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Evans & Hildreth.

MARKED DOWN.

We have this day "Marked Down" our large and complete stock of

DRY GOODS,

In order to reduce stock as much as possible before removing.

EVANS & HILDRETH.

MARKED DOWN.

We have "Marked Down,"

DRESS GOODS,

SHAWLS & SKIRTS,

CLOTHS & CASSIMERES,

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CLOAKS & CLOAKINGS

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WHITE GOODS,

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Buyers of Dry Goods, will find this a rare opportunity to procure Bargains.

EVANS & HILDRETH.

Dec 22, 75.

Kent & Bliss.

NEW PRICES,

AT

KENT & BLISS'.

FANCY DRESS GOODS,

of all kinds, from cheapest to best.

The Last line of

BLACK GOODS

in the market, embracing our favorite brands:

BLACK ALPACAS, MOHAIRS, AND BRILLIANTINES at 25c to $1.00
BLACK CASHMERES at 25c to 2.00
BLACK SILKS at $1.00 to 4.00
TAMISE, BLUSETTA CLOTHS, BOMBAZINES, CREPE CLOTHS, &c. &c.

We feel certain that an examination of our

BLACK GOODS STOCK,

will convince you that we are prepared to exhibit the cheapest and best line of

BLACK GOODS

in town.

FANCY GOODS,

in great variety with many jobs and bargains.

TRIMMINGS,

Of all kinds, including Silk and Worsted Fringe, Silk and Yak Laces, Braids, &c.

IN DOMESTIC GOODS,

We have reduced Brown Muslins from 1 to 2 cents a yard. Bleached Muslins from 1 to 3 cents a yard.

KENT & BLISS.

Towanda, Pa. Nov. 22, 1875.

Selected Poetry.

ARE ALL THE CHILDREN IN?

The darkness falls, the wind is high,
Dense black clouds fill the western sky:
The storm will soon begin;
The thunders roar, the lightnings flash,
I hear the great round rain drops dash—
Are all the children in?

They're coming softly to my side;
Their forms within my arms I hide,—
No other arms so sure!
The storm may rage with fury wild,
With trusting faith each little child
With mother feels secure.

But future days are drawing near.—
They'll go from this warm shelter here,
Out in the world's wild din;
The rain will fall, the cold winds blow,
I'll sit along and long to know
Are all the children in.

Will they have shelter then secure,
When hearts are wilding, strong and sure,
And love is cold when tried?
Or will they find a place of rest,
When through life's heart-throbs much oppressed,
To lay them down to die?

God knows it all! His will is best,
I'll shield them now, and leave the rest
With His most righteous hand;
Sometimes, sad hearts are driven
By tempests wild, and thus are driven
Nearer the better land.

If He should call me home before
The children go on that blest shore,
Afar from care and sin,
I know that I shall watch and wait
Till He, the Keeper of the Gate,
Lets all the children in.

Miscellaneous.

THE NEW YEAR'S ROSE.

BY ELLEN E. REXFORD.

John Carthew stopped before the florist's window, for a rose was blossoming there, unlike any he had ever seen before. It was white as a lily on the edges of its petals, and golden at its heart. It looked like a rose of Paradise.

"I will buy that for Dora," he said.

"It is unique," the florist said. "I have never seen any other like it. I had to send away for it, and have tried to procure others like it, but without success."

He paused a moment, and a beautiful face was bending over the rose, with a soft smile on her lips; and John Carthew was standing by her.

"I couldn't think of anything else to bring you to remember me by," he said.

"I don't want anything to make me remember you," she answered, softly.

"I did not believe you would forget me," he answered. "But this rose made me think of you, because it was so different from other roses. What is it Tennyson says? Something about some one's being 'queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls?' I'm not good at quoting poetry, you know. Every time there is a new blossom you must think that I am thinking of you."

"I wonder if your thoughts of me will be as sweet as these blossoms are?" she asked, holding one against her pink cheek.

"You can always believe that," he answered, breaking off one creamy bud, and fastening it in her hair. "When I come back from over the sea, I know where there is a rose I shall try to win. We will see if I shall find enough over there to buy it with."

"Oh, John!" she said, earnestly, "the rose you want would be yours for the asking, if the rose could have its own way in the matter. If father could only see that wealth isn't what is wanted to make us happy, perhaps he would give up his opposition to our marriage."

"It is no use to press the matter with him farther," John Carthew answered. "I am going away to try and get the wealth I must have before I can win you. It will be a long waiting for both of us, perhaps, and to me it will be a weary, lonesome one; since I may not write to you in all that time."

"I shall be as true to you as if I were bound by a thousand promises, or wrote every day," she said. I am willing to wait."

Three years came and went. To Dora Gayle they brought changes such as never dreams had foretold. She had waited hopefully for the time to come when her lover should return to claim her as his own. She heard from him now and then; he was always working, and slowly he was winning. But the years were very long to her.

The end of the third year brought death into her home. One day her father complained of feeling ill; the next day he was dead; and she was alone in the world.

After he had died a fact came to light, of which few had dreamed. The old man had speculated heavily; his estate was bankrupt.

So, at the beginning of the fourth year, Dora Gayle went out into the world with only her hands to depend upon. But she had a stout heart, and she knew John would come back when he heard what had happened.

She took a room in a poor little tenement-house; and almost the only thing she brought from her old home was the rose her lover had given her. That she would take with her, she said, wherever she went. Everything else she was willing to give up to pay her father's debts. But that was hers, and nothing could buy it from her.

She had thought that she had many friends before her father's death, but she found out now that those who had been glad to visit her in the elegant home she had lost, quite forgot that they knew the lonely girl who lived up two pair of stairs, in a poor little house, on a very plain, unfashionable street.

She waited and watched, and the days grew into weeks, and the weeks into months, and the months to years even. When her father died, she considered herself free from any obligation he had imposed, and has written to John Carthew, telling him of what had taken place. She thought he would come to her. But he did not, and was silent. Maybe he was dead. She did not once think that he might have forgotten her.

It was New Year's Eve, and she was unutterably lonely. Suddenly she remembered that she had heard that a child was ill in a tenement house down the street, and that its mother was alone, and wanted some one to come and sit with her. She put on her bonnet and shawl, and went out. All at once she thought of her rose. A new blossom had opened that morning; a royally beautiful flower; and she said to herself she would carry it to the poor sick boy.

She returned to her room, therefore, and broke off the blossom, and one half opened bud growing beside it. A tear or two fell into the rose's golden heart, as shed did this. She had learned to think that rose her friend. Every time it had blossomed she had told herself that her lover was thinking a sweet thought of her.

When she reached the room where the child was, she found that death had crossed the threshold before her, and was standing at the cradle by which the weeping mother knelt.

"He is almost gone!" the poor woman sobbed. "Poor Bennie! What will mother do?"

Dora put the rose in the child's hand. He opened his eyes, and a smile came over his poor little face.

"Pretty posy," he whispered, and held it against his cheek, lovingly. And holding it there, fell asleep forever.

Dora dressed the child for its burial, and laid the rose upon its breast, between the little folded hands. And all night long she sat there, with the dead baby and its mother, while outside the snow fell, soft and white, making the world beautiful for the New Year.

Some friends came at daybreak, to stay in her place; and Dora went home. She looked at the dead child before she left, and she saw that what had been a bud yesterday, had opened into a beautiful, golden-hearted rose today. It lay there on the babe's breast, pure as the snow out of doors, the snow that made the world seem like a bride in white garments.

It was growing dusky in the streets on New Year's afternoon, when she heard swift, impatient steps on her stairs. Her heart beat fast, she hardly knew why. The footsteps stopped at her door. There was a knock.

"Come in," she said, breathing quick.

The door opened, and a man, entering, stood there in the shadows.

"Dora," he said, hopefully, softly, questioningly. "Have I found my rose at last."

"Oh, John, John!" she cried; and then strong arms were round her, and her happy tears were hidden on the breast of the man she had been waiting for so long.

By and by he told her his story. He had received her letter, and started at once for home, bringing the money he had earned in the years of his absence. The ship he sailed in was wrecked and for months five of the crew and himself had lived upon a little half-desert island, from which they were rescued at last, and brought, that very week, to New York.

"But I am a poor man," he said; "my money went to the bottom of the sea."

"And I am a poor woman," she made reply. "But I am not poor, after all. I have *you*, John."

"And I am rich, too, for I have *you*," he said, tenderly; "and you were what I was working to win. I have hunted for you for days, up and down this great city, but you had slipped out of sight, and I could not find any trace of you. This afternoon, not an hour ago, I went with a minister, a friend of mine, to a house where a child lay dead, and on the dead baby's bosom I saw a rose; and I knew then that I had found you or some trace of you. They told me where to come; and I am here to wish you a Happy New Year, Dora, and to claim my New Year's rose, the rose I have wanted to blossom in my heart so long."

And the rose bush in the window whispered softly among its leaves, that it had done a beautiful deed in bringing two true hearts together, and was glad.—*Peterson's Magazine.*

YOURSELF.

You cannot find a more capacious subject than yourself if proper attention is paid to the individual. Yourself will go with you wherever you go, and come away when you please; approve your jokes, assent to your propositions, and, in short, be in every way agreeable, if you only have sufficient skill to practise the art of being one of a pair of twins with yourself.

Skill, however, is not so easy to acquire. You do not long the companion of your old, wise self, if you are in company with another person, to be a severe critic on your failings and foibles, and when you are censured by yourself, it is generally the severest and most intolerable species of reproof. It is on this account that you are afraid of yourself, and seek any associates, no matter how inferior, whose bold chat may keep you from playing the censor. Yourself is likewise a jealous friend. If neglected and slighted it becomes a bore, and to be left even a short time, "by yourself" is then regarded as actually a cruel penance, as many find when youth, health or wealth hath departed. How important is it then to "know thyself," to cultivate thyself warmly but rationally. A sensible self is the best of guides, for few commit crimes but in broad disregard of its admonitions. It tugs continually at the skirt of men to draw them from their cherished vices. It holds up its shadowy finger in warning when you go astray, and it sermonizes sharply on your sins after they have been committed. Our nature is two-fold, and its noblest part is the self to which we refer. It stands on the alert to check the excess of the animal impulses, and, tho' it becomes weaker in the fulfilment of its task by repeated disappointments, it is rarely so enfeebled as to be unable to raise up occasionally sheeted and pale, like Richard's victims, to overwhelm the offender with bitter reproaches. Study, therefore, to be on good terms with yourself—it is happiness to be truly pleased with yourself.

THE naked truth—a bear story.

WAR WITH MEXICO.

THE MAN WHO WAS SURROUNDED AND TOOKEN PRISONER.

The boys on the street made a good deal of sport of the old man as he walked up Woodward avenue yesterday, an old musket with bayonet on his shoulder, a red comforter tied around his waist, and a rooster's tail feather in his old hat. He marched along like a soldier, giving no heed to any one, and finally called into a store in charge of a young man with emaciated side-whiskers and pale blue eyes.

"War agin Mexico!" exclaimed the old man as he brought the butt of his musket down with a great jar and stood at attention.

"Something in our line to-day?" inquired the young man as he came forward.

"I want some powder and shot," replied the old man as he shouldered arm. "I'm off for Mexico this afternoon!"

"We don't keep such things here," replied the young man.

"Powder and shot!" exclaimed the warrior, as he brought his gun to a "right-shoulder-shift" and nearly knocked the stovepipe down with his rusty bayonet.

"I say we don't keep 'em," called the young man in louder tones.

"Shoulder arms, and—

We'll march upon the Mexicans,
And pile 'em in a heap,
And as we go the blood shall flow
In rivers wide and deep.

"Hurrah for me and General Taylor! Order arms! Shoulder arms! Forward march!"

"Please don't make so much noise," said the young man, when he could get in a word.

"Noise! Noise, you young calf!" cried the old man: "d'ye think I can whip Mexico without making any noise about it? I'm going to clean 'em out in thirty days, and I want powder and shot!"

"We don't keep such goods," was the reply.

"Let 'em come for me—right face—left face—bout face—tention—ar!—

Yes, I'll meet Old Santa Anna,
Each man his gun shall wield
Each one prepare to shed his blood
Along the dusty road.

"Please go out!" entreated the young man, who was kept dodging to avoid the old bayonet.

"Powder and shot!" yelled the old man.

"We haven't any!"

"And weigh her out mighty quick, for I start for Mexico at 12 o'clock to lay my life down for my country—this glorious old land of cotton and corn!"

"I'll give you five cents to go out," said the young man.

"Bribery!" yelled the old soldier. "An enemy in the camp—charge bayonets!"

"Don't—hold on—take that thing away!" shouted the clerk as he jumped back.

"Forward—gin 'em some more grape—down with the greasers!" shouted the veteran as he drove the young man out from behind the stove and into a corner.

"Gi'way—police—get out!"

"Powder and shot!" cried the old man, "for—

I'll meet old Santa Anna,
And all his greaser crew.
Around my brow I'll wrap the flag,
And my very last I'll do.

"Powder and shot, or I'll let you have the bayonet."

A crowd had been gathering, and at this critical moment an officer entered the store and collared the old fighter and marched him off.

"Surrounded and tooken prisoner," exclaimed the old man as he went down the street, "but 'rah for me!"

THE HISTORY OF ZERO.

'Zero,' on the common thermometer, like the fanciful names of the constelations, is a curious instance of the way wise men's errors are made immortal by becoming popular. It may be worth while to say that the word itself comes to us thro' the Spanish from the Arabic and means empty, hence nothing. In expressions like '96° Fahr.,' the abbreviation Fahr., stands for Fahrenheit, a Prussian merchant of Dantzic, on the shores of the Baltic sea. His full name was Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit. From a boy he was a close observer of nature, and when only nineteen years old, in the remarkably cold winter of 1708, he experimented by putting snow and salt together, and noticed that it produced a degree of cold equal to the coldest day of winter. As that day was the coldest that the oldest inhabitants could remember, Gabriel was the more struck with the coincidence of his little scientific discovery, and hastily concluded he had found the lowest degree of temperature known in the world; ether natural or artificial. He called that degree zero, and constructed a thermometer or rude weather glass, with a scale graduated from zero to boiling-point, which he numbered 212, and the freezing point 32, because, as he thought, mercury contracted the thirty-second of its volume on being cooled down from the temperature of freezing water to zero, and expanded 180th on being heated from the freezing to the boiling point.

Our nation began to use Fahrenheits thermometer about the middle of the last century, or not far from the time when the old style was exchanged for the new style of writing dates.

The three countries which use Fahrenheit are Holland, England and America; Russia and Prussia use Reaumer's thermometer, in which the boiling point is counted eighty degrees above freezing point. France uses the centigrade thermometer, so called because it marks the boiling point one hundred degrees from the freezing point.

On many accounts the centigrade system is the best; and the triumph of convenience will be attained when zero is made the freezing point, and when the boiling point is put one hundred or one thousand degrees from it, and all subdivisions are fixed decimally.

CIVIL RIGHTS—Obliging answers.

THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

"The idea is simply preposterous!" Cleve Fairfax drew his tall, well-proportioned figure to its utmost height; his lip curled as he did so.

"Yes," said his elder brother in resolutely, feeling his mustache; "but, you see, Charley is set on it, and—"

"That makes no difference, one way or the other," said Cleve, with that quiet firmness which made one think he might be moulded in iron. "*Your* son, *my* nephew, to marry a country girl—a Wisconsin farmer's daughter—simply because she has a pretty face and a pair of hazel eyes! Why, man, it would be a life-long mistake."

And thus saying, Mr. Fairfax passed down the broad aisle.

Mabel Thorpe, sitting in the crowd under the balconies of the Academy of Music, had heard all the brief colloquy with a stinging through her veins, and a burning flush upon her cheek.

"Cruel! cruel!" she thought, as they passed on; "and needlessly so, too! I did not care for Charles Fairfax—I should never have infringed on the dignity of their haughty race by marrying him. They should not have been afraid."

And Mabel drew herself up with a pride no less genuine than the Fairfaxes, if she *was* a "Wisconsin's farmer's daughter!"

Miss Thorpe went home feeling that New York had lost all its charms for her. She had been very, very happy in the great metropolis, with a girl's innocent, unsophisticated happiness; but it was all over now. And when Charles Fairfax called the next day, he was thunderstruck to learn that "Miss Thorpe had gone home."

So ended Charley's young dream of love, until the next pretty girl should strike its answering chord. And Cleve Fairfax thought no more of the girl who had given him a momentary uneasiness, save to congratulate himself on the fact that the danger was over.

An October afternoon, with an atmosphere full of bracing vigor. In the wide chimney of the long, low farm house kitchen, blazed a fire of well-seasoned logs, and Mabel Thorpe, standing in the level crimson light, seemed the very incarnation of the home deity, in her calico dress and ruffled white apron.

"How is he now, mother?" she asked, with a slight shadow of anxiety in her eyes, as a plump, matronly dame came down the narrow, winding stairway that led up from the side of the chimney-jamb.

"Oh, he's better," said Mrs. Thorpe briskly. "He'll do well enough now, I dare say; only I don't see how he could possibly have been so careless as to let the gun discharge itself through his own arm!"

"It will be some time before he recovers, I suppose, mother."

"Your father says he wouldn't be surprised if it was a month before he got well around again."

"A month!" Mabel Thorpe drew a long breath. Of all men in the world, she most disliked and distrusted Cleve Fairfax; yet, here he was, thrown, as it were, on their hands for the very boon of his life. Little had honest Obed Thorpe thought, when he brought home the disabled sportsman, upon whom he had stumbled by the merest chance in the world, whom he was bearing over his threshold; Mabel did not judge it best to enlighten him.

"We never were introduced to each other," she thought, "and it is not likely that he will recognize me, or even remember my name."

But when Cleve began to get better, Mabel could not but feel that a new change was coming over the life that had been rescued from the grave.

And Cleve, watching her, began to have vague ideas of a home and its home goddess.

The marvel and mystery of love—who may ever hope to read enigmas? For Cleve Fairfax, who had run the gauntlet of innumerable New York seasons heart whole and unscathed, had come beneath the lowly roof of a western farm-house to lose his heart, after all!

"Mabel!" he spoke one night after a long silence, as she sat opposite, quiet and self-contained.

"Yes, Mr. Fairfax."

"Do you know that the doctor has decided that I may go away next week?"

"I heard them say so this morning."

"Shall you be sorry to have me gone, Mabel?"

She glanced quickly toward him.

"Of course I will be lonely without you, Mr. Fairfax."

He looked wistfully at her. What made him love her so passionately? What charm did she hold that so attracted his whole nature?

"Mabel," he said suddenly, "I cannot go away from here until I have asked you one question. I cannot leave you until I tell you how dearly I love you—how earnestly I long to make you my wife."

Mabel looked up, pale but self-possessed.

"The idea is simply preposterous!" she said, in the very words that had so chilled her upspringing happiness a year ago, when she sat under the pillars of the balcony of the Academy of Music.

"Preposterous, Mabel! And why?"

"It is impossible, neither more nor less," she went on deliberately. "You to marry a country girl—a Wisconsin farmer's daughter—simply because she has a pretty face and a pair of hazel eyes! Why, man, it would be a life-long mistake!"

Cleve Fairfax felt the blood rising hot and red to his temples. He had an excellent memory, and in an instant the whole scene in the opera house rose up before his mind's eye. His own batteries were turned against him with a vengeance.

"Mabel—you heard me then?"

"I heard you then, Mr. Fairfax."

"But I meant—I didn't know—"

"It is not at all necessary to tell me what you meant, or what you know or didn't know. I am the same Mabel that I was then; nor have the haughty race of the Fairfaxes waxed less aristocratic, that I am aware of. Consequently, you will see the futility of further argument."

"But I have learned to know and love you since," pleaded Cleve eagerly.

"I am sorry you should be disappointed in anything you have set your heart upon, Mr. Fairfax, but my mind is fully made up, and cannot be altered. Moreover, I am engaged to a prince among men, one of those who make agriculture the royal pursuit it is; nor would I exchange my destiny for the highest place in all your hollow city life. Leave me here to be happy, and go you on your way. You are answered."

And Cleve Fairfax, dispirited and disappointed, went back to New York and lived an old bachelor to the end of the chapter, for the love of a "Wisconsin farmer's daughter."

TRICKS OF SPEECH.—Nothing is easier to acquire, nothing more difficult to lose than a trick of speech and manner, and nothing is more universal. If we look around among our friends and acquaintances we shall find scarcely one who has not his favorite word, his perpetual formula, his automatic action, his unmeaning gesture—all tricks caught probably when young, and, not being corrected then, next to impossible now. Who does not know the familiar "I say," as the preface to every remark?—and the still more familiar "you know," as the middle term of every sentence? Who, too, in these latter times, has not suffered from the affliction of "awful" and "jolly"—mile-stones in the path of of speech, interspersed with even uglier and more obtrusive signs of folly and corrupt diction—mile-stones that are forever turning, showing the successive distances to which good taste and refinement have receded in this hideous race after slang to which our youth is given. Then there are people who perpetrate ejaculations—who say "Goodness!" as a mark of surprise and "Gracious!" when surprise is a little mixed with provocation; lower in the social scale it is, "My word!" "Patience!" "Dick Pierce!" and indifferently to all stations, "You don't say so!" or in a voice of deprecation, "No!" and "Surely not!" To these by rules an "Exclamation" use ejaculatory people are always in a state of surprise. They go through the world in unending astonishment, and their appeals to their "goodness" and that intermediate quantity called "good gracious" are incessant.

Again, a trick by no means unusual. Your friend is telling you of some event, or making you the participator in some feeling. He invariably rounds off his narrative with "in all my life!" "I never saw such a thing in all my life!" he says, if he is telling you how his cab horse slipped on the asphalt and fell—exactly as all cab horses always slip and fall. "I never remember such a sultry day in all my life!" he cries, mopping his flushed face. But the thermometer is only eighty degrees, and he said the same yesterday when it was eighty-six degrees, and the same thing the day before when it was seventy-four degrees. Whatever happens to him is the supreme of that order of events, and nothing equal to it has been experienced by him in all his life before. He never had such a cold in all his life as this not very formidable catarrh—never enjoyed himself so much in all his life as in this not very jocund afternoon tea. His life is perpetually at its highest point, and by his track of speech you might imagine him forever at the zenith of experience. It is nothing of the kind. He's a good commonplace, moderate kind of person, whose path lies in an equable, not to say humble, level, both of fact and feeling: but he has suffered his speech to be pitted with this peculiarity, to be stamped by this trick of exaggeration, and the false registering of a fancy zenith means nothing in the world but the simplest affirmation of the most ordinary circumstances.—*The Queen.*

THE WONDERS OF AN ATOM.

All things visible around us are aggregations of atoms. From particles of dust, which under the microscope could scarcely be distinguished one from the other, are all the varied forms of nature created.

This grain of dust, this particle of sand, has strange properties and powers. Science has discovered some, but still more truths are hidden within this irregular molecule of matter which we now survey, that even philosophy dares dream of.

How strangely it obeys the impulse of heat—mysterious are the influences of light upon it—electricity we hardly excite it—and still more curious is the manner in which it obeys the magic of chemical forces. These are phenomena which we have seen; we know them, and we can reproduce them at our pleasure. We have advanced a little way into the secrets of nature, and from the spot we have gained we look forward with a vision somewhat brightened by our look; but we discover so much yet unknown, that we learn another truth—our vast ignorance. Many things relating to this grain of dust. It gathers around it other particles; they cling together, and even acting upon every other one, and all of them arranging themselves around the little centre, according to some law, a beautiful crystal results, the geometric perfection of its form being a source of admiration. It quickens with yet undiscovered energies; it moves with life; dust and vital force combine; blood and bone, nerve and muscle result from the combination. Forces which we cannot, by the utmost reflections of our philosophy, object, direct the whole, and from the same dust which formed the rock and grew in the tree, is produced a living and breathing thing, capable of receiving a divine illumination, of hearing in its new state the gladness and glory of a soul.

THE other day, when a Detroit grocer spelled sugar "s-h-u-g-a-r," a friend pointed out the word and remarked: "That word isn't spelled quite right." "Hi! I see," laughed the grocer. "One would think I had no education." And he crossed it out and wrote "s-h-u-g-o-r."

A HISTORY OF THE FAN.

A curious little volume has just appeared, giving the history of fans among all nations and at all periods. The author, M. Blendel, who has been able to examine many rare collections, states that it first came from the East, where it is always accompanied by a flip-flap and a parasol. The former is made of the tail of the Thebetian buffalo, white as snow, and of which the extremity is a tuft of hair in the form of a plume. Fans of feathers, recently in fashion, date from the seventh century. They were first used in China, where the Emperor, Kao Tsong, having heard the cry of a pheasant, supposed it to be an auspicious sign, ordered a fan to be made, shaped like the tail of that bird. According to the author, that article had more than one singular use; on it the rich deposited the alms which they gave to the poor; the great received on it the delicacies offered them. It was lowered to superiors as a mark of deference; the nobles carried it to court and it served to cool them from the heat of the day, and to amuse them while waiting in the ante-chamber. A fan placed on a plate of a particular form announced to the criminal of noble family his sentence, and it was the moment in which he held out his hands to receive the fatal present that the executioner was to accomplish his work.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION.—The Lord Chief Justice, in distributing prizes at the Birkbeck Institution the other day, made some sensonable remarks on the danger of neglecting our own tongue in our zeal for various kinds of culture. "May I be allowed to suggest," he said, "that in the examinations English composition has not quite so prominent a place as it ought to occupy? No one bows with a more profound and reverent worship at the shrine of science than I do; no one values more than I do classical attainments. Nevertheless, allow me to say that I know of no study more valuable to an Englishman than the study of English. Nothing is more valuable than the power of English composition, English oratory and English elocution; and greatly as I value classical knowledge and the knowledge of foreign languages, I still say that the English language and English composition are of the first importance to Englishmen." A warning voice such as this is needed. If the only effect of the present zeal for education is to extend bad precedents, it will bind the country in educational fetters from which there will be no after possibility of escape. Our educationists should give more thought to the subjects taught.—*London Examiner.*

THE CUNNING COBBLER.—Many years ago the the husband of an old lady living in Buckinghamshire, England, died without making his will, for the want of which necessary precaution his estate would have passed away from his widow, but she had resorted to the following expedient to avert the loss of the property. She concealed the death of her husband, and prevailed on an old cobbler, her neighbor, who was, in person, somewhat like the deceased, to go to bed at her house and personate him, in which character it was agreed that he should dictate a will, leaving the widow the estate in question. An attorney was sent for to draw up the writings. The widow, who on his arrival appeared in great affliction at her good man's danger, began to ask questions of her pretended husband, calculated to elicit the answers she expected and desired. The cobbler, groaning aloud and looking as much like a person going to give up the ghost as possible, feebly answered, "I intend to leave you half of my estate, and I think the poor old shoemaker, who lives opposite, is deserving the other half, for he has always been a good neighbor." The widow was thunderstruck at receiving a reply so different from that which she expected, but dare not negative the cobbler's *will*, for fear of losing the whole of her property; while the old rogue in bed—who was himself the poor old shoemaker living opposite—laughed in his sleeve, and divided with her the fruits of a project which the widow had intended for her sole benefit.

NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

JANUARY 9, 1876.

1 SAM. XVI: 1-13—GOLDEN TEXT: 1 SAM. XVI: 13.

FIRST QUARTER. No. 11.

The rejection of Saul by God was not followed by his immediate deposition. He remained king of Israel until his death, which occurred about ten years later. He retained his popularity with the people who were ignorant of God's purpose concerning him, and his power continued to increase. But the "evil spirit from Jehovah" gradually overmastered all the elements of goodness and a sickness in his soul, and so stirred up the feelings, ideas, imaginations and thoughts of his fierce, insubordinate mind that he dwelt in the very atmosphere of madness, and at times was stricken by its baleful fires. The very man who at first ran away from the regal power, now ran after it with a heart plotting murder, and hands ready to shed the blood not only of David but even of his brave son, Jonathan.

Samuel evidently liked the man, though compelled to reprove the king. He mourned for Saul. And he mourned for Israel. He feared lest Saul's disobedience and contrariness would bring contempt and ruin upon the nation. Grief in such a case was not sinful, except in so far as it was excessive. And Samuel's sorrow seems to have been inordinate. It implied a want of submission to God's ways, and a want of faith in God's wisdom and power. Hence God's rebuke, v. 1. Scott truly says: "Our most reasonable and disinterested sorrow may be so excessive as to imply rebellion against the righteous will of God. And he will then rebuke us as well as encourage us under our distresses." But had there been nothing amiss about Samuel's sorrow, the time to mourn was ended. God had work for him to do. "Fill thine horn with oil and go!" It was and is still the custom in the East to keep liquids in horns. One of Job's daughters was named Keren-Happuch—*i. e., paint-horn.* (Compare 1 Kings 1: 39). "I will send thee to Jesse." The only one of this name in Scripture; the grandson of Boaz and Ruth, and the great-grandson of Rahab (Matt. 1: 5). Jewish tradition has it that he was a weaver of the veils of the sanctuary. Nothing is said of David's mother; her name is not even given. But we know that she was a handmaid of the Lord (Ps. lxxxvi: 16), and no doubt David owed much to her humble piety. "For I have provided (or selected) me a king among his sons." Jehovah still retains and exercises the power of appointing their king.

V. 2. "And Samuel said, How can I (or, how shall I) go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me?" It is generally supposed that this was said from fear of Saul. It was a natural fear in the circumstances, but showed unbelief. But his question may only imply a desire to act prudently and safely in so difficult a matter. God does not blame him, as he would probably have done if guilty of unbelief, but points out the way in which he may escape Saul's attention. "Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord." This was true so far as it went. For Samuel was really about to conduct a sacrificial festival; the rest of his business he was under no obligation to divulge. The concealment of it was a real kindness to Saul, as the knowledge of it would have influenced his fierce jealousy and driven him to destroy Samuel. As the Ark of the Covenant was not at this time in the Tabernacle but at Kirjath-jearim, sacrifices were offered wherever Samuel judged them necessary.

God's command was, "Call Jesse to the sacrifice." It is plain that it was his intention that the sacrifice should have special reference to his family. "The elders (old men and so rulers) trembled at his coming." The people were ill at ease under Saul's administration, and it is evident that the elders at Bethlehem feared that they had committed some great sin or offense, for which the prophet had come to pronounce judgment upon them. We infer from this that Samuel was in the habit of going unexpectedly to different places for the purpose of reproving and punishing wrong-doing and sin. "And he said (singular verb) 'Comest thou peaceably?' The speaker was probably Jesse, who must have been an important man in the place. He spake for the trembling elders. Hence the answer is to him, and the summons meant to be confined to him and his family. This is plain from the word—"And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice." This accorded fully with Jehovah's intention, v. 3.

But how did he sanctify Jesse and his sons? Partly by a ritual sanctification by washings and legal purifications, which probably preceded every sacrificial festival (Ex. xix: 10, 14), and partly by a spiritual preparation, by putting them into a suitable frame of mind to appear before God.

Vs. 6-12. After the sacrifice was killed, and before sitting down to the sacrificial meal, Samuel called the sons of Jesse before him. They came one by one, probably into some private room. The eldest, Eliab, was first called. He was tall, stalwart and handsome, just such a man externally as suited the popular notion of a king. But the Lord made known to Samuel, whether by inward revelation or an audible voice we cannot decide, that he was not the man of his choice. And in connection therewith he laid down a great principle of his action: He judges men not by senseous but by moral qualities. "When God would please the people with a king, he chose a handsome man; but when he would