele), and it is found well adapted for nest-building by some inventive Hawaiian birds.