

# The Forest Republican.

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### A Merry Christmas!

"A merry Christmas to you all!"  
I'm passing now from mouth to mouth,  
From east to west, from north to south,  
From lowly cot and stately hall.

"A merry Christmas to us all!"  
Is shouted by the cheerful host;  
The windows barred against the frost,  
We toast the season, great and small.

A merry Christmas! Hush—no breath  
Of revelry must pierce the gloom  
Of your chamber—from that room  
The spirit has passed out with Death.

The widow clasps her child, a kiss  
Is pressed upon its rosy face;  
A choking sigh—a close embrace—  
"A merry Christmas?" What is this?

"A Christmas party—let us go!"  
A wand'r'ng homeless drops to die;  
His brothers heedless pass him by,  
Half frozen in the freezing snow.

A merry Christmas! What a few  
Remains of those it welcomed last;  
Another year has o'er us pass'd  
And left us, wife, the only two.

The childish laugh we held so dear,  
The toys that made us once more young,  
The infant arms that round us cling,  
Have vanish'd with the passing year.

But Christmas merry is—and those  
Who strive to make it so do well;  
For who can ever fully tell  
What comfort from this season flows?

"A merry Christmas!" let us bless  
The season when our Lord was born;  
And doubly bless the Christmas morn'  
That gave us "Christ our Righteousness."

"A merry Christmas to you all!"  
Let it resound from mouth to mouth,  
From east and west to north and south,  
To humble cot to stately hall.

### The Story Writer.

#### AN EDITOR'S CHRISTMAS REMINISCENCE.

I am an editor; and one bitter cold morning, a few days before Christmas, I sat at my desk. Among the heap of manuscripts I was daily compelled to examine—many of them desultory, untidy, and unskilled, and with neither beginning, middle or end—was one, written on the softest cream-laid French white paper, in a childish lady's hand, on lines which had been carefully erased afterwards. It was a little story of no great literary merit, but there was an aroma of youth and of sweetness in every line. There was a promise in it. It was like the light in the sky before the sun had risen on a fine day—an omen, a portent of sunshine and warmth, but no more. I put it down as if I had touched the petals of a rose. There was a tiny scented note beside it—of course full of italics:

"DEAR MR. EDITOR: I send you a little story. I am only sixteen, and papa and mamma do not know anything about it, but please tell me if it is worth anything. I want it to be printed; I want to be paid for it. It is not for myself, though, but I want the money to give my dear little brother a nice little birthday present. I am, dear Mr. Editor, yours, etc.,  
"EMILY."

Then came the address and signature. The writing of the note was less neat and regular than the manuscript. But there was the same fragrance of dainty youth about it.

I held it a long time in my hand. I am an old man; at all events middle-aged, perhaps something more; but my heart is younger than my appearance. Little distillations came, or seemed to come, from the paper I held. It was with no common feeling of interest that I sat down and wrote my answer to the note. I returned the manuscript, but I wrote gently and tenderly. I gave it as my hope and my opinion that, with a little more care and study, the youthful writer would achieve a success. I even promised to print that identical manuscript if it were a little revised or corrected, and I pointed out how it might be made available. I opened the window of my den after I had written my note. The weeks piercing through the flags below had a less dreary look than they had ever had before; a gleam of sunshine shone on them, and their frosty verdure borrowed something of Piccola's brightness from it. I posted my letter and the manuscript to the address named, and went home, wondering if ever I should hear from the writer again. With that, however, all thoughts of the manuscript passed away. The author was too timid to reply.

On Christmas Eve I was asked as usual to dine with an old friend of mine at St. John's Wood. He was a married man, with a pleasant comely wife, and several small children, male and female. The children are not coming down to dinner," said my hostess, "for they are going to give us a surprise afterwards."

I bowed and was delighted, both at the anticipation of pleasure to come, and of privation for the first time of considerable present annoyance. I need not say I was then a bachelor. When we went up stairs after dinner, we found the folding-doors which divided the front from the back room closed.

gifts worked and embroidered by the children for their parents. The three little girls and their governess had done it all.

While my friend and his wife were embracing and thanking the children, I had time to notice the governess. She was very young, almost a child herself. A mass of bright hair was gathered up in great waves at each side of her head, and fastened in a loose thick loop behind. The bright curls were so arranged as to reveal the ear. The ear and cheek were, I should rather say they are like those painted by Leighton in his "Painter's Honeymoon." Need I say more of their ravishing loveliness? But the pretty blue eyes looked as if they had cried a great deal, and there had been recent tears, for the eyelids were somewhat swollen. She was not sad, however, for she played on the piano for the children and for me, their old god-father, to dance to, and she joined with us in a game of blind man's buff. When the children retired, she retired also.

"What a charming person," I said.  
"She is most excellent," said my friend.  
"Although she is so young, Miss— is the bread provider of her family. Her father and mother have, according to the cant phrase, seen better days; in fact, they are people of good birth, and once had a good fortune. They have a son and daughter; the son is a fine fellow also. Both the son and daughter give the greater part of their earnings to their parents; but the son has not been very fortunate. My little governess, she is only seventeen, (my children are so young they do not require a prim regular governess,) does more with her salary, mediocre as it is, than her brother can do with his hard work. He is a clerk in a bank."  
"And she helps him also, I suppose?"  
"I dare say she does, but I have never inquired, for she is full of reticence and reserve on these points. I only know she would set up all night, and work like a horse all day, to help both her parents and her brother. She is going home to-morrow; and he, I fear, cannot afford the expense of the journey. The parents live now in Scotland."

"Could we not help him?" I said, bashfully.  
My friend smiled. Both brother and sister spent Christmas at home.  
My good fortune threw me a good deal after this with my friend's governess. Must I say from that Christmas Eve I was never heart whole?

The following Easter we were engaged, and before the Christmas Eve which followed we were married. What an aim and a hope my life has now acquired!

We have a little suburban home, and I leave my wife every morning to pursue my editorial labors, and return every evening, forgetting my work and my worries, knowing that the sweetest heart and the fairest face I have ever known await me in my modest but happy home. I never heard again from the author of the manuscript which had so much interested me; and, truth to tell, had never thought of her since that Christmas Eve. Two or three years have passed since then, and we have two babies.

Their mother is always playing with them. She often puts her delicate, slender white hands under my baby girl's foot, and the baby makes believe to stand on it. What a picture it is; it is like a rose-bud laid on a white camellia.

As I walked up and down the room reading a scratchy, scrawly manuscript, and fumbling over it in desperation, for the tiresome person who had sent it had by some ingenious carelessness mutilated it of its last page, my thoughts flew far and wide, and, by some association I cannot attempt to explain, the pretty manuscript from the youthful writer who had sent me no more was recalled to me.

Unconsciously the manuscript I held faded from my mind, and the other was present with me. I wondered what had become of her—had she written any more?—where and how was she?

Every moment I became more and more possessed with the memory. I was so happy myself that I felt for all who seemed to have care and struggle in their lives, I looked out the address to which I had written before, and wrote to the unknown a few lines. I said that time had passed, that the youthful inexperience which had prevented the paper she had sent from being accepted must now be corrected, and that I should be glad and willing to see anything else she had written, if she had written anything since then.

Within a few days I had an answer. The writing was in a feigned hand, quite unlike the round, hesitating, girlish hand I remembered. The words were, however, as sweet and innocent as the first had been. The note ran as follows:

"It is so good of you to remember me, but I do not write any more. I am so happy. I have a dear, good, noble husband. [Oh, these womanly exaggerations, I thought, as I sat in my editorial chair]. And such darling babies! I wrote, for I wanted to help my dear ones, but they have been better helped by others than I could ever have hoped to help them. God has given them a better friend than I could be. If you seek to know me, you shall do so. If when you go home you see a woman with a rose in her hand, hold out yours. You will know me."

I smiled at the romantic fervor of this reply, and a faint desire arose that my wife and the writer of the letter should know each other, and then I went on with my stupifying avocations.

As I went home, I confess I looked about for a woman with a rose in her hand, but, as might naturally be sup-

posed, neither in cabs nor omnibuses did such an apparition manifest itself.

As I entered my own door I gave an impatient shrug at the idea of having been the subject of a foolish jest. But whom did I see standing within the threshold of my home? My darling, with her fair, child-like face and bright hair; love, and joy, and youth crowning her with a triple crown, and in her hand was a rose!

"Dear husband," she said, as I kissed her, "I think I loved you from the moment I had your kind, indulgent, thoughtful note. I had written that absurd little story for I sadly wanted a little money to pay for Gerald's return home at Christmas, to be with papa and mamma, and I had a foolish notion I could write."

"And you were disappointed, my pet. What a savage I must have seemed!"  
"No; I felt how foolish I had been, and I cried heartily, but I thought you good and kind all the same. And Gerald got home, too, and we had a happy Christmas after all."

I kissed her.  
"But are you never going to write a story for my magazine again?"  
"I do not know," she said, archly.  
"Meanwhile, you can write ours, if you like."

### Fashion in Fans.

Fans are of all kinds, from the rich white satin fan for bridal occasions, with its covering of Alencon or old point, to the sober, dark-colored pocket fan with Russian leather sticks. The newest fans for evenings are mostly white, with introductions of color in the shape of very small flower blossoms, such as lilies of the valley with faint yellow stems and forget-me-nots, or pompon roses; these are nestled in the marabout tops and so arranged as to form a bunch of flowers when the fan is shut. The black fans of this kind are equally dainty, the flowers introduced being of the brightest tints of scarlet or yellow, and very Spanish in effect. Other fans have tiny flecks of color introduced in harlequin shades, and very pretty when in motion.

The sticks of these fans are in ivory, ebony or bone. Fans with cherry wood sticks are a novelty, tipped with silver; Vienna wood fans are finished in the same way, and are as pretty when folded as unfolded; the tops have prettily-painted designs in the Watteau style, sometimes painted very carefully, according to the price of the fan; or the top of satin is embroidered in flosses; or net is stretched on them thickly embroidered with glittering beads. Dark green is a favorite color in fans this year, the marabout top and the satin being often of the tone of color of the principal fall goods.

Chateaux worn with colored fans are of silver or oxidized silver. A favorite design for the clasp is the Japanese fan or a half-opened fan; the Japanese fan is a marked feature in the decoration of many other articles now worn as accessories. Evening fans for ball dresses are attached by ribbons matching the dress or trimmings, by chateaux of fine flowers or by chains of gold or some other jeweled design which adds richness to the dress.

### Stanley and His Note Book.

Says Stanley in a letter describing his African explorations: "A terrible crime in the eyes of many natives below the confluence of the Kwango and the Congo was taking notes. Six or seven tribes confederated together one day to destroy us, because I was 'bad, very bad.' I had been seen making medicine on paper—writing. Such a thing had never been heard of by the oldest inhabitant. It, therefore, must be witchcraft, and witchcraft must be punished with death. The white chief must instantly deliver his notebook (his medicine) to be burned, or there would be war on the instant."

My notebook was too valuable; it had cost too many lives and sacrifices to be consumed at the caprice of savages. What was to be done? I had a small volume of Shakespeare, Chaudos edition. It had been read and reread a dozen times, it had crossed Africa, it had been my solace many a tedious hour, but it must be sacrificed. It was delivered, exposed to the view of the savage warriors. "Is it this you want?" "Yes." "Is this the medicine that you are afraid of?" "Yes; burn it, burn it. It is bad, very bad; burn it."  
"Oh, my Shakespeare," I said, "farewell!" and poor Shakespeare was burnt. What a change took place in the faces of those angry, sullen natives! For a time it was like another jubilee. The country was saved; their women and little ones would not be visited by calamity. "Ah! the white chief was so good, the embodiment of goodness, the best of all men."

### Meteorite Stones.

Within the last eighteen years twelve falls of meteorite stones have occurred in the United States, of which specimens have been collected. Eight of these falls took place in the prairie region of the West, extending from Ohio to Kansas, and from Kentucky to Wisconsin, inclusive. Prof. J. L. Smith, of Louisville, gives a map of this region in the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, showing the locality of each fall, and he states that the aggregate estimated weight of the eight was 1,000 kilograms, equal to more than 2,300 pounds. Going back further, and taking a period of sixty years, Prof. Smith finds that there have been twenty well-noted falls in the United States, ten of which were in the same region, and those ten weighed twenty times as much as the ten which occurred outside its limits.

### What and How Wild Animals Eat.

Here is the bill of fare of the menagerie of the Botanical Garden of Paris. The guests are numerous, varying generally from 1,100 to 1,200. Their tastes are naturally different, according to the divisions and orders to which they belong. In the first place, come the flesh-eaters, the lions, tigers and bears. These each consume about eighteen pounds of meat in twenty-four hours. The hyena, although a much smaller animal, receives because of its greater voracity eleven pounds. Only eight pounds are allowed to the panther.

The great eater of the house is the elephant, which consumes 165 pounds of bread, carrots, grass, straw and bran. After such a repast he may well be thirsty, and from eight to ten barrels of water are ready to satisfy his herd.

The hippopotamus is inferior in height to the elephant, but not in appetite. His rations are like those of his neighbor of the proboscis, only the bran is replaced by a coarser quality, which is cooked.

The bears would accommodate themselves to this regimen, but they have means, which are less dear.

The rhinoceros absorbs daily about 110 pounds of nearly the same nourishment; he has also rice.

The other quadrupeds, such as the giraffe and the bison, notwithstanding their great height, require much smaller quantities of food, of which barley, hay and bran form the principal parts. The deer, antelopes, sheep and goats receive hay and grass.

The annual expense of food for the menagerie is \$7,812, which is about \$22 per day.

The bill of fare of the Zoological Garden of London differs little from that of Paris. Fish, however, are used in greater quantities in the former. They are designed for the birds and marine animals that live upon them in a state of freedom. All the fish brought for food are carefully examined, as a sea-dog came near strangling himself one day with a fish which had several hooks in its mouth.

The sea-dog eats gluttonously; the otter, on the contrary, eats slowly and chews carefully before swallowing. The most greedy lovers of fish are the pelicans. The keeper throws the fish into a pond; then opens the gate and leaves the passage free to the pelicans, who rush in and the fish are devoured in an instant. Dainties are generally reserved for the monkeys. Turnips, cooked potatoes, apples, oranges, nuts are given them, and all divided into small bits.

The monkeys usually eat together, which often causes very comical disputes, much to the delight of spectators.

The birds of prey are fed with rabbits, guinea pigs, eggs, insects and sometimes small birds. The serpents have generally but one meal in a week. Their dinner, which they take seven days to digest, sometimes consists of a dozen rabbits, twenty young guinea pigs and as many birds, and rats and mice which are given them alive, this being essential to the health and preservation of these terrible reptiles. The venomous serpents are fed solely with rats and guinea pigs. These poor little creatures succumb quickly after the reptile has bitten them.

The great pachydermatous animals, such as the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and the elephant are fed in London as in Paris. The last receives cabbages and a few crackers, a delicacy that he accepts with much pleasure. Every evening a new bed of straw is made for him. In the morning his cell is thoroughly cleaned, and the straw must be renewed. A visitor one day observed to the keeper, "Here is a very clean beast, and very careful of her lodging; she would make an excellent house-keeper."

"Oh, no," answered the keeper, "she eats her mattress every morning."

### Frightening the Monkeys.

The inhabitants of Kabilia, Northern Africa, are much troubled by the depredations of monkeys, who in countless numbers infest the hilly forests. The unfortunate farmers or market gardeners who live on the mountain slopes wage a continual war against these marauders, which is foredoomed, however, to endless failure; for the inhabitants were Darwinites long before Mr. Darwin was heard of; and they dare not for their life kill one of the creatures regarded by them as their ancestors. So the monkeys increase and multiply without the chance of becoming thinned off by any fatal battue. The only thing that can be done to guard against their attacks is to frighten them away, and this is effected by some very cunning and audacious devices. It is found that occasionally, after a successful raid upon some garden, a few of the less hardened offenders are overcome by the plenteousness of their feast. The potent juice of the grapes or of the figs gets the better of their reason or of their bodily activity, and they remain stretched on the ground, to be captured by the furious proprietor, when a mild but insidious punishment is inflicted upon the prisoners. Their necks are hung with small bells or rattles, and they are turned loose at the forest edge, when the panic created by their appearance is such as to frighten all their kindred and acquaintances away into the depths of the wood. If bells cannot be procured another process has been invented—that of clothing the captured ape in a stout waistcoat of red stuff and then letting him run. The effect is magical, and long after the ostracized animal has died or got free from his slavish badge the depredators hold aloof from the dangerous district.

### NEW YORK'S BABY SHOW.

#### Infantile Wonders on Exhibition—Competing Babies and their Surroundings.

The recent opening of the baby show in New York is thus described in the columns of the *World* of that city: The baby show opened in Midget's Hall, in Fifth Avenue, at 9:30 yesterday morning. It was a gathering to be remarked in several of its features, but most remarkable was its suggestion of wisdom.

At the hour of its opening the babies were fresh, wide-awake, unweaned and absorbed. No laggard twin, clipped of its vitality, had fallen into a leaden and precarious sleep, and the noisiest boy had not yet opened his mouth or got his preposterous legs into the throes of irresponsible motion. The flush of the vigor of morning was on the faces of all, and the alert intellect peered out of every baby's eyes. Under the circumstances, with every infant deeply serious, silent and absorbed, there never was such a gross display of facial wisdom.

The babies were assorted and arranged in the large hall on the second floor, which was trimmed profusely with American flags. At the Fifth Avenue end were the twins. On the side towards Fourteenth street were arrayed single babies and all babies with defects and remarkable histories, while babies of different merits sat on the side opposite and were strewn casually through the center of the hall. The whole number of babies entered is nearly four hundred, and all these will be out doubtless to-morrow; but yesterday the show opened with 250. There will be several sets of triplets, and arrangements have been made and will probably come to fruition with a phenomenal Brooklyn father for a quartet. The management requires the presence of babies and their mothers from nine in the morning until ten at night, though wearied babies are dismissed or put to bed on the floor above and their places supplied with fresh and vital specimens. Nurses are supplied to assist and relieve the mothers; also intelligent and instructed women to explain and interpret to visitors. In the hall above a lunch is always spread for mothers and nurses, and there are cribs and baby-jumpers for the soothing and reinvigoration of specimens.

A number of prizes are to be given, the recipients to be determined by popular ballot. Every visitor will find attached to his ticket a coupon with printed instructions as to what qualities are to be voted for, thus: "Handsomest mother," "prettiest baby," "finest triplets," "prettiest twins," "greatest novelty," and the four babies in order who are next prettiest. Each child and mother has a printed card with a number, which the visitor, having made his selections, ascertains and writes upon his coupon, depositing the same in a box afterwards. The handsomest mother is to have a prize of a gold watch and chain, and money prizes ranging from \$100 down are to go to the elected babies. As for other qualities not mentioned on the coupon, they are to be decided by a selected committee.

Yesterday the show was well crowded with visitors. Elderly gentlemen came a plenty, and chuckled over the marvels of comeliness and fatness which they found, and ladies in silks and seal-skins pondered and consulted. The twins and the fat, pretty babies got most notice; the babies with defects were studied mostly by the reporters. In nearly every case the mother sat with the child, and was ready to tell everything concerning it. Two conspicuous mottoes hung on the walls, one being: "What is home without a baby?" and the other: "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that moves the world."

### A Porcelain Fiddle.

Venice is considerably excited at present over a very unusual sort of a fiddle, the only one of its kind, probably ever made. The manufacturer of this porcelain fiddle was formerly a workman in a Saxon porcelain manufactory. After his return, old and feeble, to his old home, he attempted to carry out a long cherished project for making a fiddle, the box of which should be of china. With the aid of a boy, it is stated, he has in fact succeeded in producing a fiddle of this kind, which has a tone of rare purity and astonishing richness, combined with charming harmony and extraordinary power. The box part, or resonator, is exceedingly light, and the strings are made of metallic wires, while the bow, departing from the usual form, is curved, making almost a semi-circle. The success of this clever Venetian, who had enjoyed the advantages of the skill acquired in a German porcelain factory, may be the means of directing musicians to the advantages of the clear, ringing, but fragile china and glass, for similar uses in acoustics.—*Scientific American*.

Leisure, the highest happiness on earth, is seldom enjoyed with perfect satisfaction except in solitude. Indolence and indifference do not always afford leisure, for true leisure is frequently found in that interval of relaxation which divides a painful duty from an agreeable relax—recreation; a toil-some business from the more agreeable occupations of literature and philosophy.

Two Waterbury (Conn.) teamsters were so mad because one wouldn't turn out of a narrow courtyard for the other that they sat on their wagons facing each other all day, and unhitched the horses after dark, leaving the wagons still there. But about daylight next morning each stole around and took his cart out of the way.

### Items of Interest.

The noble horse leads a life of whom. It is a wise cow that knows its own fodder.

The language of the suspender is supposed to be, "Brace up!"  
In the case of Sitting Bull, absence makes the hair grow longer.  
Any kind of weather snits Michigan, so the bureau needn't be backwards.

If Sitting Bull could have his way about it, the American nation would have no Indian summer.  
A person who had been listening to a very dull address remarked that every thing went off well—especially the audience.

"Is it proper to say, 'I see the sun rising,' or 'I see the sun rise?'" he asked. "Sir, the proper thing is to get home before it rises," replied his friend.

A mob in Winnemucca, Nev., threatened to destroy the railroad station and a train of cars if the company did not remove a passenger who had the small-pox.

The lady whom Stanley was to marry has wedded another. What shall it profit a man if he finds 15,000,000 heathens and losses his best girl?—*N. Y. Herald*.

A Chicago inventor recently made a small fan-wheel, to be placed in the hat, to keep the head cool in warm weather. He set it going in his own hat, and the first thing he knew his hair was wound up in the machinery. The spring was very stiff, and before he could release himself a part of his hair was pulled out by the roots.

A contemporary tells young ladies how to arrange their hair in a fashionable style. "Let it all down," it says, "and comb it out with a cross-cut-saw. Then go up on the roof of the house, and there stand still while the wind plays (whatever is appropriate) with it. Then catch up the black with a bow of ribbon, and allow the front to stay as it is."

"Simplicity" is the sweet title of an association of ladies just formed at Leipzig, Germany. The object of this association is to promote simplicity in dress, and to make war upon luxury. Members must pledge themselves not to have any trains or false hair, not to wear tulle, pol noises or other frivolities. The dresses must be plain, and only a simple embroidery or trimming at the end of the costume is permitted.

### The War in Turkey.

The campaign both in Bulgaria and Armenia is not only very active, but at a very critical juncture just now. Osman Pasha, to the surprise of many military critics, still holds out in Plewna, which, by this time, he has rendered impregnable to any successful capture by assault, but everything indicates that his stock of provisions are about exhausted, and that he cannot, therefore, maintain his present attitude of bold defiance and indomitable resistance much longer. Meantime the army under Sulieman Pasha and Mohammed Ali is at length moving to the relief of the besieged general, and considerable fighting has already taken place between them and the Russians to the disadvantage of the besiegers so far as it has progressed, and a great battle is inevitable within a few days which will either result in the release of Osman Pasha's army, and the defeat of the Russians in Bulgaria, or the defeat of the Turks, the capture of Osman and his army, and the further advance of the invaders to Constantinople by the passes of the Balkans to commence the siege of Adrianople. This is the position of the belligerents substantially in Europe, and a few days will be decisive of the result of the campaign. On the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus in Armenia the war is of less moment. At last accounts the Russians are besieging Ezeroun, from before which one of their assaults had been recently repulsed. One of the most extraordinary phases of the present war, like the Franco-Prussian strife, is the comparatively insignificant part played by the fleets of the belligerents. In fact, this whole war, like that to which we have referred, has been one of surprising and unexpected events.

### Weary Amid the Glimmer.

A Washington letter has this: A lady whose husband held one of the highest places in the government stood in her magnificent home attired for her weekly reception. "How gladly would I give up all the flattery, show and insincerity of this public place and go back to the rooms I lived in when we were first married. I would throw my silks and diamonds away and sit down to my supper of chip beef and tea at sunset, and afterwards take a long quiet walk with Will, and rest on the stump in the moonlight, and tell my little plans for the future, and what I had done every hour while he was gone, and know that we were alone in the world, living only for each other. Those days seem like days in heaven. I work harder now than any slave; often three hundred calls to return in a single week, receptions or parties every night; see the same people, hear the same talk, eat the same things, come home disgusted, wonder what I am living for, where I will go when I die. 'Bottie, I must have Hon.—and Secretary—here to-morrow; I must get their influence; you must talk music to the secretary, and you must ask Hon.—about moonlight; moonlight is his hobby. Do your best. I need their help.' So it is always. Help, influence, power—smile in my face, interest in my neighbor, living a lie; feeding my soul with husks."