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SILENT MUSIC.

Melodious silence reigns from hill to hill, For there may be sweet music without sound. The wistful autumn, gold-and-russet gowned, Both all our souls with rhythmic feeling fill; On winter days, when all is bleak and chill, And each bare limb is with a snow ridge crowned— In that white prospect melodies abound— Strains we hear not, but which our senses thrill; On still, spring days, when the buds bedeck the trees, And bright green leaves shine through a blossom storm, And in the listless, dreamy, summer days, Nature is rich with silent harmonies. Beauty is music in whatever shape, It smiles on us in nature's mystic ways.

A LITTLE FAMILY AFFAIR.

When Eden was electrified by the appearance upon walls and fences of a placard announcing that the "Cecilia Club" would give a concert at Haverford (six miles away), and Saul Kittredge was the "basso profundo." West Eden was far, very far, from the madding crowd, and the entertainments that came within its range were wont to be of the burnt cork variety. They savored of the ungodly, and of very humble social sphere. And Saul was Deacon Kittredge's only son, and had been expected to follow in his father's footsteps—to be a deacon of the church, president of the Eden bank, postmaster of West Eden (the postmastership had descended to the deacon from his father and grandfather undisturbed by political changes, and the deacon regarded it as a respectable heirloom) and for a wife he was to take to himself Mary Willett, the minister's daughter. All these plans were waiting for the baby Saul when he opened his astonished blinking black eyes upon the troublesome world. Alas! Almost from the day of their opening the black eyes took quite different views of life. Before their owner was five he had set little Mary Willett down hard in a mud pie, and run off to play with the respectable children on "the Flats."

And it was not the gossip alone. He had lately found under the cushion of her chair, in a search for Zion's Messenger, a paper-covered book with the astonishing title: "The Stolen Bride, or The Mystery of the Moat." Lavinia was light-minded. But Lavinia was the wife of his bosom; he hurried home to consult with her about this new trouble that had fallen upon them. He found her perched upon the high stool behind the rows of pigeon-holes in the postoffice scrutinizing through her glasses the superscription of a letter. "Nehemiah, Tildy Slocomb has got a letter, and it's a man's writing, but I don't think it's Saul's. The postmark beats me." "I hear that she has gone to Eden to work in a milliner's shop since her father died," said the deacon. "We must send the letter over." "Now, it's queer I didn't know she'd gone. Folks won't take the trouble to tell a poor lame old woman what's goin' on," said Mrs. Kittredge, plaintively. "And they won't send postal cards; there ain't half so many goin' between here and Eden as there use to be." The deacon looked up quickly from the bowed position in which he had sat down. He had observed that; he had also overheard whispers which led him to think that his wife's curiosity about the mails was causing dissatisfaction in the town. Was disgrace in another shape coming upon him in his old age—upon him who had led so upright, so blameless a life? But no; he only imagined that because trouble had disturbed his nerves; nobody could suspect Lavinia of anything really dishonorable, and surely they could bear with her harmless curiosity and gossip. "Lavinia, Saul has joined a concert troupe. They are going to sing in Haverford to-morrow night; the bills are posted all over town with 'Saul Kittredge, basso profundo,' on them." Mrs. Kittredge got down painfully from the high stool—a little withered old lady, but with hair that was still flaxen and childish blue eyes. "Oh, Nehemiah, our Saul!" she said, with a gasp, stretching her little trembling hands out toward him. "But maybe it ain't so bad. Don't look so, Nehemiah." Deacon Kittredge groaned. "I don't see why we should have had such a son, Lavinia," he said, shaking his gray head heavily. "But there! it's the Lord's judgment on us, and we must bear it." And the deacon went to his closet, and on his rigid old knees sought to discover the meaning of the Lord's judgment. After supper he wended his way to the weekly prayer meeting. Huldah, the "help," went too, and Mrs. Kittredge was left alone. As soon as both were gone, and the doors fastened behind them, she went into the postoffice, and took the letter addressed to Tildy Slocomb again from its pigeon-hole—Tildy Slocomb who had come of "shiftless" stock, who wore pink bonnets, and went to dances, and flirted with the stage-driver. "If it ain't from Saul, I want to know it; and if it is, seems as if I ought to know it. And I never saw a postmark that I couldn't make out before. If there was any postal cards to put my mind on, maybe I could stop, thinkin' about it; or if I knew just how it was about Arvilly Wright's beau jiltin' her, but I can't be took up with that book Miss Skinner brought me, I feel so wicked readin' it; and it don't pay, for there ain't a word of truth in it. I should like to know who has written to Tildy Slocomb." She held the letter up between her eyes and the lamp that stood in a bracket on the wall. "I don't see why Nehemiah was bent on havin' everything so high up here—letter boxes and stools and lamps and all. I'll take the letter out into the sittin' room. But come to think of it, I should feel kind of awkward hidin' it away, if anybody should happen to come in, and it's warmer and not so lonesome in the kitchen." So in the kitchen Mrs. Kittredge went, with the precious letter hidden under her little worsted cape, although there was nobody to see but Saul's old gray cat, a lineal descendant of the one that had brought up her family in old Mr. Hollis's coffin. The kitchen was a large one with windows on two sides. Mrs. Kittredge carefully pulled down the curtains of the two windows whose outside blinds were not closed; they were not used to coming down, and made very hard work of it, which seemed to give her a guilty feeling. The postmark was so blurred that scarcely a letter was distinguishable. She held the letter up before the lamp. Her conscience gave twinges, but one could never discover any secrets in that way—only a stray word here and there. One could not discover anything, alas! in this letter; the envelope was too thick, or the outside of the paper was not written upon. Was it Saul's writing? The capital letters did not look like his. If she could see only one word of the inside! She turned the letter over. The envelope had not stuck together all the way across; she slid her finger in, not to open it—only enough to see, perchance, a word. The paper tore—there was a rent an inch long! She uttered an exclamation of dismay, and looked around her as if there were somebody to see. There was; the blind had been opened, and pressed against the pane was a face.

She called feebly, and the deacon's voice answered, but still she had to lean against the wall for a moment before she could find strength to unbolt the door, the face was so startling, and it was so terrible to think that somebody had seen her tampering with the letter! Her fingers trembled so that the bolt resisted her efforts. "Good land, Lavinia, what is the matter?" her husband called, impatiently. When at length the door was opened she fell into his arms, gasping, "Oh, Nehemiah, there's a man looking in at the window! It was Providence that sent you home." "Deacon Stebbins was there to lead, and I heard something that I wanted so much to tell you that I couldn't stay. Never mind about the man—let him look!" The deacon was in a astonishingly good spirit. "At that window, was it? Why, the blinds are shut. You've been dreaming, Lavinia." "The blind was open, and there was a man's face pressed against the window—and oh, Nehemiah, the letter is gone!" "What letter?" "I brought Tildy Slocomb's letter out here, just to see if I could make out where it came from, and I tore it a little mite, and he saw me, and he's been in and carried it off! No, I haven't put it in my pocket, nor mislaid it anywhere; it's gone!" The deacon hastened to the wood-shed door; it was open. "And I turned that button the very first thing after Huld' went out! How could he have got in?" said Mrs. Kittredge. The deacon bowed his head upon his hands and groaned. "It couldn't be of any great consequence, Nehemiah, a letter of Tildy Slocomb's," faltered his wife. "You don't think it's goin' to make great trouble?" "The letter was in our keeping; we must account for it. If nothing was ever said about it, it would be our duty to tell just how it was lost," said the deacon. "I s'pose you're right," said his wife (as she had said a thousand times since their wedding day); "but it's hard; it will look so much as if I meant to open it! Nehemiah, you don't suppose they'll turn us out?" The deacon walked the floor with great strides. "We shall have lost people's trust; if I am not turned out, I shall give up the office." He kept back the reproaches that rose to his lips, but he walked into the sitting-room and closed the door behind him. He opened it soon, however, and said, in a gentler tone, "Lavinia, I was going to tell you something that I heard about Saul." The little woman hurried to him, her anxious blue eyes overflowing at the mention of her son's name. "The minister says that the musical company that Saul belongs to is nothing like a minstrel troop; he says it's respectable. He seemed to think we needn't feel so bad about it." "I can't think of anything but how Saul will feel if we're turned out of the postoffice." Mrs. Kittredge suddenly broke down completely. "If I'd never touched that letter and could have things as they were, I would be willing to swallow even such a bitter pill as Tildy Slocomb," she sobbed. Then she crept off to bed, and forgot in a few hours' troubled sleep the dismal morrow when all the world would see their fail.

POSTOFFICE PECULATORS.

Inspector Adsit, of the postoffice department, whose investigation of the mail robberies in this village resulted in the arrest of young Pierce, is one of the most experienced men on the force, where he has been employed many years. There are sixty mail inspectors in all, whose duty it is to "check up" the accounts of postmasters where negligence or crookedness is suspected, and to ferret out embezzlement and thieving. The inspecting of postmasters' accounts is comparatively easy, and young men are assigned to it, as the main qualification necessary is an accurate knowledge of bookkeeping. The old hands are employed as detectives, and all the qualities necessary to the spying out of the most intricate cases are required. Inspector Adsit's many years' experience, if recorded in the plainest, most unimaginative way, would make a volume much more thrilling and sensational than the fanciful detective stories published, while at the same time it would give touches of human nature in its most varied phases. Mr. Adsit, though naturally uncommunicative, is an old newspaper man, and he told one or two of his experiences while enjoying a cigar and waiting for the 11:20 train to his next base of operations in Northern New York. "About two years ago," he said, "I had a job given me in Michigan which had troubled the department a good deal. They had been losing money from registered letters which must have been taken out by postoffice clerks at Port Huron or just over the line at Sarnia, and I finally traced it to the former place. There was a boy sixteen years old who worked through the night at the office, and I had reason to believe that he took the money. I sent four decoy letters from separate stations, mailed so that they would be sure to pass through his hands on a certain night. In a memorandum book I took a record of the date and number of the bank bills I put in each one, and made the handwriting in no two letters alike. I decided then to watch the postoffice all night to see that no one else went there. The time selected was a bright, moonlight night in September, and, as luck would have it, there had been a series of burglaries there just before, including the blowing up of a couple of safes, so that the police were wide awake. I began on my beat up and down the alley, and soon saw that a country policeman was watching me. It was not very long before he walked up to me and in a very knowing as well as pompous way said: 'Well, where are the rest of your gang? You might as well own up now.' I assured him that I was not a burglar, but was on to watch the postoffice. 'Come, master himself to-night, and he told me to watch the office myself. Come now, g'long with me,' and he started for the station house. If there is anybody in the world I don't give a secret to it's a policeman, for they are sure to tell everything they know. So I tried to evade his attempt to discover why I was there. I argued, threatened, showed him my commission and did everything else, and after working for nearly two hours freed myself by consenting to having a man put on to watch me. And he actually hired a man to watch me on the corner all night! In the morning I went into the postoffice and, finding the suspected clerk, asked him to show his registered letters. I looked them over and picked out the four I had written. 'Paul,' said I, 'now give me the money.' He got mad and said he had none. I then made him take off his coat and vest, which I searched without success, but found a roll of bills in his trousers. I picked out several, and showing him my memorandum book, made him read and compare the marks on the bills and then on the book for himself. 'You've got me,' and that is all he said. I opened my letters and found that he had taken the money from three, and had put back the bills in the fourth. He did not know that I wrote it, and I asked him why he did not take the \$25 in that letter. 'Read it,' he said, pushing it over to me. "It read as if from a poor boy about the clerk's age, who was returning \$25 he had borrowed from a neighbor to help him to a town over the line. It was written by his mother and told in a pitiful way how hard he had worked to save it and how he was saving money for her. The letter had touched him, and he left the money. I could not tell him that the letter was a fancy of mine to test his conscience. And he is the only one I ever arrested whose sentence was not carried out. He had so many manly qualities that the judge held the sentence over him on his good behavior, and the money he didn't steal helped to free him. "The most of the criminals we find are under thirty years of age, and although there are a great many women in the department, I never knew of but two who were dishonest. You see they are not tempted to spend money as boys and men are. Extravagance has been the cause of the ruin of almost every one I have arrested. I believe it was the same thing that led young Pierce to steal, although this instance is by no means a marked one. He went with the boys who had rich parents and could not afford to keep up with them in style. "I met with a sad case at Ypsilanti, Mich., a few years ago," continued Mr. Adsit. "The postmaster, who was one of the leading men of the city in social and religious life, was found \$2,800 short in his accounts, and I had to fight him for nearly two days to prevent his committing suicide. It was a singular case."

He had gone into stock speculation with the cashier of a bank across the street, and turned over nearly all the large money orders he received for the bank to cash, until it held \$2,000 dollars worth of them against the postoffice. He failed in his speculations and could not meet the orders. I offered to help him make up the deficiency, and advised him to go to friends to borrow and prevent exposure. He confided his case to one man and becoming discouraged because he refused to advance the money, did not have the face to go elsewhere. The man had lost a leg in the war, was a prominent member of the leading church and was greatly respected in the community, so that when I exposed him at last the public would not believe he could have done wrong. I was denounced for ruining his reputation, and it was not until the bondsmen were called on to make up the deficiency that people began to find out that I had made no mistake. The exposure led to the prompt discharge of the cashier. I have become accustomed to such abuse, however, and do not mind much about it. One would think that this experience would harden me, but it doesn't. I hate to expose a man more than you can realize, and I have more sympathy for human nature the more I know about its failings.

Birds and Their Feathers.

The best time for seeing perfect feathering is in the winter, or onward to the spring; then, after a very short honeymoon, the birds settle down to domestic drudgery with exemplary ardor, with the result that at the end of a few weeks their tail-feathers are rough and irregular, their pinions worn and ragged from constant contact with the nest in sitting; and by the time their new suit comes at midsummer they are more than ready for it. The spring, of course, is the climax of a bird's life. With scrupulous care he arranges hourly his feathers, all their markings are seen to perfection, and many peculiarities of decoration are then and then alone displayed. The fleshy combs and protuberances become scarlet and enlarged, and any one who has not seen a pheasant or cock grouse at this season of love would be astonished at the alteration from his normal state. The cock pigeon swells that part of his body most adorned with iridescent feathers to make the grandest show he can; and every humble finch and small bird brushes up his modest finery. It is said that not a single bright-colored feather on any bird's body is left idle or undisplayed. If birds have bright-colored tails they raise them to their highest and fullest and abase their heads; if bright heads, then they shake out their plumes, their eye distends, and their wattles swell; and if, as in some cases, they have large tufts of feathers falling on both sides of the head, they contrive the bewildered hen shall see all the glories of both sides at one glance, and so drag all the feathers of the far side round to the near side, making such a huge mass that the face is nearly hidden, and the projecting beak alone shows where the head must be. All this done for the hen's benefit, and it is only done when she is near; it all turns on her existence, and ceases if she be absent.—Magazine of Art.

A Korroboree in Australia.

After dinner, which was at 6 P. M., we went to see a korroboree, where the black fellows were encamped at a short distance from the house. There were two tribes of these, and about two hundred of them in all. They were painted with white and black streaks across the face and chest, and got up in correct style with skins and spears and boomerangs, and by the light of the fires which were kindled in a circle around they looked sufficiently hideous. The tribes danced alternately, and the watchwords of their songs appeared to be half English, half native. A great deal of the action of the dance consisted in striking the ground at the same moment, so as to cause an echoing thud with their feet. One of the repeated actions was to cause the muscles of the leg and thigh to quiver simultaneously from toe to stomach in a most extraordinary manner. At the end of each figure they brought themselves up with a strange, deep-toned sound, half hurrah, half grunt. "Wir—r—wuh!" They would then wheel right across the inclosed space in line, chattering as fast as they could, upon the women who were sitting upon the ground, and also singing a sort of chorus of a few notes; the line would then wheel back, break up in twos and threes, brandishing their short sticks and clubs over their heads, each man vociferating quickly to his mate, then all of a sudden these incoherent sounds would all coalesce together into a chorus, and the band, again united would cause the ground once more to vibrate to the reiterated cadence of their stamp.—Princess Estuand and George.

Nine Ways to Commit Suicide.

- 1. Wear narrow, thin shoes.
2. Wear a 'snug' corset.
3. Sit up in hot, unventilated rooms till midnight.
4. Sleep on feathers in a small, close room.
5. Eat rich food rapidly and at irregular times.
6. Use coffee, tea, spirits, and tobacco.
7. Stuff yourself with cake, confectionery, and sweetmeats, and swallow a few patent medicines to get rid of them.
8. Marry a fashionable wife and live beyond your income.
9. Employ a fashionable and needy doctor to attend you in every slight ailment.—Dio Lavin's "Nugget."

SONG FROM "THE MIKADO."

As some day it may happen that a victim must be found, I've got a little list—I've got a little list Of social offenders who might well be under ground, And who never would be missed—who never would be missed! There's the pestilential nuisances who write for autographs— All people who have flabby hands and irritating laughs— All children who are up in dates and floor you with 'em, flat— All persons who, in shaking hands, shake hands with you like that— And all third persons who on spoiling tete-a-tetes insist; They'd none of 'em be missed—they'd none of 'em be missed! Chorus—He's got 'em on the list—he's got 'em on the list; And they'll none of 'em be missed—they'll none of 'em be missed. There's the midnight serenader and the others of his race And the piano organist—I've got him on the list; And the people who eat peppermint and puff it in your face— They never would be missed—they never would be missed! Then the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone, All centuries but this and every country but his own; And the lady from the provinces, who dresses like a guy, And "who doesn't think she waltzes, but would rather like to try." And that singular anomaly, the lady novelist— I don't think she'd be missed—I'm sure she'd not be missed! Chorus—He's got her on the list—he's got her on the list; And I don't think she'll be missed—I'm sure she'll not be missed! And that nice prius nuisance, who just now is rather rife, The judicial humorist—I've got him on the list! All funny fellows, comic men, and clowns of private life— They'd none of 'em be missed—they'd none of 'em be missed! And apologetic statesmen of a compromising kind, Such as—what d'ye call him—Thing'em-Bob, and likewise Never-Mind, And 'St—st—st—and What's-his-name, and also You-know-who— The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you, But it really doesn't matter whom you put upon the list, For they'd none of 'em be missed—they'd none of 'em be missed! Chorus—You may put 'em on the list—you may put 'em on the list; And they'll none of them be missed—they'll none of 'em be missed!

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Established on a sound basis—A brass band. The tooth of time—One extracted on credit. "The battle is not always to the strong," said the judge, as he awarded the butter premium at a county fair.—St. Paul Herald. The latest craze in fancy note paper is a distressingly bright red flat known as El Mahdi. It is unruled, same as El Mahdi was.—Boston Post. The man who made the mosquito bars should with the angels stand, And float around among the stars, A harp within his hand.—Evanville Argus. A learned doctor says: "Keep your infants warm." Yes, warm them up even if you have to wear out ten pairs of old slippers.—Providence Star. "Circus Soap" is advertised. We suspect its manufacture is controlled by a ring, and the article is used principally for washing "tumblers."—Norristown Herald. HE'S ALWAYS ON HAND. When aid to anyone you lend And you are cheated, lo! How quickly comes along a friend To say, "I told you so!"—Boston Courier. Nautical Husband (jokingly)—Oh, I'm the mainstay of the family. Wife—Yes, and the jibboom, and the—and the—Small boy (from experience)—And the spanker, too, mamma.—Worcester Gazette. "Whenever I see you, Herr Muller, I cannot help thinking of the thirty marks I lent you a year ago!" "Strange how people differ! I forget them regularly every time I meet you!"—Fliegende Blätter. An Augusta, Ga., man is training monkeys to play baseball. The beauty of a monkey baseball player is that if he muffs a ball with his first pair of hands he can catch it with his second.—Burlington Free Press. Mrs. Fresh—Won't you please favor us with a song, Miss Porterhouse? Mrs. Porterhouse—Really, Mrs. Fresh, I am in very poor voice to-night, and I fear I cannot give satisfaction. "Oh, never mind that! Everybody is so dull to-night, and I have noticed that singing will always start conversation. No one will listen to you at all."—Philadelphia Cal. Now doth the maiden forthwith go Through autumn fields to roam, To gather parti-colored leaves And bear them to her home. Hour after hour she picks them up, Until she weary grows, And in her back there comes a creak, And wind-tipped is her nose. Thus she the leaves doth press between The pages of some book, And at them from time to time, henceforth, Doth never take a look.—Boston Gazette.