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The Peanut.

A large and healthy peanut Lay costly abroad, And it clinked, oh, so gleefully! And to itself it said: "There's a great big world before me! And my mission yet to do; And up I'll be and doing it, Ere the sun has dried the dew. "There are greedy boys to conquer, And hungry girls as well; What a world of power I've hidden Within this little shell. Though they slay me in the battle, Though they crush me like a worm, Though they bake and crunch my body, If I can I'll make 'em squirm." And the small boy grabbed that peanut And he cracked it 'tween his teeth, But when he would have swallowed it, It choked him 'en to death; And the peanut's work was ended— It had fallen in the strife— It had done its mission nobly, Though the doing cost its life.

AN APRIL FOOL.

Helen was our beauty; there is no contradicting that. A haughty, high-spirited beauty, almost dark enough for an Asiat; but so perfectly made, with such a glow on the olive oval, such a ruddy ripeness on the full lip, such a luster in the great dark eye. And, like most beauties, she felt as if the world was made for Caesar. Of course, none of us in the little village group ever thought of denying her supremacy. In fact, we all admired her too much for that, although I doubt if any of us loved her. But we all took a certain pleasure in seeing her arrayed to suit her beauty; and many was the scarf and ribbon and rose given her, like timid offerings at a shrine, from Clara and me, and, for the matter of that, from Maria and Emily, and all the rest of our girls except perhaps Jane, who had not so much to give and who never indulged herself in fineries—a little Quaker-like body in her gray gown, with her light hair put back smoothly from her white forehead; not pretty in most eyes at all, but always so fair and pure to me. Helen, however, looked at Jane with a lofty disdain; which Jane appeared to think all right and natural, for little Jane shared our opinion, holding that Helen's movements and something to do with keeping the earth in equispace. And, in fact, I have often noticed since that anybody with some one trait of pronounced mental or physical superiority, well sustained by a bad temper behind it, can rule all the world within reach, just as Helen did. We were, the most of us, better off, as the phrase goes, than Helen, so far as money was concerned; for she was only Mrs. Knowles's companion, and, except little Jane, who was an orphan, and had just enough income to dress herself meagerly and pay her board at Aunt Elroy's, we all had our happy homes. Jane had set out to fit herself for teaching. She played rather wonderfully, and she could have spoken to you in one or two different languages, if she had not been always so shamefaced. As for Clara and me, we were the holdens of the village. Maria was the first and Emily was the religious. She and Mrs. Knowles used to have the most marvelous mornings together, talking of albs and chasubles and altar pieces and candlesticks, which somehow made Emily rather interesting to the rest of us, although Cousin Stanhope laughed at us about it, if he didn't laugh at her. Cousin Stanhope, be it understood, was the light of our eyes in that mountain hamlet, so far as connection with the outside world went. He was, in one degree or another, the cousin of almost all of us, for we were all more or less distantly related. He had a position in the state department at Washington that allowed him some leisure; and, as we were not a great way from his headquarters, he often ran up for a Sunday and brought us news of that great world, and occasionally brought some one of the people figuring on its scenes—now and then an attaché of one of the legations; once in a while a traveling foreigner; once, indeed, a South Sea island chief, who boldly asked Helen to go back with him to Otaheite. A primitive savage Stanhope called him; but, if that were true, the primitive savage was a very calm and noble gentleman. "I don't know how you can say so," Helen remarked, as we were talking him over on Aunt Elroy's piazza, our usual place of congregation, one bright spring morning, April Fool's day, as we had learned, to our cost, in a series of Stanhope's jests through the mail. "A great, swarthy barbarian? I suppose it is because I am so dark myself; but I have no affinity with your dusky-skinned people." "Little Jane, for instance," said I. "No, indeed. That colorless morsel! A yellow-haired Norse, some descendant of one of the old Cimbric, a blue-eyed and red-haired Spanish grandee. He would like me, too," said Helen, laughing and putting up a great drooping curl, "on the same principle. I expect to fall in with him yet." "Or fall out with him," said I. "Nothing less than a Spanish hidalgo, with a string of titles as long as his rent-roll." "Then I suppose a poor, swarthy Roman doctor need never hope to find favor with those of your way of think-

ing, Miss Helen?" said Dr. Malatesta, in his smooth English, to which the slightest accent in the world was like sauce piquante to flavorless meat. "Oh," said Helen, coolly, with her finest air of insolence, "I did not notice that you were there, Signor." "But you will notice the hidalgo, with the string of titles and the rent roll? Well, hidalgos are often poor." "Then I should have no use for them," said Helen. "Do you mean to say, Miss Helen, that you would not marry a poor and untitled man? What is the matter with you American girls? What better title is prince than doctor? I fail to see the secret of it. There is a legend in my land that once the Roman purple was put up at auction. Diavolo! Is all this beauty for sale, too, to the highest bidder?" Helen stared at him a moment, answering nothing. "By the way, Clara," then she said, entirely ignoring him and his remarks, "did you see the Spanish lace cape Mrs. Knowles gave Emily? I should have liked it myself; and, indeed, it was not expensive." "She made a real April fool of Helen with it," said Clara; "for when she unfolded it, Helen thought, of course, it was for her." "And I had just begun to thank her, when she turned it over to the nun. However, it is the only time that I ever was made an April fool," said Helen, with her most superior gesture; "and I defy any one to do it again." "Why, Helen! How you forget!" I exclaimed. "Little Jane has made you one every year since she has known you." "Oh! Little Jane! Her fooleries! Sweetmeats under your breakfast-plate! Yes, if you count that, little Jane has." "And will next year too, I'll be bound," said Dr. Malatesta. "At least, she would if—" And I was thankful that he wheeled his chair away and round the corner of the gallery, for a knew he was going to say, "if nature had not been before her; and if he had said it Helen would have had her foot on all our necks before peace could have been declared." Dr. Malatesta was Cousin Stanhope's last importation—an Italian gentleman who was visiting America, a graduate of some wonderful old university, who perhaps might settle down and practice in America if he had inducement, Cousin Stanhope said, with a laugh, and who had found his way to the Italian legation at Washington, where Stanhope had met him. It was quite unfortunate for him that he fell on the slippery pavement and broke his ankle; but Stanhope, who had taken a fancy to him, had brought him up to our village as soon as he could be moved, and had installed him at Aunt Elroy's, where he was waited on by inches, Aunt Elroy outdoing herself in fancy dishes, and little Jane now and then venturing lest he might be homesick to let him hear his native tongue again, while she spoke a little of her timid Italian with him, half sure that he was laughing at her, but willing he should laugh if that diverted the poor gentleman any from the pain in his ankle. "As if it wouldn't make him homesick," said Helen, high and mightily. "But it didn't seem to do so. He used to watch little Jane a good deal. Perhaps it amused him. When she came back, with her basket on her arm from Aunt Elroy's errands among the poorer people of the mountain (and she was always sure to have one or two cases of want in reserve as her own property), he would ask her a swarm of questions and apparently derive infinite entertainment from her answers. But he was occupied the most part of the time with notes that he seemed to be collecting and arranging for a book. "Singular person!" said Helen, in her sweetly scornful tone. "What could Cousin Stanhope have been thinking of to bring him here? He hasn't even the manners of a gentleman." "Why, Helen!" came a chorus. "I think he is a consummate gentleman," said Aunt Elroy. "Just about as much of a gentleman as Jane is a lady," continued Helen. "Look at her now, bringing in the eggs. She hasn't a soul above her hens." "She gives every egg to the poor and sick people up the hills." "Goody! goody! Just my ideal of an old maid. Seamy gown, puritanic collar, plain hair, generally drab. Well, there must always be one such in every circle." "One such!" I cried. "I wish there were a dozen such." "Oh! well," said Helen, "we won't quarrel over little Jane. She's too small, dear." "It was lovely April weather up our hillsides. Everything was blossoming into May. All life and the future seemed to our hearts as bright as the blooming world was. We passed the time in one long picnic—Mother and Aunt Elroy and Uncle John and Mrs. Knowles and all—climbing the mountains, catching the brook trout and broiling them on our wood fires, and coming back with our arms full of flowers. At least, we all did but little Jane. She said she had not the heart to leave her lodger alone in his condition to the mercies of Old Sally; and she used to do her little gardening around the house, and carry her pensioners our flowers of the day before if we had left them with her, and be back again at short intervals. And the last I saw of her one day she had her davenport on the piazza and was writing away at his dictation, as if there were no such thing as May breezes and flowers and mountain rambles, and life

were good for nothing except to make it pleasant to his swarthy, lean, ill-favored foreigner. But it was only Jane's way with everybody. "That is one of the troubles with her," said Helen. "She hasn't any identity. She forgets herself in the next person always. A bit of white glass—that is all she is." And there was such an assumption of authority in Helen's sayings that, after a few repetitions, one was apt to take them as gospel. Only Dr. Malatesta never did, and his polite way of looking over her and through her as if she were a transparency or did not exist at all, was the only way he had of moving Helen. And that did move her. Presently I thought I saw that Helen had determined to change it; and although she did not care a son for him himself, she could not brook a rebel within her dominion, and she meant to make him care for her. In the full flow of admiration long received her pride had sailed upon a smooth current, without an obstruction. This obstruction of the oblivious Italian doctor caused a disagreeable commotion in the tide. What made me first think of it was Helen's picking to pieces a bunch of yellow blossoms she had brought in from the woods, and as she passed the doctor in his chair scattering a rain of them all over him, and then looking back with a laugh that showed her glittering teeth and brightened all the carnation on her olive cheeks and the luster in her eyes. Well, she was too beautiful for anything but dreams. The doctor must have seen what I thought where I sat in the window-frame, for presently he said to me: "Too brilliant for use, is it not? As for me, I prefer—What was it Miss Jane read to me today?" "You mean—" "A creature not too bright and good For human nature's daily food?" That would be Miss Jane herself," said I. "St. Jane," said he. "I suppose," I said, "that one sees a plenty of such faces in Rome?" "As Miss Helen's? Plenty." "I always thought Helen looked like a Roman lady." "Like a Roman peasant girl," said he. "But I knew better than to repeat his words." "So your peasant girls have that golden tinge under the carmine?" I asked him. "All of them." In a day or two Helen, who often came over to Aunt Elroy's, where she saw a group of us, when Emily and Mrs. Knowles were having one of their seances, was standing by a pillar of the gallery, twisting a budding vine about herself, and a humming bird came darting along, and hovered a moment, just as if he took her mouth for a blossom. We all exclaimed and laughed, even the doctor; and when the next moment a saucy robin in the black-heart cherry tree gave forth a burst of his music, and Helen opened her lips and answered it in delicious trill on trill, we felt as if the scene was something ideal. "You could hardly do better than this in Italy," said I to the doctor. "The robins take you for one of themselves, Helen," said Aunt Elroy. "It is one of the wise birds," said the doctor. "He wants another song from you, Miss Helen, as I, indeed, do too." And then Helen sang again. She had been chary of her songs before; but after this you always knew when Helen was coming by the music that ushered her, and where she was going by the sweet sounds that went dancing after her. "How can he help falling at her feet?" said I to Cousin Stanhope, on one of his Saturdays with us. "He is lame," said Stanhope. "Nonsense!" "And then I should have fallen in love with her myself long ago, if it had not been for her temper." "You, Stanhope?" "Yes, I; and if—" "If what?" "If I had not fallen in love with somebody else." But just then the doctor, who had so far improved as to be able to use a crutch, came down the garden-path and took Stanhope off with him. I saw little Jane gaze after them intently a moment; and I wondered vaguely if she were too fond of Stanhope, and I felt vaguely disturbed and unhappy, and went home and practiced a sonata till I was tired out. How fair and sweet Jane was in those June days, as they came! There was such an unspeakable tranquillity about her. I never looked at her without thinking of perfect, placid drawings. "What a complete lady Jane is," I said to Stanhope once, as we were walking in the wood. "That is because her temperament is so quiet. It gives her manners repose," he answered. "All her ways are pleasantness and all her paths are peace." And I knew I had no right to be vexed with him for speaking so. Who could be blamed for loving Jane? "Only I never could see," added Stanhope, "how any man could fall in love with Jane. I should as soon think of kissing a statue. But then, I suppose," he said, looking half askance at me, "when one is in love with somebody else—" And he stopped, because two people were slowly coming through the wood, although they were not observing us. It was Dr. Malatesta, who could now walk tolerably with his stick, and Helen, whom he had met. "Yes," he was saying, "I have quite recovered—so far that I shall be able to resume my journey in a short time.

And, Miss Helen, shall I tell you? When I go home I hope to take a wife there with me." "Why in the world should Helen think he means her?" whispered Stanhope. "Look at her!" For Helen had suddenly averted her face, and, thrusting her hands out before her in a beautiful forbidding gesture, had cried: "Oh, no, no, no! I could never leave America!" Dr. Malatesta stopped short in his walk, in blank amazement. "I beg your pardon, Miss Helen," he cried. "You misunderstand me," he said. "Believe me, I had no thought of asking you." And then he drew himself up proudly. "I was about to tell you," he said, "that I am the promised husband of Miss Jane." But at that time Stanhope, who had been in the secret for some time, could not forbear a moment longer, and burst into a roar of laughter. And then such an angry man as Malatesta was may I never see again, when he began adjuring Stanhope in foreign tongues, while the latter leaned against the tree and laughed on. "At any rate," said Helen to me, that night "the fact remains that I refused him. He didn't misunderstand me." Well, it was the loveliest little wedding that we had two weeks later on Aunt Elroy's broad gallery, with all the flowers and vines and birds. And a grand Italian gentleman came up with Stanhope, too, who treated us all like nobles, and delighted Emily and aved Maria. The doctor would have his wheel-chair present, for he declared it had been the best friend he ever had; and he looked at Jane in her white muslin and joesamines, as if it were too much that any of us should touch her. And then he took her off on the journey over the continent; "for we will see America before we go back to our home in Italy," he said. So letters came to us from Niagara, from a shooting season in Colorado, from Mexico, from Californian ranches; then from the islands of the Pacific seas, from Japan, from India; and Jane was going to her home by way of the Red sea and Egypt and the Mediterranean. "Just think of our little Jane!" said I. "She is putting Marco Polo in the shade." "It's about time he settled down to his practice now, though," said Aunt Elroy, not meaning Marco Polo, but the doctor. "I declare, what a gap it makes in life to have Jane gone; and now Mrs. Knowles and Helen too. I wonder if Helen is having the triumphant time she hoped for in Rome." For Mrs. Knowles had gone to Rome, and Helen had been buoyant with expectation. "Are you speaking of Helen?" said Emily, coming up with an open letter from the post. "She has seen some very pleasant people. She has been a guest at a grand villa, been present at a superb festival in the country and been received by a prince and princess. Do you want to read about it?" And this was what Helen had written on that page: "It was just a morning of mornings, this April day; and Mrs. Knowles and I, having left the city and come up here on the Apennines, were taking our stroll—a stroll where we crushed the violets at every step—when we saw that the village was all aflame with flowers and banners, and the people decked out like a scene in a theater, and there was music, and there were throngs of children, with garlands, and I don't know what and all. It was the home-coming of the prince and princess, they said. And we had time to hear no more; for, as we stood just inside the gates of the lovely gardens, we stepped aside, to let the low carriage, with its four cream-colored horses, dash by. And all of a sudden there was a cry, and the horses were pulled up, and two people sprang out of the carriage. And oh, Emily! I had reason to remember, all in a rush, that it was April Fool's day, and I the merest fool that ever was—I, who had actually refused this man! For who do you think the prince was but Prince Malatesta? And the princess—was our little Jane!" —Independent.

FOR THE LADIES. A Broom Drill. A new idea in amusements this, and its inventors were some girls in Lowell, Mass. Twelve young ladies, commanded by a captain, gave a public drill of their proficiency in handling the broom. The girls were uniformed in red, white and blue. The brooms were decorated with colored ribbons, and as the young women marched with the streamers behind them they looked very martial and were warmly applauded. A young lady, dressed in the national colors, was the "drummer boy" of the broom corps. A fan drill is performed in somewhat the same fashion, only the fan can be used more gracefully and effectively than the broom. But, after all, perhaps, the best broom drill is the one that takes place in the kitchen, where there is only one broom and no streamers. How the Empress Gets Through a Day. Empress Elizabeth, of Austria, begins the day's work and amusement with a cup of cold chocolate, taken at 7 o'clock. Then she goes to the stable to see her hunting pet; then receives her steward and makes arrangements for presentations, interviews, etc. At one she takes a beefsteak and a couple of glasses of Hungarian wine, after which her lady-in-waiting tells her the news and reads to her paragraphs from divers newspapers. She dines at six, and then dons her riding habit and goes to the large circus which is connected by a covered passage with her private apartments. Here she mounts some mettlesome horse and trains him with wonderful skill and boldness. When some animal usually wild and spirited is to be conquered a few appreciative guests are invited to come and look on at the daring empress' proceeding. A Queen's Robes. A fashionable modiste of San Francisco had her parlors crowded one entire day with guests inspecting an outfit which she had just completed per order for Queen Kaprolam, the wife of King Kalakama, of the Sandwich islands. Among the many handsome robes was one which is intended for a grand state occasion. It is made in the native style of the Hawaiian islands, and is termed the "holok". The design is the same as is known in the South, especially in New Orleans, as the "volanta", the robe being in one piece and gathered into a deep yoke that covers the shoulders. The material is of the very richest velvet, of a Marie Louise blue, striped with gold and combined with plain velvet of the same shade. Another was of embossed velvet, of the most delicate peach-pink shade, which constituted the train and corsage. This was over a petticoat of plain Turin satin, also peach-pink, and was richly embroidered with white jet. The half sleeves and high-rolling collar were of the satin, and thickly covered with jet embroidery. Handsome white jet ornaments fastened the corsage, which was pointed in the front and back. The most beautiful of the lot, however, was a marine blue satin combined with eru satin and finished with a heavy garniture of crimson-crushed roses. This gown was also made in the "holok" style, with long, flowing sleeves open at the shoulders and extending nearly to the bottom of the gown, and were lined with crimson satin. Each suit had two pairs of slippers made of the same material as the dress they were to be worn with. Japanese Factory Girls. The Japanese have just made another advance in their imitation of European customs. Up to the present time popular prejudice has greatly restricted the field for women's labor. In the interior, indeed, the weaker sex take part in agricultural operations, but at the great centers of industry men have monopolized almost the whole area of remunerative work. This system appears to be doomed, as some of the more enterprising manufacturers are offering employment to women, and so far as the experiment has yet been carried these philanthropists have no cause to regret the venture. The feminine employees are content with considerable lower wages, and yet work the same time—twelve hours—as the masculine monopolists. Whether they turn out the same quantity is not stated, but in quality the result of their labors is said to compare not unfavorably with the average of men's work. So great has been the success of the experiment that several new factories, chiefly for the manufacture of cloth, are about to be built exclusively for the employment of women. A factory act will soon be needed, if it be true that the feminine hands now in employment are kept at work without intermission from 5 A. M. to 5 P. M. Japanese women are not, as a rule, very robust, and such prolonged labor as this must necessarily impose a severe strain even on the strongest. Fashion Notes. The new dolman sacks are shorter at the back than in front. Batiste embroidered in colors is imported to trim summer gowns. Robin's-egg blue will be much worn by young girls this summer. The summer pilgrimage costumes have a wateau plait in the back. The short street dress seems to have come for a long visit this time. Irish point-lace wrought with gold thread is used to trim cotton dresses. Basques are to be a little longer this season than they were in the winter.

White muslin petticoats are the only garments that are made fuller than formerly. Pink tulle, trimmed with holly berries without leaves, is a new fancy for ball toilets. The lace used on the summer bonnets is very deeply tinted, and is arranged in flutings. The newest jackets have no hoods, but collars that cross in front and make a pretty trimming. A New York bride recently went to the altar with her veil fastened by a horseshoe of orange blossoms. The little gaudies for summer are of all sizes, from a coachman's collar to a small Mother Hubbard cloak. The cheapest materials for really handsome undershirts is satin, which can be bought in all the bright colors. Dainty chains, with a fern foliage mixed with the blossoms, are among the flowers prepared to trim summer bonnets. Fashions in every detail of the toilet change so rapidly that it is difficult to say what is and what is not fashionable. Many folds of ombre satin straight across the crown is one favorite trimming, while others cover but half the crown, and are finished with lace on the edges. A handsome dress of black grenadine, with half inch stripes of satin and of some open meshed design, has each of the sides covered with a jabot of black Spanish lace, the jabots being a half yard wide. Shirtings and ruffles are seen in all parts of costumes of cotton printed goods, where trimmings can be used. All dressy suits are composed of two or more fabrics which usually match in color, but contrasts in effect. Weather Prophets. Speculations about the weather are not wholly useless if we are to accept the testimony of Professor J. Hyatt, who has been engaged for a long time in studying the relations between the phases of the moon and the rainfall at certain stations. It has long been known that when the moon is full the sky is most likely to be clear. This is not only the testimony of sailors and farmers, but also of eminent astronomers and scientific men. It appears that the rays of the full moon have the power to dispel clouds, and it therefore seems not unreasonable to suppose that the moon exerts an appreciable influence upon the weather. Professor Hyatt's observations have led him to divide the lunar month, of about twenty-nine and a half days, into eight periods, or octants, of three and two-thirds days each, and he has found that every lunation is apt to acquire its character as regards rainfall within the first octant, or within three and two-thirds days from the time of the new moon. It also appears that the same kind of weather, as regards temperature, cloudiness or rain, is apt to occur on or about the same day of the week, or more accurately, at the same stage in the lunar quarters. A number of instances are given, extending over a considerable period of time, which seem to bear out the truth of these conclusions with remarkable accuracy, and it would seem that if seven-tenths of an inch or more of rain falls within three and two-thirds days of the new moon, the entire lunation is very likely to be a wet one; but if very little rain falls during that time the remaining seven-eighths of the lunation will probably be dry. These observations verify the old saying that the first three days rule the month. As a result of observations conducted at two localities, extending over a period of three years, the rule has been found to hold good in at least eleven cases out of twelve, and they would doubtless hold good for all places in the hilly country between the Appalachians and the Atlantic, not too near either the sea or the mountains. Such conclusions are only reliable for places similarly situated, since peculiarities of location, elevation, the prevailing direction of the wind, etc., necessarily affect the result, and these characteristics must be studied for each place. The distribution of rainfall is very irregular throughout the year; two or three dry or two or three wet lunations are apt to be grouped together. Thread from Wood. The manufacture of thread from wood for crochet and sewing purposes, has, it is said, recently been started in the middle of Sweden. It is wound in balls by machinery, either by hand or steam, which, with the labeling, takes one minute and twelve seconds, and the balls are packed up in cardboard boxes, generally ten in a box. Plenty of orders from all parts of Sweden have come in, but as the works are not in proper order, there has hardly been time to complete them all. The production gives fair promise of success, and it is expected to be very important for home consumption. The Chinese are said to believe that the reason why those who read the Bible become Christians is due to the stupefying power of the ink, which takes away his reason and leaves him ready to believe false doctrines. Warnings against the purchase of foreign books are frequent in consequence of this superstition. In some cases striped grenadine is confined to the basque alone, while the skirts are of plain iron grenadine, or else the smooth sewing silk grenadines, with some of the striped goods used for retroses and borders.