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A MESSAGE

What can I hope for thee? A little less of care than weighs me down, A little less of woe than makes my crown, And fewer pains than round about me frown, Are what I hope for thee.

Yes, these I wish for thee! A sweeter peace than I have ever known, And sturdier good than I have ever seen, And that thou be to manifest manhood grown, These do I wish for thee!

For, lo! I find in thee The chance to be all that I wished to be, The chance to see all that I wished to see, The chance of joys that could not come to me, These do I find in thee.

And I petition thee: Be brave, whatever sullen cares assail, Be good, whatever tempter would prevail, And smile serene however men may rail, This I petition thee.

And let me counsel thee: Nourish no dream that springs within thy heart To draw thee from the work-world's busy mart, For, at the last, thou and thy dream must part, And so I counsel thee.

This is from me to thee: And one day when my work falls from my hand, So much to-day thou canst not understand, The reason of the things that I have planned Will be made plain to thee. —James Berry Bessell.

ON SKATES.

"It ain't the way I was brought up," said Mrs. Gerard. "In the days when I was a girl, we used to be satisfied to sit down and sew, and make table linen and bed quilts, against we got a chance of a good husband. We never went skating, or rushed about playing lawn tennis, or had any leisure time after the cows were milked, and the butter and cheese looked after, and the housework done up, we learned to use our needles."

"But I don't see any chance of a good husband for me, Mrs. Gerard, said Sylvia, saucily. "There are two single men in Bustleboro, and one is the Methodist minister, who is sixty-odd, and the other is old Jack Dodd, who hasn't got his full wits, and has to be watched by his little nieces and nephews."

"Who knows what may happen?" said the old lady, oracularly. "I wish my Cousin Chester would come home," sighed Sylvia, leaning her plump, white chin on one hand, as she stared out over the wintry landscape. "Perhaps," and her eyes sparkled mischievously, "he might fall in love with me!"

looks at each other all day long without a soul crossing the threshold." Mrs. Gerard was a kind-hearted old lady, full of generous impulses. Sylvia was affectionate and clinging in her nature, and yet the two women somehow did not agree.

"Oh, Sylvia!" she cried. "Where have you been! I thought you would never come back! Chester is here—my poor, poor boy!"

"What has happened?" cried Sylvia. "Where is he?"

"On the sofa in the parlor!" said Mrs. Gerard, getting her words out incoherently and by jerks. "And I'm afraid he's dying! He was intending to surprise me, and he rode over from Hartwick on Mrs. Poyntz's black horse, that never was fit for a Christian to ride, and the brute shied at a tree-stump that showed black against the white snow, and threw him. And he could just crawl to the door, with his leg broken, before he fainted dead away. Oh, Chester—oh, my poor boy!"

Mrs. Gerard's eyes sparkled. "Has he asked you to marry him—already?" said she. "But I knew he was getting to love you. Oh, I am so glad!"

"You approve it, then?" said Sylvia, rather disappointed. "I never was so pleased in all my life," said the old lady. "But—but—" hesitated Sylvia, "I don't think I care for him as a wife should care for her husband—I am sure I don't!"

"How Royal Families Live. England stands at the head of all European nations in the cost of its nobility and Germany in the expenses of maintaining the royal family alone. The latter empire, with a population of not more than 45,000,000, has to support twenty-two royal, princely and ducal families, and the direct cost of their maintenance is \$16,500,000.

The sum expended on account of the British royal family will be increased by \$30,000 a year on the coming marriage of the Princess Beatrice, and it is expected that there will shortly be a call for an income for the oldest son of the Prince of Wales. Yet the sum thus granted will be but a homoeopathic dose compared with the annual expenditures in appointments, salaries, pensions and moneys received by the families and relations of dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons, amounting to the prodigious total of \$108,614,030, divided as follows: Twenty-eight families of dukes take \$9,760,000; thirty-three families of marquises, \$8,205,950; 205 families of earls, \$48,181,203; sixty families of viscounts, \$11,241,200; 211 families of barons, \$31,126,188. Of these the Duke of Richmond heads the list with \$1,600,000; followed by the Duke of Wellington, \$1,425,000; the Duke of Grafton, \$1,115,850, and so on. The old Duchess of Cambridge, now eighty-eight years of age, continues to draw from the British treasury \$30,000 a year, besides enjoying the royal palaces of St. James and Kew as her residences. Her son, the queen's cousin, receives about \$110,000 a year from the same source to compensate him for the loss of the throne, which would have been his had the queen died without an heir, or had never been born.

Italy pays her royal family \$3,500,000 a year, which is a very large sum in proportion to the means of the country, while Spain disburses on the same account \$2,000,000. This ends the list of European monarchies of large population. But the minor monarchies also pay their royal families very large sums. Belgium, with about as large a population as the State of New York, pays \$400,000 a year to her king, and Portugal, with three-quarters of a million less population, pays \$330,000. Monarchy costs Sweden and Norway \$587,500 annually; Denmark, \$310,000; Holland, \$315,000; Roumania, \$240,000, and Greece, \$210,000. But \$60,000 of this last sum is paid by England, France and Russia. Republican France gives her president \$180,000, two-thirds of which is in the form of salary and one-third for household expenses. The Swiss republic pays its president \$3,000 a year, which is probably the smallest sum that the head of any civilized nation in the world receives. All the expenditures of Switzerland are on a correspondingly low scale. With a population approaching 3,000,000, the entire expenditures of the confederation does not reach \$10,000,000 annually.

LIFE'S HUMOROUS PHASES.

STORIES TOLD BY MERRY WAGS OF THE PRESS.

Revenge Pa—A Solemn Moment—An American Fable—Typical Western Fertility—Subdued by Size. "It's a shame that Mr. Blobs should have treated you so abominably, father." "Yes, it is a shame, daughter. It's outrageous, it's scandalous."

A Solemn Moment. After the marriage of Miss Lillian Sniggs, of Dallas, the bridal party partook of a sumptuous banquet, toward the end of which a younger brother of the bride got up, and said solemnly, raising his glass: "Ladies and gentlemen, I have to propose a toast, which, however, must be drunk standing. Please take your glasses and rise up."

Fable of the Fox and Woodchuck. A Woodchuck who had, at great labor and many Back-Aches, managed to excavate a Hole for Himself in a Hillside, was resting and congratulating Himself when along came a Fox, who said: "Ah—um! Just Fits me! I've been looking for just such a Den the last three months."

Typical Western Fertility. The following story of an engineer on a Western railway shows how fast the country is growing. We do not hold ourselves responsible for the truth of the story, but we do not hesitate to say that it is "not much of a story," compared with that told by the Western man who makes an effort: "One day I was driving my engine over the prairie at the rate of forty miles an hour, without a house in sight, and supposing the nearest town to be thirty miles distant. But as I glanced ahead I was astonished to see that I was approaching a large city. I rubbed my eyes, thinking it was a miracle."

A Queer Squirrel Yarn. Old citizens of Toledo distinctly remember the time when there was an emigration of squirrels in this vicinity. On a certain day a gentleman was on the bank of the Ten Mile creek, when the number of quirels moving was unusually large. Among the squirrels was one that exhibited such motherly care and affection for her two little ones as to prove a most interesting sight. She reached the bank of the creek where a crossing was to be made. The little squirrel were quite timid about going near to the water, but the mother coaxed them until they seemed to be satisfied to do as she wished. She ran along the shore, and finding a piece of bark about a foot long and six inches wide, dragged it to the water's edge and pushed it in the water, so that only a small part of one end of the bark was resting on the shore. She then induced her little ones to get on the bark and they at once cuddled closely together, when the old squirrel pushed the bark and its load into the stream, and taking one end of the bark in her teeth, pushed it ahead of her until the opposite bank was reached, where the young squirrels quickly scampered up the bank of the creek, where the mother rested for a few minutes, when the journey was resumed.—Toledo Blade.

A Novel Contest. The great sword contest on horseback between Duncan C. Ross, the champion all-round athlete of the world, and Sergeant Owen Davis of the United States army, for \$500 a side, was decided at Central Park, San Francisco, recently. About 3,000 persons were present. The costumes of the men were those usually worn by wielders of the sword, consisting of an iron coat of mail, and having their heads incased in an iron mask supporting a helmet, on top of which a small flag waved idly in the breeze. The contest, which was very interesting, and at times very exciting, was won by Davis amid tremendous cheering. Ross proved he was a finished swordsman, but the horse being a racer, was frequently unmanageable. The blows exchanged during the affair must have been very severe, as the thick armors showed deep dents on the back and on several parts of the breast it was cut through. Both men looked exhausted after the battle, on account of the bearing of their heavy armor and the trouble which their horses caused them.

Shop Signs. Shop signs were introduced into England from France in the reign of Edward III, and they became so general that nearly every shopkeeper in London had one displayed outside his shop. Great ingenuity was shown in the invention of signs calculated to prove most attractive to the passer by, and large sums of money were expended in this species of advertising. These signs were not affixed to the houses, but were placed on posts, or hung thereon on hinges, at the edge of the footpath. So largely did these increase that they absolutely obstructed the free circulation of air, and are supposed to be among the causes of the frequent epidemical disorders of London. They also naturally aided the spread of configurations, and on these grounds were afterward forbidden to be displayed.

Drunkennes in either the husband or wife is now regarded as a sufficient ground for divorce in France.

JINGLES OF THE RINK.

Hear them prate, prate, prate, The skater with his mate, Oh, the skates, the merry, merry skate! There's many a love-ly story they relate, As they speed at fearful rate.

'Tis often Cupid seals the fate, Be sure and save your pate Ere it shall be too late: For 'tis so very, very great To ride upon the merry, merry skate— 'Tis better far than swinging on the gait. —Cambridge Tribune.

I want to be a skater, And with the skaters glide, A pair of rollers on my feet, A sweet girl by my side. He tried to be a skater, And bravely he struck out.

A daring young lady, named Russell, Thought she'd give roller skating a "tussle," Her skates were erratic— Her fall was emphatic, And—her life it was saved by her bustle.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

It's a poor skater that won't roll both ways, as beginners speedily learn.—Boston Courier. In these times a man can start a sensation in London by stepping on a parlor match.—Chicago Herald. Will England charge the cost of the war with El Mahdi to the prophet and loss account?—Boston Globe.

When Smithy gave his girl the sack the other day, she took it very philosophically. It once covered a seal.—St. Paul Herald. The breath of winter may be cold, but it is not half so cold as the glance of the man you strike for the loan of half a dollar.—Blizzard. An artist who went into the country for the purpose of sketching a bull found there was danger of the bull's catching him.—Boston Times.

"Soft words," says a writer of proverbs, "do not scald the mouth." The average dude ought to have a very cool mouth.—Burlington (Vt.), Free Press. "Suppose we have no sugar!" suggests an English magazine. Well, then, we don't see how you could successfully run a political campaign.—Lovelock Citizen.

We agree with a recent writer that "it's all nonsense to say that eating pies is unhealthy." It is trying to digest them that raises the mischief with one's health.—Boston Transcript. It is said that Japanese women have never seen and do not know the use of pins. When a Japanese man's suspend button comes off he uses a shingle nail or a match.—Graphic. Enfant terrible: "Say, Mr. Snobby, can you play cards?" Snobby: "Why no, Johnny, I can't play very well." E. T.: "Well, then, you'd better look out, for ma says if Emma plays her cards well she'll catch you!"—Life.

A new dictionary of the Chinese language comprises forty volumes. When a Chinese editor gets stuck on the spelling of a word, he has to delay publication for a week or two in order to consult the lexicon.—Lovelock Citizen. Mark Twain has invented a shirt that requires no buttons or studs; and now if somebody will get up a sock that won't give away at the heel and too we don't see why men folks cannot be moderately happy after all.—Chicago Ledger.

"Yes," said pretty Miss Snooks, as she came home from a party at 5 A. M., "was determined to be the last to leave. I hate that horrid Mrs. Blinks, so I was resolved she shouldn't have the pleasure of slandering me after I'd gone."—San Francisco Post. We observe with pain that the old form of putting the name of a hotel first is going out of style, and that now they put it "Hotel English," "Hotel Anderson," etc. Soon we shall see such signs as "Butcher Shop Jones," "Gin Mill Schwab," and the like. What is the country coming to?—Derriek. A dogmatical spirit inclines a man to be censorious of his neighbors. Every one of his opinions appears to him written, as it were, with sunbeams, and he grows angry that his neighbors do not see it in the same light. He is tempted to disdain his correspondents as men of low and dark understanding, because they do not believe what he does. There is no river that presents more sudden and enormous variations than the Nile. For instance, fifty miles below Khartoum its whole volume flows through a canyon just forty yards in width, but the stream is 150 feet in water. A mile below the river is three miles wide, full of islands and so shallow that steamboats often ground.