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THE MUSIC OF CHILDHOOD.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

When I hear the waters fretting,
When I see the chestnut letting
All her lovely blossom falter down, I think,
"Alas the day!"
Once, with magical sweet singing,
Blackbirds set the woodland ringing
That awakes no more while April hours wear
themselves away.

In our hearts fair hope lay smiling
Sweet as air, and all beguiling;
And there hung a mist of bluebells on the
slope and down the dell;
And we talked of joy and splendor
That the years unborn would render;
And the blackbirds helped us with the story,
for they knew it well—

Piping, fluting, "Bees are humming;
April's here, and Summer's coming,
Don't forget us when you walk, a man with
men, in pride and joy;
Think on us in alleys shady,
When you step a graceful lady;
For no fairer days have we to hope for, little
girl and boy.

'Laugh and play, O lisping waters!
Lull our downy sons and daughters;
Come, O wind, and rock their leafy cradle in
thy wanderings coy;
When they wake we'll end the measure
With a wild sweet cry of pleasure,
And a 'Hey down derry, let's be merry, little
girl and boy!"

At North Conway.

THE MISTAKE OF AN EVENING.

"I think you said—" There was a startled look on the pleasant face of the much-enduring waitress as she bent a little lower; and certainly the order which she had received, "Miss Sylvester and dipped toast," was rather a novel one. "I don't think I understand you, sir."

"I beg your pardon," said Philip Van Dorne, coming back to the contemplation of his supper with a sudden start, and blushing like a school boy as he became conscious of his mistake; and then, as the relieved damsel sped away, her evident fears as to his lapse from sanity being quieted by a less difficult order, he glanced again at the distant table where sat the three personages whose advent had so surprised, and, as it appeared, disconcerted him.

Two ladies and a gentleman;—one lady tall, pale and dark-eyed, with a wonderful crown of pale gold hair; the other a mere child in appearance, with a round, piquant, peach-blossom face, wide blue eyes, and fair hair, cut close and curling around her forehead in little babyish rings; the gentleman a rather grave looking, but decidedly handsome man, with no peculiarity of look or demeanor that would justify Philip Van Dorne in staring at him in such a decidedly vindictive and unprepossessing way.

He watched them furtively until they rose to depart; but as they passed by, he was to all appearance entirely absorbed in the roll with which he had been trifling for the last half hour, and did not raise his eyes.

They noticed him, however, for the younger lady laid her hand suddenly on her companion's arm.

"Look, Rose!" she whispered, 'there's Phil Van Dorne." And Rose, after one glance, passed on, with her gold-crowned head held a little higher, and her face a little paler than before.

Two minutes later, Philip Van Dorne was in the office, hastily running over the list of the new arrivals at the Kearsarge House. Yes, here it was at last; "Mr. and Mrs. Colchester, Miss Sylvester, New York;" and although he had felt sure of it from the first, the sight of her changed name affected him as he had believed nothing could have done. "Joe was right, after all," he said, bitterly, as he turned away. "Odd that I should meet them on their wedding journey, though." Very soon he found himself face to face with a gentleman with a lady on either arm.

"Mr. Van Dorne—how unexpected, and—how pleasant!" It was a wee white hand which was extended to him, and he took it mechanically in his.

"Thank you," he said, his eyes wandering to the tall, lissome figure beside her. "I hardly thought to meet you here, Emmie."

The old pet name came almost unconsciously—Emmie had always been a favorite of his in the old days—and then Rose returned his low bow without removing her hand from the sleeve where it rested.

"Oh, and I beg your pardon—Mr. Colchester—Mr. Van Dorne. I believe you have met before, though!"

"Yes," answered Philip, grimly, 'once or twice only, I think." Emmie, with a little laugh, slipped her pretty hand through his arm.

"Rose, you and Roger lead the way. We will follow." And Philip, finding himself taken possession of, resigned himself to his fate. After all, it was better to face it bravely than to run away; so, with Emmie on his arm, he joined the promenaders on the wide veranda.

All that long evening he watched that face, that proud, pale face, which had once been to him the only face in all the world. And when at last he sat alone, trying for once unavailingly to find solace in a cigar, that pale, proud face seemed still before him.

How he had loved that woman!—how dear she had been to him in the old days! Yet how little had separated them. A hasty word,—a scornful reply,—and it was over.

He had been greatly to blame. He felt it now, keenly; but she had been impatient of interference, and imperious and obstinate in a pretty girlish way,—and so, at last—

"Ah, me!" said Phil, tossing his cigar away as he arose, "to think that I should meet her here on her wedding journey, not two years afterward! There were grounds for jealousy of Colchester, after all; although I don't think she is madly in love with him. Perhaps that stately dignified style suits him though." He thought, gloomily, of the time when that gold-crowned head had rested lightly on his shoulder, in her charming fits of penitence for some misdoing, when those eyes had looked up to him as they looked at no one else, when those lips—

"Confound it all!" he said, wrathfully. "I shall make a fool of myself if I go on in this way. Better leave quietly to-morrow—take the early train, and leave a note of adieux to Emmie." But fate ordered it otherwise; for, as he went in to his early breakfast, a nod from a curly head, and a wave from a pretty hand, brought him to a seat beside Emmie herself.

"We only stay here to-day, you see," explained the little lady, after the morning greetings were interchanged, "and we want to make the most of it. Therefore this early breakfast;" and Rose smiled across at her sister in a manner so suggestive of the bright, winsome Rose he used to know, that Phil felt bound to assert to himself that he was in no danger of "making a fool of himself" over another man's wife. "Better face it out," he thought. "It's only to-day anyway, and if I go it will look as though"—as though he had not forgotten old times quite so completely as desirable, he was afraid. Thus deciding, he talked and laughed with Emmie, and was so generally agreeable that even Roger Colchester unbent a little, and the pale face opposite grew interested and appreciative.

After breakfast they strolled around after the usual fashion of North Conway visitants, and Philip, having nothing else to do, strolled with them; but although he strove to seem at ease with Rose, he felt that he failed miserably, and gladly returned to Emmie for relief. She, at least, was unchanged,—just the same childish, winsome Emmie as of old, whom he had been used to pet and tease; and she had not outgrown her old liking for him, either—that was evident, for she showed it frankly. So he strolled along beside her, and pointed out the beauties of "Minerva's Head," the shadowy "Indian Maiden," and the famed "White Horse," which, with upraised head and flying mane and tail, seems ever galloping madly away from North Conway and sight-seers, in general, but ever remains there, one of the "lions" (pardon the anomaly) of the place.

After dinner there was a drive proposed. "Would he go?" Emmie asked; there was "just room for four." He went.

Riding backward made Emmie ill. "Would Rose mind?" No, Rose wouldn't; and before Philip realized it Rose was sitting beside him. The silken folds of her dress swept against him; and once, as the carriage swayed heavily, her gloved hand rested on his arm with a swift, light pressure, which made his heart throb strangely.

"I beg your pardon," she said; and, looking up, her eyes met his for a moment—only a moment; but as she turned away a sudden wave of crimson swept over her face.

"She has not forgotten, then," he thought grimly, glancing at the two opposite.

Roger Colchester was, to all appearance, unconscious of the little by-play; but Emmie's blue eyes were a trifle wider than usual, and she was looking at Rose with a sudden surprised curiosity on her face.

All that afternoon Philip was invisible. Taking a full cigar-case as a companion, he set himself resolutely to the task, of walking off the new depression and unrest which had come to him.

"I won't see her again," he said. "They go early to-morrow, and I'll keep away from them;" and, pursuant to this plan, he was one of the latest arrivals at the supper table, and ate in stately solitude.

When, however, he went out on the broad piazza a little later, and, looking through the windows, saw them sitting in the great parlor, he could not resist the temptation to join them. "After all," he said, "it is only to-night, after which she will go out of my life entirely.' So he sauntered in, in his lazily graceful way, and took the vacant seat beside Emmie.

"Have you been dancing?" he asked.

Emmie answered with a little sigh of regret. "No, only twice. Roger doesn't care for it, and there is no one else."

"Take pity on me, then. I am partnerless. May I?—for the Lanciers?" The next moment, with Emmie's hand on his arm, he joined the dancers, and went through the figures "unexceptionably," as Emmie declared; and then stood beside her, laughing and talking lightly when the dance was over and she had resumed her seat.

"Listen!" she said, as the music began again. "How odd for them to play that,—the saddest of all sad things,—it is the 'Last Waltz of the Madman,' Rose."

Philip hesitated for a moment. Why should he not? She could but refuse; and it would be the last time. He turned toward her with a look almost of entreaty on his handsome face. "Will you?" he said—"Will you, Rose!"

He had never once called her by her new name—he could not—and the old name came so thoughtlessly. "I beg your pardon," he said gravely. Without reply she rose and laid her hand on his arm.

That waltz—could he ever forget it?—with that gold-crowned head almost resting on his shoulder—with that beautiful face so close to his own. For this brief space she was his. At last it came to him suddenly and sharply, that not one particle of the old love had died out, in spite of all his struggles, and the mantle of grim cynicism in which he had striven to envelope his better self; that, Roger Colchester's wife as she was, she was dearer to him than any other woman ever was, or ever could be.

"You are tired," he said, sharply, seeing the sudden pallor of her face as she looked up, wondering at his long silence.

"Why did you not tell me?"

"It is so beautiful," she said, almost in a whisper,—"and so sad. Is it not heart-breaking?" There were tears in the great dark eyes as she turned her head away, but Philip, looking down at her, answered not a word.

"How white you are, Rose!" exclaimed Emmie, as they came back to her. "You should not have danced so long. Why did you let her?"—a little sharply—looking up at Philip. But Rose answered quietly that it was nothing, she was only a little tired, and she had not waltzed for so long—so very long. She glanced at Philip; and he meeting her eyes, thought of their last waltz together in the old days.

"The music is over for to-night," said Emmie, gathering her light cloak about her, "Early hours seem to be the rule at the 'Kearsarge,' for the piazza is deserted. It is lovely out there in the moonlight. Come!" And slipping her hand through Roger Colchester's arm, she led the way. "We're going to walk down to the 'Pagoda,'" she proclaimed, after a few minutes, looking back over her shoulder. "One wouldn't think it a prosaic depot by moonlight. You don't mind our leaving you for a short time, Rose, as you are too tired to go, do you? We'll be back directly." The next moment Rose and Philip were left alone together for the first time.

There was a moment of embarassing silence as the two disappeared down the wide plank walk; and then Philip began to talk rapidly concerning the scenery, and especially old Kearsarge as appearing by moonlight, the "cloud-effects" of the previous day, etc., until he saw the shimmering gleam of Emmie's dress in the distance, and knew she was returning. Then he turned to the woman beside him, with a sudden and entire change of manner.

"As you and I go our different ways to-morrow," he said, "I will bid you good-bye to-night; but before I go, I must say one thing which, perhaps, I ought not to say now, but which I ought to have said long ago. If, in the old days, I was domineering and exacting,—as I was,—I most sincerely beg your pardon. We did not part friends,—let us now—and I wish you every happiness, Mrs. Colchester."

She was standing beside him, a fleecy shawl veiling her head and shoulders, her face turned away from him, and her dark eyes looking up at the far-away crown of Kearsarge; but as he spoke the last word, she turned quickly, a vivid blush sweeping across her face, and looked up at him with a great wonderment in her wide eyes.

"I was in fault, too," she said, after a little pause, her voice trembling strangely. "I have regretted it bitterly since—more than you can know,—and I,—Philip!—how could you think it!—I am not Mrs. Colchester. I thought you knew it—it is Emmie."

Very soon after, Emmie, returning with her husband, was electrified by the sight of Rose—with her head pillowed on Philip Van Dorne's broad shoulder, Philip's strong arm around her, and her beautiful face, no longer pale, but suspiciously rosy, looking up at him in a way which told of happiness and peace at last.

"It is all very well to go seeking one's fortune in foreign lands, Rose," said Philip to his wife, a few months afterward, "but I don't believe in it. I found my fortune (after a long search, though, I must confess) nearer home."

"Where?" asked Rose, looking up at him, with a mischievous light in her great dark eyes.

"Under the shadow of Kearsarge, love,—at North Conway—and at the moment when I believed that I was bidding an eternal good-bye to another man's wife, I found my own."—*The Aldine.*

Literary Curiosities.

Pliny asserts that the Iliad of Homer had been written on a piece of parchment, so small as to be enclosed in a nutshell. Huet, although skeptical, made an experiment which convinced him that it was possible, although others may still doubt. He tells us that a piece of vellum ten inches long and eight wide, can be put in the shell of a large walnut. On this he considers it possible to write in a single line thirty verses of the Iliad, and to squeeze 250 lines in a single page. The two sides of the leaf would hold the 15,000 verses of Homer's poem. A line of Iliad contains about thirty letters, hence 900 letters would have to be written in every line, which, if not beyond the bounds of possibility, is beyond those of probability.

Charlotte Bronte's small writing contains twenty letters to the linear inch, and she put 17 lines into an inch. This would give nearly 2000 verses of Homer in the space that Huet considers can be made to hold 15,000. Elian records that a Lacedemonian artist wrote in letters of gold a posy of two verses, enclosed in the rind of a grain of corn.

Peter Bules, a celebrated and irascible writing master, is said to have written a minute copy of the Bible, each leaf containing the same matter as a page of the great Bible. The entire book was enclosed in a walnut not larger than a hen's egg. The British Museum is said to contain a portrait of Queen Anne, a little larger than a hand in size, but the lines of the drawing are formed of very small writing, and contain the contents of a small folio volume.

Passing from writing to printing, one of the smallest books ever produced is an octavo entitled, "The Bible in Miniature (sic), or a Concise History of the Old and New Testaments. London, printed for E. Newbury, corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, 1780." It extends to 256 pages, is strongly bound and adorned with execrable steel engravings. A single page, taken at random, is found to contain 21 words, or 105 letters. The page measures $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches, about an inch being occupied by the text. This small book on a great subject, is exceeded in infinitesimalness by a literary pigmy blushing in its thirty-second edition. "Small rain upon the tender herb. Deut xxxii. 2. Thirty-second edition, London Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster Row," is the full title page of a work which may probably claim the designation of the smallest book in the world. It is an octavo of 128 pages, and each page holds some 40 words, or about 140 letters. It measures a shade over $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

If we take as a test of smallness the greatest amount of matter compressed into the least space, the palm is probably due to a Bible recently issued at the Oxford press. It measures $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, is about an inch thick, and weighs when, handsomely bound in calf, with silk linings, less than $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. Another firm have lately issued a Bible which is only smaller than that just described.

The largest book the world has so far seen is believed to be the work entitled "Specifications of Patents for Inventions," published for many years past under the editorial Care of Mr. Bennet Woodcroft, F. R. S. The work is still in course of publication, about ten parts of it appearing daily, or between three or four thousand yearly. Each specification forms a pamphlet stitched in a blue paper cover, illustrated when necessary, with engravings. Some specifications only cover a single leaf; others are as large as a good-sized volume. If we are to regard that as the smallest book which contains the fewest letters, the palm is probably due to "The Wordless Book," which after the title-page, does not contain a single word. This "book" consists of ten pages. The first is the title page and front cover; the tenth forming the other cover; the second and third pages are black as an "Ethiop's arm;" the fourth and fifth are red as a rose; the sixth and seventh are virgin white; the eighth and ninth are shining gold. The entire work is a religious allegory, devised by some enthusiastic Evangelical the black symbolizing the unregenerate heart of man; the red indicating the Redemption; the white portraying the condition of the heart after it has been "plunged beneath that flood, and the golden felicity with which the book ends being the symbol alike of earthly and celestial joy.

Derivation of Loafer.

Lour or Lowr, and Loaver, are all vulgar terms for money, and combine two gypsy words, the one *lovo* or *lovey*, and the other *lowre*, to steal. The reason for the combination or confusion is obvious. The author of the Slang Dictionary, in order to explain this word, goes as usual to the Wallachian Gypsies, for what he might have learned from the first tinker in the streets of London. I should remark on the word loure, that Mr. Borrow has shown its original identity with *loot*, the Hindustani for plunder or booty. I believe that the American word loafer owes something to this Gypsy root, as well as to the German *laufer* (*landlaufer*) and Mexican Spanish *galofar*, and for this reason, that when the term first began to be popular in 1834 or 1835, I can distinctly remember that it meant to *pilfer*. Such, at least, is my earliest recollection, and of hearing school boys ask one another in jest, of their acquisitions or gifts, "Where did you loaf that from?" A petty pilferer was a loafer, but in a very short time all of the tribe of loungers in the sun, and disreputable pickers up of unconsidered trifles, now known as bummers, were called loafers. On this point my memory is positive, and I call attention to it, since the word in question has been the subject of much conjecture in America.—*Leland's English Gypsies.*

Missing Hands.

In Morocco the number "five is never mentioned in the Sultan's presence, because five is the number of the fingers of the hand; and the hand, as the wielder of sceptre, sword and pen should be, is the symbol of authority all the world over. This gives a meaning to the custom of saluting a ruler's hand by way of homage, and no courtly ceremony can boast a greater antiquity than that of kissing hands. Priam, supplicating Achilles to restore the body of Hector, calls himself the most miserable of men in being forced to kneel before the murderer of his children, and kiss the hand yet reeking with their blood. Roman soldiers kissed the hand of their generals; consuls, tribunes and dictators permitted a favored few to pay them the same mark of respect. Under the emperors, kissing the imperial hand was held an essential duty on the part of courtiers of high rank; and, taking a leaf out of the Pagan's book, as was too much their habit, the bishops of the early Christian Church gave their hands to the lips of inferior ministers. The wearers of the triple crown were content with being honored in the same fashion, until one of the Leos, not caring to exhibit a mutilated hand, substituted his foot, and no one daring to protest against the innovation, his successors were careful not to resort to the less abject ceremony. It may be doubted if any Pope would have persuaded Cardinal John, of Lorraine, to kiss his toe. When the Duchess of Savoy proffered her falr fingers to that lip-loving churchman, he declined the favor with disdain, declaring he was accustomed to make free with the lips of the greatest Queen in the world, and was not going to do less by a dirty little duchess; then seizing the astonished lady by the waist, the bold Cardinal, spite of struggles and perturbations, kissed her thrice upon the mouth. With equal disregard for etiquette, but with more simplicity, did the country dames, to whom Charles II. presented his hand, put up their lips for the king to kiss, a breach of custom the Merry Monarch readily forgave; forgave, we may be sure, with more sincerity than James I. forgave Sir Henry Yelverton for speaking disrespectfully of his countrymen when, in token of pardon, he allowed the indiscreet orator to kiss his royal hand thrice ere he left the presence. Kissers at court are, we believe, forbidden to appear with their hands gloved. It was not always so, for in a letter dated 1625 we read: "This day my Lord Coke, with his gloves on, touched and kissed the King's hand, but whether to be confirmed a councilor or cashiered I cannot yet learn." From kissing hands at court came kissing hands in courting—a practice the learned Selden considered as foolish as to eat the paring of an apple when one might taste the fruit itself; and from kissing hands for love came kissing hands for politeness' sake, and the use of the phrase, "I kiss your hand," as a salutation upon leave-taking, without a thought of suiting the action to the word. A story is told of an old laird, who, being presented to George the Fourth at a levee, in his ignorance and anxiety to get through the business, ignored the hand extended to him, and, with a hasty blow, edged toward the door with all speed. Brought up by Lord Errol's whispered reminder "Kiss hands! kiss hands!" the startled old gentleman, facing about, kissed both his hands at the king as if wafting a cordial recognition to a friend at a distance. All unconsciously, the laird was acting according to ancient rule, for only the greater subjects of the later Cæsars were permitted to press their lips upon imperial fingers. Inferior folks kissed their own hands, as they were wont to do upon entering the temples of the gods; a custom Pliny set down among those which were followed for no known reason but their antiquity.—*All the Year Round.*

What I Saw.

I saw them go down town to-day. She was on one side of the road and he on the other; she carried a large basket and he swung a cane; she panted for breath to bear the heavy weight and face the cold, strong wind, and he puffed his away on a five cent cigar.

They entered the store; she handed the clerk the basket of butter, and leaned against the counter with a poor, tired, faint little sigh of relief; he lounged over to the stove, tipped back in a chair, and, elevating his feet, watched the graceful curls of smoke with intense enjoyment.

She anxiously inquired the price of and purchased a little coffe, a little sugar, and "some cheap calico for the children's dresses;" he carelessly ordered a clerk to give him "a pound or so of your best fine-cut and another box of cigars." She sadly remarked to the clerk that winter was coming on, but hoped that the Kansas people were all provided for; he said to *one of the boys* that it was "confounded hard on a fellow these times with a family to support." She took the basket containing her purchases in one hand, and a kerosene can in the other, and wearily left the store; he lit another cigar, shifted his chair, raised his feet higher, and discussed politics until nearly half after dinner time, when he wended his way homeward, with his hands in his pockets.

I remembered five years ago when they walked down town, and he held her parasol so as to shield her fair face from the sun, and carried the book she was returning to the library. An hour after they walked back together, the very picture of blissful content and happiness. That was before he promised to love and cherish her every day besides Sunday nights.

Hints for Nile-boat Invalids.

As to clothing, the invalid ought to carry supplies of light and warm descriptions, which may be required to doff and don, often twice during the day. Unless well wrapped and under an awning, it is not advisable for very delicate persons to leave the saloon after sunset. During November and the three following months, dew falls profusely at night all over the Valley of Thebes after 9 P. M. It is, however, dispersed before 9 A. M., and in the form of fleecy cirri may be seen floating at high altitudes in an otherwise clear and delightfully serene atmosphere. The dew almost vanishes in Nubia, above the First Cataract, in consequence of the close proximity of the desert to the river. Thus the climate, from being moist, as in Egypt, becomes exceedingly dry in Nubia. Travelers sometimes sail at night when the wind is favorable, but as time ought to be no object, the preferable plan is to halt at dusk and start after breakfast. By this means the sick enjoy all the scenery, and are saved the annoyance of the creaking helm at night. The boat should be so placed that the morning sun will shine on either the starboard or port side for two hours before the patient arrives in the saloon, the lattice windows of which have been raised, and the outer curtain rolled up, the object being to dispel the sharp morning air, by no means an insignificant caution. But it will be found that invalids with susceptible air-passages—and they constitute more than one-half of the Winter sojourners on the Nile—who have experienced the comfortless feeling of getting out of bed and dressing with an Egyptian north wind blowing through the boat, will fully appreciate this recommendation. Again, on the downward voyage, when Boreas blows sharply, the stern windows should be covered with the satara, and the boat allowed to drift stern foremost while the patient is seated in the cozy nook in front of the saloon. A comfortless boat, without a satara, and full of drafts from the badly-fitting doors and windows, obliges the invalid to shut himself up during windy weather, and thus the full benefit of the climate is in a measure lost. The grand advantage of the Egyptian climate in winter is its daily serenity and sunshine. However strongly the wind may blow, a sheltered corner after breakfast time will always be a sunny one. To persons, therefore, with delicate lungs it is a matter of no little importance to be aware of this circumstance and to be enabled at the same time to utilize a few simple measures of protection against the asperities of the weather. The climates of Upper Egypt, Nubia, and the desert are, from their superior dryness, far better suited for certain lung diseases than the damp atmosphere of the Delta and cultivated tracts of the low country; much, however, depends on the condition of the patient, who must consult with his medical adviser on this point. The climate of the Nile Valley in Nubia is much dryer than that of Lower Egypt; while the sharp, bracing air of the Nubian Desert is often trying to the very delicate. The experience of years suggests to the patient that, provided benefit is obtained by the voyage to the First Cataract, he will do well to push on to the second cataract, and tarry in Nubia as long as the weather will permit. He may return to Assowan toward the end of February, and bask for a few days among the sunny creeks of the rapids, where he will enjoy the fine scenery and a delightful climate. If equal to the exertion, he can stroll among Philla's interesting ruins, and anchor the boat in the sheltered nook just under the grand temple of Æsculapius—no unsuitable place for the invalid who feels the better for his Nubian tour. Indeed, if his gratitude for the art which has been the means of suggesting remedial measures for his good has any eccentricity he may imitate the ancients, and there and then sacrifice a cock at the Temple of Health, where doubtless many an ancient Egyptian had offered up similar oblations.—*Chambers's Journal*

Speculative Values.

There is a homely proverb which warns us against counting our chickens before they are hatched. A beautiful exemplification of the proverb is given in the Arabian Nights, in the story of Almaschar; how he invested a few coppers in a basket of crockery and imagined rapid sales and high profits reinvested, and prosperity and wealth flowing in upon him, until he was in a position to marry a princess. While gloating over his imagined good fortune, in that insolence of false pride which is too apt to accompany sudden wealth, Almaschar spurns his princess, and suiting the action to the thought, kicks down the basket and smashes the crockery, which is his whole fortune in the present as well as in the future.

Now it must, however, be said of the imaginative Persian, that he speculated entirely on his own capital. His success was to be due solely to his own efforts. His folly ruined himself, but hurt nobody else. How very different would have been the story of so sanguine a gentleman of the present day? He would have borrowed of everybody that would have loaned money to him; persuaded those to endorse who had not the money to lend; lived on the proceeds of his wits while he held his wares at ridiculous prices, and estimated his own business capacity at a marvelous value, until the end came, which almost inevitably comes to those who trade on other people's capital. This is a story which the history of the day in America tells us over and over again. It is a common fault with us to imagine that we can manage other people's money better than they can do it themselves. It is a common error to undertake to do it. The results are seen in the account of failures which annually occur. It is estimated that in this country, the total number of business failures, for the four years, 1872-3-4 and '5 will foot up at the end of this year about 22,000, and an indebtedness of $675,000,000, that is, six hundred and seventy-five millions of other people's capital, on which these twenty-two thousand men have been trying to get rich, at other people's risk. This is something fearful, and bears terrible testimony to the recklessness and extravagance of the American people. It must be taken, too, into consideration that these are the failures only of business men. No note is taken of the hundred thousand mechanics and laboring men who have also counted their chickens too soon, but whose failures are two insignificant to deserve a record in the business world.

The English Walnut.

The home of the English walnut (*Juglans regia*) is Persia and the Himalayas. It was introduced into Europe, at a very early age, by the Greeks, who planted it in all their colonies. It found its way into Italy many centuries prior to the Christian era, and was greatly prized by the Romans, who gave it the name Juglans, said by Varro to be a contraction of the words *Jovis glans*,—Jupiter's nut. The Romans diffused the tree through their provinces, planting it even in England, where it was called by the Saxons Wealh-knut, or foreign nut, whence comes the modern name walnut. In Russia, the tree is called Greek nut, probably because it was carried from Greece into that country.

The finest walnut-trees in the world grow, it is said, in Asia Minor and along the Black Sea. In Circassia and Persia, thousands of families subsist upon the produce of a few roods of ground devoted to walnut-trees. The *Building News*, giving statistics regarding the tree, says: "Near Balaklava, in the Crimea, there is an enormous walnut, which belongs to five Tartar families, and which produces annually from 80,000 to 100,000 nuts. This tree is said to be nearly 3,000 years old. At the Village of Parthenit, in Greece, there is a walnut tree whose trunk is 20 feet in circumference. This tree is worth £27 annually. There are several very ancient walnut trees in England, the most remarkable of which is in Norfolk. The trunk of this tree is said to be 80 feet high, and 11 feet in diameter. In 1627, a walnut-tree was cut down at Melwyn, in Hertfordshire, which, when standing, occupied a space of 2,299 square yards."

The timber of the English walnut is light, hard, fine-grained, and susceptible of a high polish. It is consequently greatly valued for various purposes. It is, with the black walnut, almost the only wood used in the construction of gunstocks, and $3,000 has been paid for a single tree to be worked up in this manufacture. England annually consumes 20,000 full-grown walnut-trees, which are imported mainly from Italy and the ports of the Black Sea.

—Fire Island, near Norfolk, Conn., is garrulous with 1,000,000 wild geese.

A Royal Meeting.

When the allied armies occupied Paris in 1815, the emperor of Russia, who resided at Talleyrand's palace, was in the habit of taking every morning, in the strictest incognito, a walk in the Tuileries and from thence to the Palais Royal. One day he fell in there with his two allies, and the three sovereigns were going together to the Rue St. Florentine, when they were met by a man who, in all probability, had arrived in Paris but a few days ago.

"Gentlemen," said he to the allied princes, "can you tell me where I can find the Tuileries?"

"Yes," replied Alexander, "follow us; we are just going there."

The stranger thanked him, and the conversation was continued. A few minutes after they reached the palace, and, as their paths separated, they took leave of one another.

"One word more," added the stranger, who was an honest Gascon; "I should like very much to learn the names of the gentlemen who have been so exceedingly kind to me?"

"I believe you have already heard of me," replied Alexander. "I am the emperor of Russia."

"A capital joke," exclaimed the Gascon; "the emperor of Russia?" "And you," he asked, of the second, "who are you?"

"I suppose I am not entirely unknown to you either, as I am the king of Prussia."

"Better and better," replied the Gascon. "And you?" he said, turning to the third.

"I am emperor of Austria."

The Gascon burst into a fit of laughter. Alexander then said to him:

"I suppose you will tell us now likewise with whom we have the honor of speaking?"

"Certainly," replied the Gascon, drawing himself up to his full height and walking majestically; "I am the Great Mogul."

The Emperor Alexander often related this amusing episode to his friends.

Fruit in Prehistoric Times.

Carbonized apples of small size, identical with those growing wild in the woods of Switzerland, have been found abundantly in lake bottoms and in a tolerable state of preservation. Mr. Messikommer discovered on one occasion more than three hundred of them lying together. They are often cut in halves, more rarely in three or four parts, and were evidently dried for consumption during winter. Whether a larger kind of apples found at Robenhausen was cultivated, or a wild-growing species, remains undecided. Prof. Oswald Heer, of Zurich, who has published an interesting work on lacustrine vegetable remains, inclines to the former view. Wild pears were treated in the same manner; but they are far less common than apples, which must have formed a much-sought article of diet. Among other vegetable remains accumulated in the lake mud may be mentioned hazel-nuts and beech-nuts, which doubtless both grew in great plenty; also water-chestnuts, which doubtless were collected and eaten by the lake-men, as they are in Upper Italy at this day. Their present occurrence in Switzerland appears to be restricted to a tarn in the canton of Lucerne. There have further been found abundantly the stones of sloes, bird-cherries and wild plums, and seeds of the raspberry, blackberry, and strawberry, showing that these fruits of the forest were used as food. According to Dr. Keller, the lake colonists of the Stone Age drew their sustenance chiefly from the vegetable kingdom. Their animal food evidently was acquired by hunting rather than by the breeding of cattle, considering that, in the accumulations around the piles, the bones of wild animals outnumber those of the domestic species. Milk, we may assume, formed an important article of their diet.

London Conductors and Cabmen.

When people are disposed to murmur at careless conductors or at exorbitant cabmen, let them remember their hard, exposed lives from morning to morning. Let them also believe that they are not willingly cruel to their horses when they appear so; indeed, they are often fonder of them than of their wives and children. We heard one touching instance of genuine feeling. An omnibus horse fell. The coachman got off his box and tried to raise him, but the cold had seized him. He took off his coat and wrapped it round the poor animal—caressed him—spoke to him—in vain. The man burst into tears, for the horse was dead. We ourselves saw an elderly conductor with two large pieces of bread in his hand, which he gave to the horses at a particular spot. "They al'ays look round for it just here, whether I've got it or no," he remarked. Christmas was the worst time for man and beast. Day after day, night after night, luggage vans and carrier's carts, laden to an incredible height and width, threaded our ice-maze with much difficulty. The country must have starved itself to feed the town, but neither the one nor the other knew the labor of delivering the boxes, hampers, and baskets that contained the good cheer sent to celebrate Christmas withal. Much of it arrived too late for the occasion. "We would 'a brought it last night," said a youth, in return for a trifling Christmas-box, "but the North Mail was late owen to the frost, but there was such a sight o' goods that 'twas impossible to deliver 'em. I haven't been in bed myself since last Saturday." What a revelation! While we were celebrating the event, most important and most blest to mankind in the world's history, in a church artistically decorated with evergreens and flowers, railway officials, who had not slept in comfort for a week, were dropping food from door to door.—*London Society.*

John Randolph and the Abbe.

The *Herald's* recent statement that the better class of Englishmen like Virginia reminds the Cincinnati *Times* of a story. It says: When that distinguished French Abbe (can't for the life of us recall his name) was making us a visit in the early days of our national history, he happened to be dining with some Washington celebrities, of whom John Randolph, of Roanoke, was one, and the place of whose residence was not known to the foreigneer. The question was put to the Abbe:

"And how were you pleased with the South?"

"Exceedingly; but I confess to having been a little disappointed—I had heard so much—in the Virginia gentlemen.

"Perhaps you were unfortunate in your circle," broke in Randolph, with a sneer.

"You did not come to Roanoke, for instance."

"True," said the Abbe, covering his evident annoyance at the rude tone with his usual calm smile. "True; the next time I visit Virginia I shall certainly go to Roanoke."

"*Gentlemen*," answered Randolph emphasizing the word, "do not come to Roanoke unless they are *invited*!"

It was a cruel thrust, but the Abbe took it in the same placid manner; and lifting his gray head, paused for a moment to give due emphasis to his words and then replied, looking inquiringly at the other guests:

"Said I not, messieurs, that I was disappointed in the Virginia gentleman?"

YOUTHS' COLUMN.

Joseph's Wife.—The fame of Joseph, the son of Jacob, and the great minister and servant of Pharaoh, is not by any means confined to the present readers of the Bible. In Egypt he is still remembered, although they don't think so much of him as we do, while the Mahommedans have, or pretend to have, his full history.

It may not be out of place to give their story of his marriage. They say that one day, when he was in the full tide of power, he went out driving, and by the roadside an old woman stopped the horses of his chariot and begged for alms. As he looked at her, Joseph thought he had never seen so very ugly a woman, and as he was rather plain spoken in those days, he told her so. The old woman told him as his God answered all his prayers, he should pray that she might be made young again, promising him that then she would not be so ugly. Joseph at once lifted up his hands and voice, and prayed God to make her young and beautiful, and when he turned again to look at her, she was so young and so lovely, that he fell in love with her and married her. She long outlived him, and died very old, becoming the only old woman in Heaven, because, according to the Moslem or Mohammedan belief, all women are made young in Heaven, but only once, and Joseph's wife had already been changed, so she must remain in Heaven forever as an old woman.

Such is the Moslem story, and there are several morals in it, which you can hunt up if you will, and while you are looking them out, let those who know the meaning of the word "usurer" and "usury," try to think how and where Joseph became the first usurer in history, and what were the consequences of his usury; and as I may as well tell you that we ravens don't like Joseph, see if you can tell the reason why!

A Child's Fancy.—I knew a little girl who spent a winter with two maiden ladies, and who had been presented by one of them with a paper doll, gorgeously arrayed. She named it the Marquis, and at once assigned to that nobleman the heart and hand of her younger hostess. He was thenceforth always treated with the respect due to the head of the house; a chair and plate were assigned to him at table, though, for reasons of practical convenience, he usually sat in the plate. "Good-morning" must always be said to him. The best of everything must be first offered to him, or else Lizzie was much hurt, and the family were charged with discourteous neglect. Indeed she always chose to take the tone that he did not receive quite the consideration to which his rank and services entitled him; and when she first awaked in the morning, she would give reproving lectures to his supposed spouse. "He does everything for you," the child would say to this lady; "he earns money, and buys you all that you have; he shovels your paths for you"—this being perhaps on a snowy morning when that process was audible—"and yet you do not remember all his kindness." The whole assumed relationship was treated as an absolute reality, and the lively farce lasted, with undiminished spirit during the whole of a New England winter.—*Scribner for January.*

A Dead Hawk and a Living One.—"What a commotion you are making!" said a sparrow to a flock of small birds chattering and twittering around the body of a hawk that was lying stiff and cold on the ground.

"He's dead! he's dead!" they cried; "we are safe from him now; he will never frighten us again."

"Frighten us!,' said the sparrow, hopping up to the dead enemy and giving him a contemptuous little peck; "speak for yourselves, my friends, as for me, I never saw so much to be frightened about in the fellow. After all, you may see he is nothing but a bird; he has wings, and a head, and legs and claws, and so have we. A close view shows one the absurdity of needless alarm; for my part, I intend in future to show to the whole tribe— Why, where are you all going?" he exclaimed, stopping in his harangue, as the small birds suddenly took wing.

"Off as fast as we can," they cried; "the hawk's mate is hovering above us, and as we have not received your new light, we prefer getting out of her way. You can stay and tell her your mind."

"The hawk's mate! You don't say so!" screamed the sparrow. "Here; let me pass, pray!"

And he brushed through the throng, and never rested till he had gained his hiding-place!

The Duke of Wellington was a great soldier, perhaps, with the exception of King Henry II and Malborough, the greatest warrior of England. He was accustomed to the rough life of the camp and on the field was notoriously bluff, cross and severe; and yet a linnet who lived in the Duke's iron-girt house, told me once that the last words of the Iron Duke were "if you please." Just before he died an attendant asked whether he would have some tea. Wellington said, "Yes, if you please," drank the tea, looked his thanks and never spoke again. If the great marshal of England thought it worth while to say "if you please," wouldn't it be a good sentence for some of us, who are not field marshals, to use more frequently?

An Ancient Present.—A very learned man once came to one of the dear little schoolma'am's picnics, and what do you think he said in the course of conversation?

I give his remark entire.

"We all know," said he, raising his eyebrows, "that rivers in time will carry land from one place and deposit it in another. Perhaps the best illustration of this fact is lower Egypt, which Herodotus said the Egyptian priests considered to be a *present* from the river Nile."

The little schoolmistress was busy dealing out sandwiches at the time, but she nodded her head. So I suppose the learned man was right.—*St. Nicholas for February.*

A Blackbird not long since told me that in an old town hall in Massachusetts he saw a book of town records, dated two hundred years ago, and in it was the following: "Voted—that the town clerk buy half a quire of paper for the use of the town." Fancy a town council voting on such a question nowadays. Paper may have cost more then than now, but if I didn