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The Seasons.

The little snowflakes come When the singing birds are dumb, And fill the empty nest; And the frost upon the pane Mimics ferns and bearded grain, And the blossoms we love heat.

The pretty wind-flowers rise With an air of sweet surprise When the laughing spring Calls the crocuses from their sleep, Bids the grass begin to creep, And the sparrow sing.

The daisies' lint-white florets Push and jostle; and the locks Of the barberry shine, When the mosses' fringes spread, And the daddier's jeweled thread Make the meadows fine.

When the autumn walks abroad, Torches of the golden-rod Burn the living day; And the birds are flying far When witch-hazel's yellow star Lands its little ray.

-Mary A. Prescott.

STRATAGEM.

I am a spinster, aged—but no, I will not tell you my age—and I live in a little white house on the side of the hill, surrounded by fruit trees and lilac bushes, while in the front of the house is a little garden with hollyhocks, marigolds and a plentiful supply of spars, which is so nice for soup, and a sprig of wake-robin, which is very good for weak eyes. I am plagued with weak eyes some.

Here I live alone by myself—not alone either, for haven't I Towzer, a big black dog, with a face that is a mixture of gray and white, and great brown eyes with a look almost human in them, and a great deal more expression than has that simpering Sarah Smythe. She says I am a conceited old maid, only waiting for a chance to get married—the nitty! Why shouldn't I, if I have a good chance? It would be handy to have a man bring water, chop kindlings and stretch clotheslines on washdays I may be out of the market now before she is, the little goose; for when I turn my cap over after drinking tea—I always do—the grounds say a long journey with three dots at the end, which stands for a crown; and if that isn't marriage I'd like to know what is?

If nothing happens to intercept fortune I shall have him call me Silly; it is so much more loving and affectionate than Priscilla. New my name is one of those things that never can be accounted for; for why should they name such a loving person Priscilla Nettleton? And to tell the truth the man who gets Priscilla might do worse. I don't want to brag, but the man or woman who finds any dirt in my house has got to hunt for it; and I can make pierceat that would melt in your mouth, and rhubarb tarts and huckleberry hollows that would do your soul good. In my mind a man's love has a great deal to do with the condition of his stomach.

Then I am not very bad-looking; I have a sweet disposition, dress young—and that makes me think of Sarah Smythe again; that girl is a brier in my flesh. She says, coming home from meeting the other Sunday—so I could hear her, too:

"If old Miss Nettleton hasn't got a pink gingham just like mine, and made just like it, with three flounces!"

Says I: "You good-for-nothing little minx, why shouldn't I have a pink gingham with three flounces if I pay for it? Your father is in debt to everybody in Thomsville!"

Don't you think she got mad just my saying that—folks don't get mad as easy as that unless you bit them pretty close—and says she:

"You're a meddlesome, interfering old maid!"

Just think of calling me an interfering old maid! Now that is a downright fabrication. I don't want anybody to be wicked, but if they are I want to know all about it, and I won't uphold anybody in their wicked ways by withholding my opinion, and if Abby Nicholas is going to have a light in her front room until half-past 10 Sunday evenings, I have a right to call in there about that time if I want to. And if Sara Perkins and her husband don't get along I want to know that, too. I knew they wouldn't; why, Sara can't make brown bread fit for my Towzer to eat; and that soggy white bread is what has given poor Perkins the dyspepsia, and in my mind it has something to do with his rheumatism. You have to be very careful about raising white bread, for if it stands three minutes too long or too little it is spoiled—just spoilt.

There comes Mary Green's sassy boy. I must go out and tell him to wipe his feet before he comes in—and if he hasn't got a letter! Now a letter always sets me shivering like, for they are almost always trimmed with black; but this one isn't. I most wish it was, though.

"DEAR MISS NETTLETON:—I wrote you some time ago informing you of the death of your kinsman, John Vance. I now feel it incumbent on me as his friend and the guardian of his only child, Dolly, to say that, as she has no permanent home, it might be pleasant for you to have her come to you. If I receive no answer by next week I shall take silence as consent, and you may expect her the first of the week after."

"Very respectfully, "W. KELLER."

Isn't that cool, though? Why, she will be as much trouble as was Towzer

in his juvenile days, dancing in and out, and I shall have the doors to shut after her, and my kitchen will have to be washed twice a day, and she'll want to sit in the front room and have the curtains up, and my rag carpet will be all faded out; and I shall never know where to find nothing. Now, if I lay a thing down it stays there till I pick it up again. Why, I could darn my stockings in the dark, and lay my hands on the right number of cotton to darn them with. Number sixteen is in the right hand corner, number eight is wrapped in paper, number twelve is in a rag.

Things will be mixed in the family circle. Now I have my corner, Towzer has his and Nepenthe's hers. Did I tell you about Nepenthe? Well, she's a remarkable cat of three colors, is double-pawed and has great yellow, moon-like eyes. But it is no reason because there are four corners in the room that I want Dolly Vance set up in the fourth. I don't want her, but I suppose she will have to come. It's my misfortune to have relations.

She came. Now if I don't tell you how she looks you will be wondering what she is like, and think her eyes are like sunshine and her hair like spun silk. They aren't neither one nor the other. She has brown eyes that have such a queer way of shutting together whenever I say anything, and then she puts her handkerchief over her mouth. I suppose she shuts her eyes to keep in better what I have to say, and puts her handkerchief to her mouth to keep the idea in; as if people heard with their mouths! And then she has brown hair just the color of her eyes, which she wears braided down her back with the end curled; and the time she wastes twisting that one curl would knit a pair of shell stockings. But Dolly doesn't like to knit nor scour tin pans, nor to learn any accomplishments. However, she does well enough, and we get along nicely; anybody could get along with as amiable a person as I.

One day Dolly says: "Cousin!" Then she makes a long pause and says I:

"Dolly, if you have got anything to say, say it, and don't wait till that dish-water gets cold and the grease settles around the edges of them boilers."

"Well, cousin, I was going to say that if you had no objections, I have a friend from Sweetwater, Mr. Howard, that I would like to have come here once in a while; it is so very lonely."

"Lonesome for them that's got nothing to do," says I. "Now, Dolly Vance, after all the good advice I've given you! Why, I've talked to you hours and hours about the frailties and disappointments of this world, and I've just wasted my breath. As if we didn't have work enough to do now! There's more than forty chips about that chopping block to be picked up, and there's that rising sun bedquilt to be set together, and squash pies to make, and that old speckled hen's come off with sixteen chicks; of course she'd hatch every one if she stole her nest. I shouldn't think you'd have thought of such a thing as a bean. Wait until you get a little older—say my age, now."

I think she will remember that, for she clapped her hands right over her mouth so as not to forget it.

"But I knew it would come to this—I told you so. If it was a deacon or a minister, or some kind of a religious man, I wouldn't have minded so much."

"But Mr. Howard is just as good as—"

"Don't tell me! I know he is just good for nothing, or he would want some girl that knew something about work, and not one that burns her hands every time she turns a pie round in the oven."

After this there was a calm in our mill-pond of an existence—I have read of life's being like a river, and why not like a mill-pond, which is much smoother and more poetical?—and nothing occurred to disturb my sweet, serene disposition, until I saw Tommy Green coming over again with a letter. I declare it set me in a perspiration all over! I hoped no more cousins had died and left their orphans as legacies to me.

DEAR MISS NETTLETON:—I am a minister in somewhat poor health; have a disease of the heart; and the doctor says I must have quiet and rest for a while. Hearing of your little Eden of a place, I hope and trust it may be my good fortune to engage board there for a few weeks. Will pay seven dollars per week.

Of course I would take him! It would be flying in the face of Providence and fortune not to. Poor, dear man! he had the heart disease, but I'd cure him of that—that is if he would take the catnip tea and thorn-ughtwort. Seven dollars a week, too! If he stayed four weeks that would be twenty-eight dollars; twenty-five to lay up in the old tea-pot, and three left to spend. I decided to buy me a red feather for my bonnet with a dollar and a half, and with the rest get Towzer a new brass collar, with a little padlock and key on it.

"Dolly," says I, as she came in with her cheeks as red as one of them red hollyhocks—I don't like red cheeks myself—"I've got a letter from Parson Rushing, and he wants to come here to board a few weeks at \$7 a week."

"Of course you won't take him," says she.

"Mustache is gray, but his eyes are black and bright, and he is not the least bit of trouble, and I think after a while he will get over the dyspepsia and that hacking cough of his. It is some better now. He takes long walks in the morning for his health and also in the pursuit of science (he is very learned), and brings home lots of bugs and beetles—ugh! the nasty things! Not that exactly, either, for Parson Rushing says some of them are very curious and quite rare, so of course they are."

After the sun has gone down they take a row on the river; yes, they, for Dolly doesn't steady herself down to anything, and so she is always ready to set out when the parson is, while I never, or scarce ever, go with them, as I have the dishes to wash in the morning and the pans to scour and the floor to scrub; Parson Rushing does so like to see a white floor! At night there is the bread to toast, and he is so particular about that.

One night I did go rowing, and if it wasn't a blessing I got back again and alive! Why, that boat pitched and rocked and dove, till my head buzzed and my stomach felt so queer, all because I was physically bilious, and disinclined toward rowing, the parson said. But he did his best to make it pleasant and rowed until his face was red; and he would go from one side of the boat to the other as quick as lightning to see if there was a fish at my line, and then the boat would give one of them lurches, till I was afraid it would take in water at the sides; and I had to pretend it was delightful, when it was so horrid. It was like a nightmare chasing you over a stony pasture.

It was the thankfullest moment in my life when Towzer came down toward us and I knew I was on Trilla Frilla (that's French) once more. But my troubles weren't but half over, for when we got home Dolly had scorching the toast and burnt the bread, and the tea wasn't steeped, and the elder said if he drank such weak tea as that he was afraid it would set him in the dyspepsia again, and looked reproachfully at Dolly. But don't you think that instead of looking meek and being sorry as she should, the heartless girl just laughed and laughed until she jarred over the tea in the elder's cup. I always fill his cup full. There are some people who never do care about other people's feelings!

Now I am not one of that kind, and I felt very much for the parson; but at the same time I thought it would do him good, for he would now know better than ever how to appreciate my good cooking; not but what he did, dear man! but now he would come to a fuller knowledge of it by experience; and, too, he'd know I'd given Dolly a chance, and not kept her in the background.

The other day he was saying that it was a very excellent thing for young ladies (that's the 'ae) to have a thorough knowledge of housekeeping, and he did not see what some people could be thinking of to bring their daughters up in idleness—now Dolly was brought up when she came here, so that isn't me—nor what men could be thinking of to take such girls as wives.

Parson Rushing had been here three weeks to a day, and an awful hot day it was, to my thinking, and I had just made up my mind that when I finished washing the floor I would refresh my mind with Dr. Watts' hymns for an hour or so, and rest my weary brains. Parson Rushing says the mind must have something to feed on as well as the body. Well, I had just got comfortably settled down in my corner, with my feet placed carefully on a cushion, but had not got down to the bottom of the first page when in Towzer came in with—oh, horrors! He had scalped Parson Rushing, for there were his lovely gray curls, and the dog came and laid the trophy at my feet.

I took it up and walked tip-toe to the sitting-room, where Parson Rushing and Dolly were taking notes of their morning ramble. Having arrived at the door I paused—why or for what reason I cannot say; it must have been a presentment of the great sorrow that was already over my head. Having, as I said, come to the door, I paused. Now this door had an aperture—a crack—that extended the whole length of it; unto this aperture I applied my eye, and—but words are inadequate to express my thoughts, letters are not black enough to convey my feelings. There sat Parson Rushing (for it was he) minus the gray curls, bereft of gray whiskers, which were in a chair, and in their stead were short black side whiskers and mustache and close cropped black curls; his eyes and nose, which had a little scratch on it from Nepenthe's claws—I wished she scratched more affectionately!—were the same.

Well, there he sat, looking as cool and comfortable, and beside him that little wretch, Dolly—I always knew there was something deep about her—and he was talking away, and she a-chattering. By-and-by he took one of her hands, and, bending over—would you believe it? I can, hardly—kissed it!

At this sign of love, unreciprocated affection burst in from the door.

"How dare you thus trifle with a confiding maiden's love? How dare you—"

"I am not trifling at all. I was never more in earnest in my life. Allow me to introduce you to my affianced wife."

Saying this he arose and took Dolly by the hand; she began with:

"That I never will!" said I. "A girl who will deliberately steal the affections of a man from such a loving, trusting woman as I—"

"But, cousin,"—with a very peculiar smile—"I had his affections before he ever came here. Had I not, George?"

"That you had, my darling, and always will have."

Then he said a lot more of foolish stuff that I don't remember. But the short and the long of it was they went to the city and were married and settled at housekeeping in no time at all. I occasionally drop in and have a cup of tea when I go to the city shopping. But I never will forgive them. Towzer has his brass collar, padlock and all.

Saved from Cannibalism.

On Christmas day, in the Pacific ocean, three boat loads of people yut off from the hopelessly burning coal ship Milton. Last evening, says the San Francisco Call of recent date, the survivors of the second boat load heard from arrived in this city by the steamer Newbern from Mazatlan. The survivors were Captain McArthur, his wife, two children and one sailor. They had been taken from a Mexican coasting schooner by the Newbern on her down trip. Two days before that the schooner had picked them up, the captain and his family looking little better than bronzed skeleton, one sailor a gibbering maniac, the other senseless. A two-year-old child of the captain's was dead. All had been in an open boat forty-six days. For many days they had subsisted upon a mouthful of food and a spoonful of freshened ocean water. When the Mexican schooner took them on board one sailor overcame all restraint and drank himself to death with the water furnished.

"For the love of God give me passage to some place where my wife and child can have proper care," the wrecked captain said to Captain Huntington of the Newbern, when the steamer was approached by a boat from the coasting schooner.

The survivors were taken aboard. "There is a white man among them for I can tell by his voice," an English lady on the Newbern said. "but how dreadful that poor squaw looks." It was the captain's wife, her exposed flesh burned to a darker hue than an Indian's, that the lady thought was a squaw.

The maniac sailor died from the effect of the water, which he hoped would give him new life, soon after he was lifted on board the steamer. The others were tenderly cared for.

The captain's little boy, only four years old, looked wildly strange and unnatural. "But, bless you," an officer of the Newbern said to a Call reporter, "we could just see him grow fat and natural-like from meal to meal." The little fellow, who had stood what killed three of the strong sailors, was soon a great favorite with every man on the steamer.

The captain's wife, when Mazatlan was reached, after being on the steamer three days, gave birth to a son. It was two weeks old when the steamer arrived at the wharf, and a lively, bright infant. Such is the story of their rescue. Words cannot picture the sufferings they endured in the forty-six days in an open boat; days when the mother saw one babe waste away to death for the lack of even such scanty nourishment as had to be dealt to all; days when the clear-headed captain had to tie to the thwarts two of the crazy sailors to prevent them from feasting in fact upon the weaker ones, upon whom their delirium-lighted eyes flashed hungrily, longingly; days when distant sails would loom up, wildly revive sinking hope, disappear, and drive hope into a greater, blacker distance; days when the sufferings of all were nearly ended by drowning, when the crazed man's wild plunging nearly capsize the boat. It was a terrible picture, and one which the imagination alone can attempt feebly to paint.

"Ah!" the wife and mother said one day on the steamer, as the passengers were at dinner, "if my dear baby boy had had each day a mouthful of the water so lavishly dealt out here."

Popular Resorts in a Spanish Town.

The people (of Toledo) generally were very simple and good-natured, and in particular a young commercial traveler from Barcelona whom we met exerted himself to entertain us. The chief street was lined with awnings reaching to the curbstone in front of the shops, and every public doorway was screened by a striped curtain. Pushing aside one of these, our new acquaintance introduced us to what seemed a dingy bar, but by a series of turnings opened out into a spacious concealed cafe—that of the Two Brothers—where we frequently repaired with him, to sip chiccory and cognac or play dominoes. On these occasions he kept the tally in pencil on the marble table, marking the side of himself and a friend with their initials, and heading ours "The Strangers." All travelers in Spain are described by natives as "Strangers" or "French," and the reputation for a pure Parisian accent which we acquired under these circumstances, though brief, was glorious. To the Two Brothers resorted many soldiers, shopkeepers and housewives during fixed hours of the afternoon and evening, but at other times it was as forsaken as Don Roderrick's palace. Another place of amusement was the Grand Summer theater, lodged within the ragged walls of a large building which had been half

torn down. Here we sat under the stairs, luxuriating in the most expensive seats (at eight cents per head), surrounded by a full audience of exceedingly good aspect, including some Toledan ladies of great beauty, and listened to a zarzuela, or popular comic opera, in which the prompter took an almost too energetic part. The ticket collector came in among the chairs to take up everybody's coupons, with very much the air of being one of the family; for while performing his stern duty he smoked a short brier pipe, giving to the act an indescribable dignity, which threw the whole business of the tickets into a proper subordination. In returning to our inn about midnight, we were attracted by the free cool sound of a guitar duetto issuing from a dark street that rambled off somewhere like a worm-track in old wood, and, pursuing the sound, we discovered, by the aid of a match lighted for a cigarette, two men standing in the obscure alley, and serenading a couple of ladies in a balcony, who positively laughed with pride at the attention. The men, it proved, had been hired by some admirer, and so our friend engaged them to perform for us at the hotel the following night.—George P. Lathrop, in Harper.

A Sailor Coon.

A correspondent of the Forest and Stream, who used to sail a fast yacht, the Decoy, describes one of his crew, a pet coon, caught when young and raised in the boat-house. The yacht never sailed without him. He was "forward man." Often when the sea was heavy it would wash him from the deck into the boiling foam, but in an instant he was again at his post, and gave us all to understand by a peculiar guttural sound that he meant business. He delighted to sit on the end of the bowsprit, and when we would cross a boat's bow, or take the wind out of her sail, he talked. Sometimes a coming sea would chase him up the jibstay a foot or two, but he never failed to regain his old position. In moderate weather, and the water smooth, he would come aft, and looking at me knowingly, would mount the tiller; and with one paw placed affectionately on my arm, would sail the boat for miles. Then he did talk. He had been shot at several times from rival boats, and he knew them all as well as we did. Once he was badly hurt, and falling from the end of the bowsprit into the water, I picked him up as he drifted by. The ball had passed through his intestines. He was a sick coon, almost unto death. We ran into Gloucester, where a surgeon, a friend of ours, attended his wound. How often he thanked that man for his kindness the God that has given life to all can only tell, for he was then to weak to talk. We all loved him, and it was reciprocated. How our hearts warmed and throbbed in sympathy for that innocent, unoffending atom of the great creation. He got well, but he never ventured out on the bowsprit any more. Quiet afternoons in the boat-house he would climb up gently into my hammock, and softly comb down my beard with his paws, and brush the flies away until I snored; then he knew I was dead to all earthly things, and in a minute he would have my watch and money down to the last cent, and, in fact, everything about my clothes. Unlike, however, the genus man—with all his godlike gifts—he gave his plunder back, and told me plainly he could have robbed me if he liked.

Norwegian Glaciers and Folk-Lore.

A correspondent of the Nature gives some curious particulars of the advance of a Norwegian glacier known as Buerbro, near Odde on the Sorford. "I visited the place," he says, "in 1874, and the recent plowing up of a considerable bit of the valley by the vast irresistible ice-plow was very striking, while the glacier itself was very beautiful. My object, however, is to repeat a strange piece of folk-lore, which tends to show that in this particular spot the advance of the glacier must have been long-continued. The legend was told me by Asbjorn Olsen, an intelligent guide at Odde, who speaks good English. The tale was that long ago the Buer valley extended far into the mountains, and was full of farms and cultivation. It had also a village, a church and a pastor. One winter night when a fearful storm was threatened, three Finns (i. e. Lapps) entered the valley and begged shelter in vain of the inhabitants. At last they asked the priest, and he too refused. Then the wrath of the heathen wizards was raised and they solemnly cursed the valley and doomed it to destruction by the crawling power of the ice, until the glacier reached the lake below. The Lapps were seen no more, but on their disappearing the snow began to fall. The winter was terrible. The glacier approached by awful steps, and by degrees engulfed the cursed valley and farms. Nor is the curse yet exhausted, for the glacier creeps down the valley each year, and has yet a mile to go before it reaches its destination in the lake above Odde. I am no judge of folk-lore, but this weird tale seemed to me a genuine piece of it, and not invented for the occasion, as Olsea gave it half jokingly as the tradition of the district. The farmer who owns the remnant of the doomed valley wanted then to sell it, as he saw his acres swallowed up each year, but no one will buy. If this tale be genuine it points to a prolonged advance of the Folgefond, which has led to the tale of the Lapps' curse."

Hands.

A little hand, a fair, soft hand, Dimpled and sweet to kiss; No sculptor ever carved from stone A lovelier hand than this. A hand as idle and white As lilies on their stems; Dazzling with rosy finger-tips, Dazzling with crusted gems. Another hand—a tired old hand, Written with many lines; A faithful, weary hand, whereon The pearl of great price shines. For folded as the winged fly Sleeps in the chrysalis, Within this little palm I see That lovelier hand than this. —Harriet Prescott Spofford.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Arabella—No; powder will not make your hair bang. Circus jokes are generally served up like boiled mutton—with caper sauce. Moonbeams are the strongest timbers being in building castles in the air. —Pica-yune.

The contribution plate passed to come in a fashionable church is apt about back nickel plated. —Pica-yune. Fashionable ladies with short sleeves wear their bracelets above the elbow. Policemen continue to put theirs on the wrists.

Ho who courts and goes away May live to court another day; But he who weds and courts girls still, May get in court against his will. —Salem Sunbeam.

An Italian glass manufacturer is making a great success with ladies' glass bonnets and hats. Thank heaven! We will now have something transparent. —Rome Sentinel.

Our Continent says that marriage is on the decline. That may be, but the ladies who are over fifteen and under sixty years of age are not much on the decline. —exas Siftings.

A little boy who wouldn't run to the store for his mother until he had a drink of water, pleaded in extenuation of his disobedience that "even a river couldn't run when it was dry."

A scientist says that every adult person carries enough phosphorus in his body to make at least 4,000 of the ordinary two-cent packages of friction matches. That is a scientific fact that is of very little value to a man who comes home in the night, smashes everything on the bureau in searching for a match, and realizes that all the 4,000 match-power phosphorus concealed inside of him will not light the gas. —Siftings.

Early Japanese Books.

The earliest Japanese printed books were reproductions of Chinese classical and Buddhist works. The oldest which has come down to modern times was produced about A. D. 1200; but it shows that much skill had been attained by the engravers. The first really national work printed in Japan was the Nihongi, or Japan-Chronicles, at the very end of the sixteenth century; although it had been in existence in manuscript most probably since A. D. 720. When the Japanese hero Hideyoshi conquered Corea in 1594, the Japanese found that the Coreans had been employing moveable copper type since the fourteenth century. One Corean book appears authentically to date from 1317 and 1324, 120 years before the earliest printed book known in Europe; and there is a distinct mention of the production of type in Corea by molding and casting about 1420. The Japanese immediately adopted the invention, and all their books for thirty or forty years afterward were printed with moveable types; but a return was made to blocks, which continued to be used for the vast majority of publications. The earliest illustrated Japanese book known is dated 1610, but engravings of popular gods exist as old as 1017 and 1282. —St. James' Engraver.

Death from a Tower.

Four suicides during the present century have been committed at Bologna Italy, by jumping from the top of the famous leaning tower, Assinelli, the climbing of which involves a toilsome journey up more than 400 worn and steep stairs. The first case occurred in 1833, when a shoemaker, while sitting astride one of the battlements, drank a flask of wine as he was singing, and then allowed himself to fall backward into space. The second was in 1874, a young man, aged twenty-three, allowed himself to fall, with a handkerchief tied round his eyes, leaving his coat, hat, sleeve cuffs, and two letters behind him. The third happened two years later; an old man went up with his boy nephew, and while the boy was obeying his directions to write the word "infamy" on the wall, throw himself over the battlement. The fourth suicide has just taken place. A young man who had failed in a certain examination, ascended the tower with the keeper, lighted a cigarette, and while the keeper was showing him the bell, jumped off. Two ladies and gentlemen came up just after he had jumped, and found that the keeper had fainted from fright.

Grit is the grain of character. It may generally be described as heroism materialized—spirit and will thrust into heart and brain and backbone, so as to form part of the physical substance of the man.