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AN ASPIRATION.

Behold! The earth its verdure gains By covered fires and treasured rains, Unseen by mortal eyes;

Such growth—such force, be mine to know; Let wrot strength within me glow;

With honor's fire upraise; And crown my life's perfected sphere

With acts and words, that, mortal here, Shall win immortal praise.

—J. A. Deane, in The Current.

LAWYER AND PARSON.

The Rev. Dr. Melton was just beginning to feel at home in his new parsonage when he was surprised one evening to receive a call from his classmate Harvey Leigh.

"The papers didn't garble my sermon this week," the doctor said. "On the contrary, the reporters picked out the best and overlooked the worst in the kindest and most flattering fashion."

Mr. Leigh laughed. "You won't be amiable to reporters when you know them better. This is quite a change from your old life, and an agreeable change, no doubt. Or do you believe that God made the country and man made the town?"

"I believe that God made them both, and man tries his best to spoil both," the parson answered.

"Ah, that's a neat—very neat. By the way, I ought to call you doctor. I read your book on the Atonement with a good deal of pleasure." The parson winced.

"I don't wonder the college doctored you for it, though your ideas must seem rather liberal to the dusty old fogies who peddle out Latin and Greek and theology."

"I came near being one of the dusty old fogies myself," said Dr. Melton. "They wanted me to be a professor, but I prefer to be a parson."

"A city parson," said his guest. "I am not so sure about the city part," Dr. Melton said, slowly. "It was pleasant up there in the country; I was attached to my people; I liked to potter about in my garden. I was astonished when I received a call from New York. I don't know that I would have accepted it if one of my deacons had not had a promising son ready to fill my place, and I think that my congregation rather liked the idea of a young dominie. I had about come to the conclusion that I should live and die a country parson; but here I am."

"With six thousand dollars a year and a comfortable house," added Mr. Leigh.

The parson frowned. "A man with four children has no right to slight a chance of bettering his fortune; but it was not the money that brought me to New York. There is work here—"

"He broke off suddenly, perhaps because he saw the shadow of a sneer on Mr. Leigh's lips. "And you are still living in Philadelphia?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed; I would not live anywhere else. New Yorkers may turn up their noses and call it a village, but Philadelphia suits people who belong to the old Quaker stock."

"You have a son, I believe, to perpetuate the name?" the parson remarked. "One son—an only child. Morton is twenty-four, and reading law in my office. A bright fellow too; never gives me a moment's uneasiness; always at work; steady-going; no boyish nonsense about him."

"Twenty-four," the parson repeated, "and no boyish nonsense about him? There is a good deal of nonsense about my boys, I am hap—sorry to say. Still, I hope they won't disgrace me. Their mother thinks they are all right, and I am learning every day of my life that my wisdom, as compared with others, is beneath contempt. I can hardly believe you have a son twenty-four. Why, you are a spruce young man yourself."

"Grown up!" "I hope so; otherwise they will tower over my head."

"And do you understand them?" asked Mr. Leigh, with a gravity that made the parson's blue eyes twinkle and the corners of his mouth twitch.

"Oh, no, I don't understand them; I don't understand any creature in petticoats; but my daughters are good girls, and their mother assures me that they are remarkably gifted. What do I want to understand them for?"

"It might be an advantage under some circumstances," Mr. Leigh remarked. "What is the matter? What girl do you think it might be an advantage to understand?"

"My ward," answered Mr. Leigh. "She is an orphan, a far-away cousin of my wife, and she has lived with us for the past five years. She has a nice little fortune; she is pretty; she is well-bred—"

"That goes without saying," muttered the parson, stroking his long beard.

"But she hasn't a grain of common sense," Mr. Leigh rose, took up a position on the rug, slipped his left hand under the short tails of his cut-away coat, and gesticulated with his right as he warmed to his story. "Last summer," he began, "she was twenty-one, and just out of school. She went to Cape May with the Phippards, people in whom I placed the utmost confidence. I thought she was safe with them; but lo and behold! she must make the acquaintance of a young gentleman who held the responsible position of bookkeeper in one of our large hardware shops, a retail concern, and he has sold many a paper of tacks over the counter. I was in Europe; so this interesting tack-seller ran down to Cape May every Sunday, and he stayed until Monday. Then he had a clerk's two weeks' vacation, and he spent that at Cape May. I came back in October, and before I had been home twenty-four hours who should call at the house but this young man? He wanted to see me, and I saw him, and I was informed by him that he had wooed and won my ward. I asked if he proposed to take her to live over the shop."

Mr. Leigh's thin lips curled downward; he glanced at the parson for sympathy, but he encountered a steady, somewhat critical look.

"Why shouldn't they live over the shop?" Dr. Melton said.

"Oh, you don't understand," Mr. Leigh exclaimed, fretfully. "She has been brought up in luxury, and she ought to have some idea of what is proper and fitting. There has been a terrible time. Why, I assure you I have had the sympathy of all Philadelphia. This hardware man had the effrontery to say that he had money enough to take care of a wife, just as though he had never thought of my ward's little fortune. He begged me to go and see his employees—people I never heard of—and I told him that I did not want their recommendations; I did not propose to hire a bookkeeper. He was insolent, and I ordered him out. Then she blazed away at me, the weak, infatuated girl. I tried to reason with her; my wife talked to her; my son—well, you see, my son wanted to marry her, too, and he would have made just the husband for her, but she told him if he spoke to her she would ask her hardware man to protect her. Think of it! As though Morton would insult her—the best-mannered man that ever lived."

"And Morton is very fond of her," he continued—"so fond of her, in fact, that he is waiting like a hero for this to blow over. I think the farce is nearly ended, for the hardware man became partner the other day in a nail factory or something of that sort, and a week ago he sailed for Europe. He will have to stay a year, traveling for his firm, and when he comes back—" Mr. Leigh broke off with a smile astutely and to drop the lid over his left eye.

"I don't exactly understand your objections to him," said Dr. Melton slowly. "Does he drink or keep low company?"

"No," answered Mr. Leigh; "but—" "I beg your pardon," said the doctor, interrupting him, "but I want to speak in his behalf. He must be industrious, and no fool, and prosperous, or he would not have jumped into this new position. I confess I don't think you have made out a clear case. Of course you want to see your son happy; but if she does not love your son, that ends the matter. And if she does love this other man, and he is honest and upright, why should he not have her?"

"He is not her equal," said Mr. Leigh. "You know in Philadelphia—" The parson rose up with a stifled exclamation.

"It is warm in here," he said. "I want a little fresh air; I am not used to a furnace-heated house. Poor girl! The city has not yet claimed me for its own, and I miss the fire-place in my old study. Poor fellow!"

He threw up the window, and looked out on a wide expanse of tiny high-fenced back yards; but overhead was the clear sea of sky, where the moon rode at anchor amid the fleet of stars. He stood there, drawing in the crisp December air, until a tap sounded on the door. "Come in," he cried, and one of his daughters entered—a tall, slim girl with her father's blue eyes.

"Papa," she said, pressing close to him, and smiling mysteriously, "there are some people in the parlor."

"Drawing-room, my dear," said the doctor. "We are in Philadelphia."

He passed his arm about her and kissed her, she did not know why; then led her to his guest.

"Mollie, this is a classmate of mine. My daughter, Mr. Leigh—Mr. Harvey Leigh, of Philadelphia. You must excuse me for a few minutes."

He went into the adjoining parlor. Yes, it was a wedding-party, no doubt, but the would-be bride and groom did not look like the brides and grooms that seek out a parson in such a fashion. The man was a gentleman, with a fine face and dignified bearing. The girl was pretty, but more than that, she had an air of courage, of self-reliance; she was not a weak piece of pink and white flesh. An older couple was with them, a somewhat frightened middle-aged man and a very nervous middle-aged woman, evidently his wife, for she clung to his arm helplessly.

"I am William Dunbar," said the young man. The parson shook hands with him. "And this," he added, turning to the young lady, "is Miss Kate Perry. We are both of age—in fact, I am thirty-three—and I hope you will be good enough to marry us."

Mr. Dunbar was very much in earnest, but he smiled a little. "Our marriage is sudden," he added, "because I must sail for Europe to-morrow, and I want to take my wife with me."

"The parson looked at him, then at the girl. Her eyes met his steadily, though a faint flush stole into her cheeks. "Where is your home?" he asked.

"I have none," she answered. "I have neither father nor mother. I have been living in Philadelphia with my guardian. The words were spoken softly, but her eyes flashed. "I am free to do as I please," she went on. "My guardian has no right to dictate any longer."

"Hum!" said Dr. Melton, passing his hand over his beard. "And you are from Philadelphia, too?" he added, turning to Mr. Dunbar.

"I am," was the curt response. "Your name sounds familiar," said the parson. "Could I have seen it the other day in a list of passengers for Europe?"

"He scanned the faces before him. The man's jaws clicked; the girl's flush deepened into crimson.

"We are free to marry," said Mr. Dunbar. "There is no reason why we should not be man and wife. If you won't perform the ceremony, I shall find some one who is willing. We have with us my uncle and aunt; but there is no use in wasting words. Will you marry us?"

"Yes," said the parson. Then he asked a few formal questions, and married them according to the ritual of the Dutch church. He begged them to be seated for a minute, while he filled out the certificate. This made it necessary for him to return to the study.

"A runaway country couple?" said Mr. Leigh.

"I can't swear to the country part," the parson answered, as he drew a certificate out of his desk.

"I wonder you are willing to perform the ceremony," Mr. Leigh remarked. "I should think it was a great risk to marry runaway couples."

"The risk is greater without it," said the parson. "If I don't tie the knot, somebody will, and it is generally a satisfaction to one to know that the knot is tied. In this case, however, I am quite sure I am doing right."

He went back to the parlor with the certificate, taking pen and ink, so that the witnesses might sign their names. Mr. Dunbar shook him by the hand, leaving a note in his palm. The bride smiled shyly upon him, and the elderly woman bowed; but the elderly man, who so far had not spoken a word, said, suddenly, "I will tell you, sir, that you will never regret having helped this marriage."

ABOUT ANIMAL PLAGUES.

THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD'S HEALTH AND PROPERTY.

Result of Interesting Investigations by Dr. D. E. Salmon, of the Department of Agriculture.

Dr. D. E. Salmon, chief of the bureau of animal industry department of agriculture, Washington, delivered an interesting lecture recently at the Long Island College hospital: "Animal Plagues; with special reference to their influence on health and property, and the means of prevention."

Dr. Salmon grouped some important facts. The speaker said that from time immemorial animal life had suffered from plagues, some of which also attacked the human form divine. By the teachings of science, most of these plagues are now shown to be from parasites, animal or vegetable. The accounts of these plagues began with the earliest history of mankind. Virgil describes all too plainly the dreadful pestilence of his time, which afflicted horses and other animals, and it is not to be concluded that he described the instances of a single year. That these plagues were of frequent occurrence is shown in his writings. Homer also tells of the terrible plague which afflicted the Grecian camp at the siege of Troy, where Apollo is described as shooting his deadly arrows to avenge the insult to his priest, Chryses.

One hundred years earlier, in the time of King Leonidas, a similar plague is described, and two and a half centuries before this king is the extraordinary plague in Egypt, where all the animals were afflicted, and the first born of every family were smitten.

Three thousand years ago animal plagues originated in the simpler forms of life, and may these not have been evolved in accordance with the law of the survival of the fittest? Smallpox has not yet finished its development; it must have originated at a comparatively recent date, or it would have become more widely distributed, and would have been known also to the ancients. So with scarlatina and kindred diseases.

Numbers of disease germs are scattered in the earth, water and air. Contagious fever germs are passed from animal to animal, and we have them with our food and drink.

In this country we have millions and millions of cattle under various conditions, from the close, unhealthy quarters and swill feed of the crowded towns to the pure air and pasturage of the Rocky mountains, but among all these millions we have had no case of rinderpest, and we may conclude this will be our misery for the future until the disease is brought to our shores. Our climate, it has been concluded, is not favorable to these particular diseases which afflict Europe, or we would have had them. Pleuro-pneumonia did not exist here until imported, and although it was believed it could not exist beyond the Alleghenies, it does exist there. The West had been free because contagion was never brought here.

Some animal plagues do not originate in any known country, and the attempts to trace their origin have proved futile. Some of these have had a large effect on the health and property of the world. Diseases which only arise from contagion are attributed to other causes, and scientists charged with the duty of repressing them have to struggle with wrong opinions. The writings on these diseases of half a dozen years ago serve to show what rapid advances science has made in this direction. The germ theory has been directed the most of all. Varro, before the birth of Christ, writing on malarial fever, attributed it to little animals bred in marshes. Not until 1876 was this theory established.

Dr. Salmon here introduced a number of drawings from photographs, much enlarged, showing the result of microscopic examinations of disease germs in cattle, poultry and swine, and the different appearance of the same disease—such as cholera—had in poultry and swine.

The lecturer spoke of the danger from animals afflicted with tuberculosis, or consumption. Few, probably, realized the vast number of domesticated animals held in this country and not protected from these diseases. There are thirteen and a half million horses and mules, 44,000,000 cattle, 50,000,000 sheep, and 45,000,000 swine. The horses, sixteen abreast, would make a line 4,000 miles long, and all the animals in line would reach 10,000 miles. To pass along the line would take twenty days, of twelve hours each, travelling at the rate of twenty miles an hour. These animals, worth \$2,500,000 (two thousand five hundred millions) in value, and which all the gold ever mined here could not buy, stand exposed to the ravages of animal plagues swept over here from Europe. England lost millions of cattle by these diseases, and to estimate our possible loss we have only to multiply by seven. Consumption is becoming more prevalent among cattle, and there is practically no inspection to prevent the milk or flesh of tuberculosis cows being sold to the public and spreading the germs of the disease. This milk is especially dangerous to children.

At present this whole question of properly treating cattle disease is in such a muddle that it is doubtful if either science or art will ever be able to clear it up; but what these cannot do, urgent necessity, born of a great national calamity, will sometimes accomplish. Almost every State has its local laws on the subject, and they clash. The central government cannot step into a State to check the disease, as it is "unconstitutional." It took a dozen lawyers now to tell how to ship a calf across country. It is like a prairie fire. Will a man, whose house, barns, and earthly goods stand in the heart of the prairie, when he

sees a little fire starting on some other property, and which must sweep over and sweep away his own, go at once and put out the small fire, or wait and meet it at his own home? The question answers itself.

In concluding Dr. Salmon said the trouble must be regarded as a foreign enemy and be so treated—crushed out.

Lions as Family Pets.

H. H. Cross was for seventeen years engaged in the purchase of animals for menageries, and for long study of their dispositions and peculiarities he is a convert to the theory that all animals will eventually become what man chooses to make them. For instance, he characterizes the bull-dog as the natural gentleman of his species, with more intelligence and discernment than any other, until he learns how to fight and gradually becomes the bruiser and loafer of his kind. Some years ago, while visiting Australia, he purchased a pair of young lions—male and female—and brought them to his home in New York, where they have since been kept in an apartment fitted up expressly for them. Several of their cubs have been sold for \$1,000 each, and he has been offered \$6,000 for either of the parent couple, but he declined to part with them and will keep them until they die. His children have learned to play with them without the least apprehension of danger, and a photograph of the pair has been inscribed: "The souls that love us." During all the time the two old lions have been in his possession they have not shown the least disposition to injure any one, and he never had any trouble with their descendants, with the exception of one incorrigible cub, which Mr. Cross describes as "the greatest lunkhead he ever saw."

This obstinate young beast persistently resisted all blandishments, and at one time, during Mr. Cross' absence from home, amused himself by tearing out the bottom of the cage and then refusing to allow his temporary keeper to repair the damage. Whenever the keeper made an attempt to slip a board over the hole the cub would strike at him viciously as a notification that he was regarded as a trespasser, and the cage was left undisturbed. When the owner returned he was apprised of the insurrection in his menagerie, and promptly armed himself with a stout stick as a preparation of war. He tried to place a board over the same hole, but the lion resented the intrusion, and the subsequent engagement may be described in Mr. Cross' own words: My experience has told me that a lion's vulnerable points of attack were on the nasal cavity and paws, and a few quick and earnest raps across these will defeat the bravest lion and make him turn tail. I went for the obdurate cub with my stick; he surrendered, promptly if not gracefully, and there was no further objection to board or projected repairs.

This is the only misunderstanding recorded in that department, and the cub was sold at the first opportunity. The members of his home menagerie have been almost entirely exempt from sickness since their residence in America, but every attention has been paid to their physical well-being. Mr. Cross states that if lions are kept in a healthy condition they must have access to the ground, for otherwise they soon become victims of paralysis or incurable distemper. In dealing with his lions he has found that they, like human beings, oftentimes prefer to be let alone, and on such occasions he paid no attention to them, but always reciprocated any disposition to be sociable.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The "Roof of the World."

A little east of the narrow tract now in dispute between Russia and Afghanistan, is that native protuberance called by the natives the Pamir, or The Roof of the World. This wonderful plateau, furrowed by deep valleys, through which flow the head streams of great rivers, is the loftiest in the world, and stretches away for some hundreds of miles from 10,000 to 15,000 feet above the sea. It is an elevated isthmus connecting those almost impassable mountain systems of Asia, the Thian Shan and Altai on the north, with the Hindoo Koosh and Himalayas on the south. Here history places the cradle of European races. Here lived our Aryan forefathers, who, leaving their Pamir slopes, followed great rivers westward, and finally pastured their herd in Europe. Hither are returning now their descendants, the Slavs and Anglo-Saxons, sooner or later to contend for the supremacy of Asia upon the historic ground from which their primitive progenitors are believed to have migrated.—New York Sun.

A Four-Year-Old Warrior.

The widow of General Custer relates that, in a Dakota Indian dance, a four-year-old boy was brought to the circle by his mother, and left to make his little whirling gyrations around the ring of the dancers. It was explained that he had won his right to join in the festivities of the tribe. Of the four Indians of a rival tribe left on a battlefield, one, though mortally wounded, was not yet dead when the retreat took place. A squaw incited the child to plunge a knife into the wounded warrior. As a reward he acquired the privilege of joining in all celebrations, and the right to wear an eagle feather standing straight from the scalp-lock of his tiny head. The mother's eyes gleamed with pride as she watched the miniature warrior admitted among the mature and experienced braves.

The greatest height of an ocean wave is said to be about thirty-five feet above the level.

SOMEBODY'S DUDE.

Into a rink with four bleak walls, That blazed with a glare like midday light; Where never a shadow of sorrow falls, Somebody's dude strolled in one night; Somebody's dude so young and so white, Wearing upon his innocent face Never a sign of manhood's might, But his scarpin' showed a suspicious paste.

Carefully combed are his raven curls, That lightly lie on his delicate brain, And in his fingers he languidly twirls In ceaseless motion a gold-headed cane; Somebody carefully combed his hair; Was it his mother, whose sight now fades Was it a blushing maiden fair, Or a barber as black as the ace of spades?

There's never a doubt he is somebody's pet; Somebody's heart has embraced him there; Maybe the dude has a fairytale pet, Or a mother, who waits at the head of the stair; Maybe a maiden, with cheek of rose, Is sadly awaiting this missing link, And there he stands in a beautiful pose, In the glamour and glare of the skating rink.

But there comes a man full of honeyed guile And fastens the cruel skates to his feet; Then stands aside with a cynical smile, And waits for his head and his heels to meet.

Kiss him once for his grandmother's sake; It's doubtful if ever she kisses him more; The skates from his feet so tenderly take, Sweep out the debris and close the door. —Eugene Clay Ferguson.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Love is a fellow around swapping a peck of trouble for a pint of happiness. A polished delivery—cuffs and collars from the laundry.—Burlington Free Press.

In Denmark the rooms in the hotels are all bald-headed—that is, they have no locks. "What is the dollar of the daddies!" asks some one. It is, briefly, what the dudes exist on.—Boston Post.

Skating rinks promote temperance because all who go there take a drop too much before they leave.—Merchant-Traveler.

A Newport girl fell asleep in church Sunday and dreamed aloud, saying "Oh, he skates too awful nice for anything." —Kentucky State Journal.

I never met a fractions goat, Especially when the field was wide, But that I ached for many a day, And always on the butted side. —Call.

Yes, everything is faster in this country. In England they say that a man stands for parliament. In this country he runs for Congress.—Arkansas Traveler.

Jones—What is the price of this Merchant—that—well, I'll make you a present of it, seeing it's your own. Jones (absent-mindedly)—Isn't that a trifle steep!—Blissard.

An exchange says a "Chicago policeman caught the small-pox while asleep." If a Chicago policeman ever caught anything it would be when he was asleep.—New York Graphic.

There is something about a good natured man that takes one by the hand as heartily as a poor relation, and hangs on like a man getting home in a crowded car.—Chicago Ledger.

Mr. Edward Atkinson says that silver is not as valuable as are eggs. This may be true, but a pocket full of the former does not cause as much anxiety as the same quantity of the latter.—Boston Post.

"This is not a very fertile country," said a tender-foot as he surveyed the rugged hills in a far Western State. "Think not," said a miner, "you should see the revolvers flourishing in a hot spot." —Boston Courier.

A dwarf, who is only seventeen inches in height, aged thirty-six, a good writer and well educated, lives at Shiga, Ken, Japan. This is not an isolated case. There are good writers and educated men living in this country who are also very "short." —New York Dispatch.

The watch-dog grows— A man is a watch-dog As one more bean Has pants chawed, Old man up stairs— Warm blankets 'neath Says, "Glad I died Up Fowler's tooth!" "Never go back," advises a writer. "What you attempt, do with all your strength." This may be good advice, but it wouldn't work satisfactorily. When a young man, for instance, attempts to court a girl, he may do it with all his strength, but he goes back, all the same. He goes back about six nights a week.—Norridown Herald.

"Will you look me up the origin of the word rink, papa?" "Certainly, my dear; but why do you wish me to do so?" "I have taken a notion to learn roller-skating, and I have a curiosity to know what the word rink is derived from." "If you are going to learn roller-skating I would advise you to become acquainted with the word equilibrium, for you'll want to know more about that than about rink when you put on the rollers." —Boston Courier.

THE SMALL BOY. No more with ead the small boy's nose At early morning tinges; And as the weather warmer grows, His hair his mother shingles. Soon to the placid pool he'll hiss, Whose banks wild flowers bespangle, And as the sunny hours glide by For horreputts he will angle. Perhaps he'll of the water fool, And when he thinks it warmest, Upon the bank he'll quickly pool, And plunge right in head foremost; One bathing suit he makes no use, Their texture or their trimming; In pairs he'll swim, That's how he goes in swimming. —Boston Courier.