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A DAY OF PROMISE.

Look forth, beloved, from thy mansion high,
By soft airs fanned.
And see the summer with its bluest sky
Surprise the land!
See how the bare hills bask in purple bliss
Along the south;
On the brown death of winter falls a kiss
From summer's mouth!
From pines that wave among the vanished trees
Their phantom bowers
A murmur comes, as sought the ghosts of bees
The ghosts of flowers.
Though yet no blood may fill the willow rind
No grass-blade start,
A dream of blossoms fills the yearning mind.
Of love my heart.
Look forth, beloved, through the tender air,
And let thine eyes
The violets be it finds not anywhere
And scentless dies.
Look! and thy trembling locks of plenteous gold
The day shall see
And search no more where first on yonder wold
The cowslips be,
Look and the wandering summer not forlorn
Shall turn aside,
Content to leave her million flowers unborn,
Her song untried,
Drowsy with life and not with sleep or death
I dream of thee,
Breathe forth thy being in one answering breath,
And come to me!
Come forth, beloved! Love's exultant sign
Is in the sky,
And let me lay my panting heart to thine
And die!

Mrs. McWilliams' Fright.

Well, sir—continued Mr. McWilliams, for this was not the beginning of his talk—the fear of lightning is one of the most distressing infirmities a human being can be afflicted with. It is mostly confined to women; but now and then you will find it in a little dog, and sometimes in a man. It is a particularly distressing infirmity, for the reason that it takes the sand out of a person to an extent which no other fear can, and it can't be reasoned with, and neither can it be shamed out of a person. A woman who could face the very devil himself—or a mouse—loses her grip and goes all to pieces in front of a flash of lightning. Her fright is something pitiful to see.

Well, as I was telling you, I woke up, with that smothered and unlocatable cry of "Mortimer! Mortimer!" wailing in my ears, and as soon as I could scrape my faculties together I reached over in the dark, and then said:

"Evangeline, is that you calling? What is the matter? Where are you?"

"Shut up in the boot-closet. You ought to be ashamed to lie there and sleep so, and such an awful storm going on."

"Why, how can one be ashamed when he is asleep? It is unreasonable; a man can't be ashamed when he is asleep, Evangeline."

"You never try, Mortimer—you know very well you never try."

I caught the sound of muffled sobs.

That sound smote dead the sharp speech that was on my lips, and I changed it to—

"I'm sorry, dear—I'm truly sorry. I never meant to act so. Come back and—"

"Mortimer!"

"Heavens! what is the matter, my love?"

"Do you mean to say that you are in that bed yet?"

"Why, of course."

"Come out of it instantly. I should think you would take some little care of your life, for my sake and the children's, if you will not for your own."

"But, my love—"

"Don't talk to me, Mortimer. You know there is no place so dangerous as a bed, in such a thunder-storm as this—all the books say that; yet, there you will lie and deliberately throw away your life—for goodness knows what, unless for the sake of arguing, and arguing, and—",

"But, confound it, Evangeline, I'm not in bed now. I'm—"

[Sentence interrupted by a sudden glare of lightning, followed by a terrified little scream from Mrs. McWilliams, and a tremendous blast of thunder.]

"There! You see the result? Oh, Mortimer, how can you be so profligate as to swear at such a time as this!"

"I didn't swear. And that wasn't a result of it anyhow. It would have come, just the same, if I hadn't said a word, and you know, Evangeline—at least you ought to know—that when the atmosphere is charged with electricity—"

"Oh, yes, now argue it, and argue it, and argue it! I don't see how you can act so, when you know there is not a lightning rod on the place, and your poor wife and children are absolutely at the mercy of Providence. What are you doing? Lighting a match at such a time as this! Are you stark mad?"

"Hang it, woman, where's the harm? The place is as dark as the inside of an infidel; and—"

"Put it out! put it out instantly! Are you determined to sacrifice us all? You know there's nothing attracts lightning like a light. [*Fizt!—crash!—boom—botoom—boom—boom!*] Oh, just hear it! Now you see what you've done!"

"No, I don't see what I've done. A match may attract lightning, for all I know, but it don't cause lightning—I'll go odds on that. And it didn't attract worth a cent this time; for if that shot was leveled at my match it was blessed poor markmanship—about an average of none out of a possible million, I should say. Why, at Dollymount, such markmanship as that—"

"For shame, Mortimer! Here we are standing in the very presence of death, and yet in so solemn a moment you are capable of using such language as that. If you have no desire to—Mortimer!"

"Well."

"Did you say your prayers to-night?"

"I—I—meant to, but I got to trying to cipher out now much twelve times thirteen is, and—

[*Fizt!—boom—beroom—boom! bumble—umble bang* SMASH!]

"Oh, we are lost, beyond all help! How could you neglect such a thing at such a time as this?"

"But it wasn't such a time as this." There wasn't a cloud in the sky. How could I know there was going to be all this rumpus and powwow about a little slip like that? And I don't think it's just fair for you to make so much out of it any way, seeing it happens so seldom; I haven't missed before since I brought on that earthquake, four years ago."

"Mortimer! How you talk! Have you forgotten the yellow fever?"

"My dear, you are always throwing up this yellow fever to me, and I think it is perfectly unreasonable. You can't even send a telegraphic message as far as Memphis without relays, so how is a little devotional slip of time going to carry so far. I'll stand the earthquake because it was in the neighborhood; but I'll be hanged if I'm going to be responsible for everybody else's shortcomings. There, I'm ready to be blamed—"

[*Fizt!*—BOOM *beroom*—boom! boom!—BANG!]

"Oh, dear, dear, dear! I know it struck something, Mortimer. We never shall see the light of another day: and if it will do you any good to remember, when we are gone, that your dreadful language—Mortimer!"

"Well! What now?"

"Your voice sounds as if—Mortimer, are you actually standing in front of that open fireplace?"

"That is the very crime I am committing."

"Get away from it this moment. You do seem determined to bring destruction on us all. Don't you know that there is no better conductor for lightning than an open chimney? Now where have you got to?"

"I'm here by the window."

"Oh, for pity's sake, have you lost your mind? Clear out from here this moment. The very children in arms know that it is fatal to stand near a window in a thunder storm. Dear, dear, I know I shall never see the light of another day. Mortimer?"

"Yes."

"What is that rustling?"

"It's me."

"What are you doing?"

"Trying to find the upper end of my pantaloons."

"Quick! throw them things away! I do believe you would deliberately put on those clothes at such a time as this; yet you know woolen stuffs attract lightning. Oh, dear, dear, it isn't sufficient that one's life must be in peril from natural causes, but you must do everything you can possibly think of to augment the danger. Oh, don't sing! What can you be thinking of?"

"Now, where's the harm in it."

"Mortimer, if I have told you once I have told you a hundred times, that singing causes vibrations in the atmosphere which interrupt the flow of the electric fluid, and— What on earth are you opening that door for?"

"Goodness gracious, woman, is there any harm in that?"

"Harm? Ther'es death in it. Anybody that has given this subject any attention knows that to create a draught is to invite the lightning. You haven't half shut it; shut it tight—and do hurry, or we are all destroyed. Oh, it is an awful thing to be shut up with a lunatic at such a time as this. Mortimer, what are you doing?"

"Nothing. Just turning on the water. This room is smothering hot and close. I want to bathe my face and hands."

"You have certainly parted with the remnant of your mind! Where lightning strikes substance once, it strikes water fifty times. Do turn it off. Oh, dear, I am sure that nothing in this world can save us. It does seem to me that—Mortimer what was that?"

"It was a do—it was a picture. Knocked it down."

"Then you are close to the wall! I never heard of such imprudence! Don't you know that there is no better conductor of lightning than a wall? Come away from there! And you came as near as anything to swearing, too. Oh, how can you be so desperately wicked, and your family in such peril? Mortimer, did you order a feather bed, as I asked you to do?"

"No. Forgot it."

"Forgot it! It may cost you your life. If you had a feather bed, now, and could spread it in the middle of the room and lie on it, you would be perfectly safe. Come in here—come quick, before you have a chance to committ any more frantic indiscretions."

I tried, but the little closet would not hold us both with the door shut, unless we could be content to smother. I gasped awhile, then forced my way out. My wife called out—

"Mortimer, something must be done for your preservation. Give me that German book that is on the end of the mantle piece and a candle; but don't light it; give me a match; I will light it in here. That book has some directions in it."

I got the book—at the cost of a vase and some other brittle things; and the madam shut herself up with her candle. I had a moment's peace; then she called out—

"Mortimer, what was that?"

"Nothing but the cat."

"The cat! Oh, destruction! Catch her, and shut her up in the wash stand. Do be quick, love; cats are full of electricity. I just know my hair will turn white with this night's awful perils."

I heard the muffled sobbings again. But for that I should not have moved hand or foot in such a wild enterprise in the dark.

However, I went at my task over chairs and against all sorts of obstructions, all of them hard ones, too, and most of them with sharp edges—and at last I got kitty cooped up in the commode, at an expense of over four hundred dollars in broken furniture and shins. Then these muffled words came from the closet:

"It says the safest thing is to stand on a chair in the middle of the room, Mortimer; and the legs of the chair must be insulated with non-conductors. That is, you must set the legs of the chair in glass tumblers. [*Fzt!—boom!—bang!—smash!*] Oh! hear that. Do hurry, Mortimer, before you are struck."

I managed to find and secure the tumblers. I got the last four—broke all the rest. I insulated the chair-legs, and called for further instructions.

"Mortimer," it says, "Wahrend eines Gewitters entferne man Metalle, wie z B, Ringe, Uhren, Schlussel, etc., von sich und halte sich auch nich an solchen Stellen auf, wo viele Metalle bei einder liegen, order nit andern Koerpere verbunden sind, wie an Herdeen, Ofen, Eisengittern u. dgl. What does that mean, Mortimer? Does it mean that you must keep metals about you, or keep them away from you?"

"Well, I hardly know. It appears to be a little mixed. All German advice is more or less mixed. However, I think that sentence is mostly in the native case, with a gentle genitive and accusative sifted in, here and there, for luck, so I reckon it means that you must keep some metals about you."

"Yes; that must be it. It stands to reason that it is. They are in the nature of lightning rods, you know. Put on your fireman's helmet, Mortimer; that is mostly metal."

I got it and put it on—a very heavy and clumsy and uncomfortable thing on a hot night in a close room. Even my nightdress seemed to be more clothing than I strictly needed.

"Mortimer, I think your middle ought to be protected. Won't you buckle on your militia sabre, please?"

I complied.

"Now, Mortimer, you ought to have some way to protect your feet. Do, please, put on your spurs."

I did it—in silence—and kept my temper as well as I could.

"Mortimer, it says, 'Das Gewitter lauten ist sehr gefahalich, weil die Glöcken selbst, sowie der dorch das Lauten veranlasste Luftzug und die Hohe des Thurmes den Bitz anziehen konnten." Mortimer, does that mean that it is dangerous not to ring the church bells during a thunderstorm?"

"Yes; it seems to me that—if that is the past participle of the nominative case singular, and I reckon it is. Yes; I think it means that on account of the height of the church tower and the absence of '*Luftzug*, it would be very dangerous (*sehr gefahrlich*) not to ring the bells in time of a storm; and, moreover, don't you see, the very wording—"

"Never mind that, Mortimer; don't waste the precious time in talk. Get the large dinner bell; it is right there in the hall. Quick, Mortimer, dear; we are almost safe. Oh, dear, I do believe we are going to be saved at last!"

Our little summer establishment stands on top of a high range of hills, over looking a valley. Several farm houses are in our neighborhood, the nearest some three or four hundred yards away.

When I, mounted on a chair, had been clanging that dreadful bell a matter of seven or eight minutes, our shutters were suddenly torn open from without and a brilliant bull's eye lantern was thrust in at the window, followed by a hoarse inquiry:

"What in the nation is the matter here?"

The windows were full of men's heads, and the heads were full of eyes that stared wildly at my night dress and my warlike accoutrements.

I dropped the bell, skipped down from the chair in confusion, and said—

"There is nothing the matter friends—only a little discomfort on account of the thunderstorm. I was trying to keep off the lightning."

"Thunder storm? Lightning? Why, Mr. McWilliams, have you lost your mind? It is a beautiful starlight night; there has been no storm."

I looked out, and was so astonished I could not speak for awhile. Then I said:

"I do not not understand this. We distinctly saw the glow and the flashes through the curtains and shutters, and heard the thunder."

One after another those people lay down on the ground to laugh, and two of them died. One of the survivors remarked:

Pity you dindn't think to open your blinds and look over to the top of the high hill yonder. What you heard was a cannon; what you saw was the flash. You see, the telegraph brought some news, just at midnight: Jones' nomination and that's what's the matter!"

Yes, Mr. Twain, as I was saying in the beginning (said Mr. McWilliams), the rules for preserving people against lightning are so excellent and so innumerable that the most incomprehensible thing in the world to me is how anybody manages to get struck.

So saying he gathered up his satchel and umbrella, and departed; for the train had reached his town.

Singing Birds.

The steamers are bringing to this country large importations of singing birds, particularly the German ones, and the demand is equal to the supply. The bull-finch is the popular song-bird, and strangely enough having no natural song, must receive musical training. They will readily catch an air, and if educated in Germany are given to the sentimental music of Abt and Schubert; but an American bird will pipe Pinafore and Polly Perkins. The ease which they are trained makes them a favorite bird with ladies, who can give to them any favorite song. Their song, moreover, is less shrill than that of the canary. The canary is at present most valued for its color. The most expensive colors are the orange melting into lemon and gray, with a blending of tints otherwise unapproachable. Such birds are valued as high as twenty-five dollars. A beautiful bird is the goldenfinch mule—half canary, half goldfinch—whose orange body has the reddish head of the goldfinch. Another desirable hybrid is the goldfinch bullfinch. Among other birds that having pleasing short songs are the dainty, white-capped nuns, one of the loveliest birds of the aviary, and the tiny strawberry finches. The best talkers among parrots are the gray parrots. At a bird store in Sixth av., New York, is one called Ned with decided conversational powers. One of his dialogues is, "Will you dance this evening?" "Not this evening" "Good evening." More than two hundred of these birds have just arrived here from Africa, with educations yet to be finished in English. An even better talker, it is said, is the Indian minor. These birds have wonderful conversational ability beside whistling and singing songs. Here, also, is a beautiful magpie and a starling, both of which may be classed among the companionable birds. The white blackbird is here matched by a white robin, a curiosity of his kind, and a feathered Albino, with pink eyes. Among other curious birds is the crossbill, concerning which there is a legend that his bill was twisted in endeavor to pull out the nails from the cross. Leadbetter's cockatoo, who, as he addresses you, raises his topknot like the feathers of a Zulu chief, and the rosellas, two beautiful Australian birds with blue-gray breasts.

A Mighty Struggle.

Young men, what are you living for? Have you an object dear to you as life and without the attainment of which you feel that your life will have been a wide, shoreless waste of shadow peopled by the spectres of dead ambitions? You can take your choice in the great battle of life, whether you will bristle up and win a deathless name and owe almost everybody, or be satisfied with scabs and mediocrity. Many of those who now stand at the head of the nation as statesmen and logicians were once unknown, unhonored and unsung. Now they saw the air in the halls of Congress, and their names are plastered on the temple of fame.

You can win some laurels, too, if you will brace up and secure them when they are ripe. Daniel Webster, and President Garfield and Dr. Tanner, and George Eliot were all, at one time, poor boys. They had to start at the foot of the ladder and toil upward. They struggled against poverty and public opinion bravely on till they won a name in the annals of history, and secured to their loved ones palatial homes, with lightning rods and mortgages on them. So may you if you will make the effort. All these things are within your reach. Live temperately on $9 per month. That's the way we got our start. Burn the midnight oil if necessary. Get some true noble-minded young lady of your acquaintance to assist you. Tell her of your troubles and she will tell you what to do. She will gladly advise you. Then you can marry her, and she will advise you some more. After that she will lay aside her work any time to advise you. You needn't be out of advice at all unless you want to. She, too, will tell you when you have made a mistake. She will come to you frankly and acknowledge that you have made a jackass of yourself. As she gets more acquainted with you she will be more candid with you, and in her unstudied, girlish way, she will point out your errors, and gradually convince you, with an old chair-leg and other arguments, that you were wrong, and your past life will come up before you like a panorama, and you will tell her so, and she will let you up again. Life is indeed a mighty struggle.

The Weeping Willow.

You have seen and admired the weeping willow tree—the Salix Babylonica—upon which the captive Hebrews hung their harps when they sat down by the rivers of Babylon and "wept when they remembered Zion." It is a native of the Garden of Eden, and not of America, and I will tell you how it immigrated to this country.

More than 150 years ago a merchant lost his fortune. He went to Smyrna, a seaside city in Asia Minor, to recover it. Alexander Pope, one of the great poets of England, was the merchant's warm friend, and sympathized with him in his misfortunes.

Soon after the merchant arrived in Smyrna he sent to Pope, as a present, a box of dried figs. At that time the poet had built a beautiful vila at Twickenham, on the bank of the River Thames, and was adorning it with trees, shrubbery, and flowering plants.

On opening the box of figs Pope discovered in it a small twig of the tree. It was a stranger to him. As it came from the East, he planted the twig in the ground near the edge of the river, close by his vila. The spot accidentally chosen for the planting was favorable to its growth, for the twig was from the weeping willow tree—possibly from the bank of one of "the rivers of Babylon"—which flourishes best along the borders of water courses.

This little twig grew vigorously, and in a few years it became a large tree, spreading wide its branches, and drooping, graceful sprays, and winning the inspiration of the poet's friend as well as strangers. It became the ancestor of all the weeping willows in England.

There was a rebellion in the English-American colonies in 1775. British troops were sent to Boston to put down the insurrection. Their leaders expected to end it in a few weeks after their arrival. Some young officers brought fishing-tackle with them to enable them to enjoy sport after the brief war. Others came to settle on the confiscated lands of the "rebels."

Among the latter was a young officer on the staff of Gen. Howe. He brought with him, wrapped in oiled silk, a twig, from Pope's weeping-willow at Twickenham, which he intended to plant on some stream watering his American estate.

Washington commanded an army before Boston which kept the British imprisoned in that city a long time against their will. On his staff was his stepson, John Parke Custis, who frequently went to the British headquarters, under the protection of a flag, with dispatches for Gen. Howe. He became acquainted with the young officer who had the willow twig, and they became friends.

Instead of "crushing the rebellion in six weeks," the British army at Boston, at the end of an imprisonment of nine months, was glad to fly by sea, for life and liberty, to Halifax. Long before that flight the British subaltern, satisfied that he should never have an estate in America to adorn, gave his carefully preserved willow twig to young Custis, who planted it at Abingdon, his estate in Virginia, where it grew and flourished, and became the parent of all the weeping willows in the United States.

Sometime after the war, Gen. Horatio Gates, of the Revolution, settled on the "Rose Hill Farm," on New York Island, and at the entrance to a lane which led from a country road to his house he planted a twig from the vigorous willow at Abingdon, which he had brought with him. That country road is now Third avenue, and the lane is Twenty-second street. Gates' mansion, built of wood, and two stories in hight, stood near the corner of Twenty-seventh street and Second avenue, where I saw it consumed by fire in 1815. The tree which grew from the twig planted at the entrance to Gates' lane remained until comparatively a few years ago. It stood on the north-east corner of Third avenue and Twenty-second street. It was a direct descendant, in the third generation, of Pope's willow, planted at Twickenham about 1722.

How Long Man May Live.

It was Prof. Hufeland's opinion that the limit of possible human life might be set at 200 years. This is on the general principle that the life of a creature is eight times the years of its period of growth. That which is quickly formed quickly perishes, and the earlier complete development is reached the sooner bodily decay ensues. More women reach old age than men, but more men attain remarkable longevity than women. Some animals grow to be very old. Horned animals live shorter lives than those without horns, fierce longer than timid, and amphibious longer than those which inhabit the air. The voracious pike exists, it is said, to an age of 150 years; the turtle is good for a hundred years or more; and among birds the golden eagle is known to have lived nearly 200 years, while the sly and somber crow reaches the venerable age of a century. Passing up in the scale of life to man and skipping the patriarchs, we find many recorded instances of longevity among the classic Greeks and Romans. Pliny notes that in the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, in the year 76, there were 124 men living in the limited area between the Apennines and the Po of 100 years and upward, three of whom were 140 and four over 135. Cicero's wife lived to the age of 103, and the Roman actress Luceja played in public as late as her 112th year.

Coming down to more recent times the most notable authentic instance of great age is that of Henry Jenkins, of Yorkshire, *Eng.*, who died in 1670, 169 years old. He was a fisherman, and at the age of 100 easily swam across rapid rivers. Another historic case is that of Thomas Parr, of Shropshire, a day-laborer, who lived to the age of 152 years. When more than 120 he married his second wife, and till 130 he could swing the scythe and wield the flail with the best of his fellow laborers. In his 152d year Parr went up to London to exhibit himself to the King. It proved an unlucky visit, for violating the abstemious habit of a century and a half the old man feasted so freely on the royal victuals that he soon died merely of a plethora. On examination his internal organs they proved to be in excellent condition, and there was no reason why he should not have lived much longer save for this unfortunate taste of royal hospitality. Prof. Hufeland's roll of centenarians includes many more remarkable cases, among them that of Mittlestedt, a Prussian soldier, who served 67 years under both Fredericks, fighting many battles and enduring much hard campaigning, and who after all this married successively three wives, the last when he was 110, only two years before his death

Two friends meeting, the following colloquy ensued: "Where have you been?"

"To my tailor, and I had hard work to make him accept a little money."

"You astonish me! Why?

"Because he wanted more?"

Why is a spendthrift's purse like a thunder-cloud? Because it is continually light'ning.

"A Goshburned Fool"

And it came to pass recently, that as a wealthy and benevolent citizen of Noo Orleenz opened the door of his dwelling, in order that he might proceed, as he was wont, unto his place of business, he did behold a poor tramp reclining upon the steps before the door.

And the tramp was exceedingly lean and ill-favored. His raiment it was dirty, and his eyes they did have in them the sad and far-away look of a half- starved dog.

And the old gentleman hove nigh unto him and spake unto him, saying, "Look ve—what want ye here?"

And the tramp lifted up his voice and said; "Wilt thou give me to eat! Even thirteen days have flown by since feed hath passed my lips."

And the heart of the O. G. was moved with compassion—even unto the bursting of his suspenders.

And he called unto his maid-servant and commanded her, saying: "Give thou unto this poor traveler food and drink, of which he standeth sore in need. Verily, I know how it is myself. See that thou lettest him eat his fill, for it is written; "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But hark ye, sirrah! Verily, the wood pile lieth nigh and unto it the ax adjacent, and when thou hast partaken of thy fill, see to it that ye repay me. even unto the hewing of wood. What sayest thou, fellow? Wilt thou do this thing?" Art thou of mind to work?"

And the tramp lifted up his voice and spake unto him with tears and said: "Yes, that will I! Ye bet thy socks I will! Even as thou commandedest will I obey. I will tackle the festive wood and hew it even unto the blistering of my hands."

And the old man went his way.

And the tramp doubled the tracks of the maid-servant unto the dining hall and sate down and did eat of the food which she sat before him. And he ate heartily as though he was possessed of the stomach of Doctor Tanner—him who fasted forty days of old and afterwards brought a grievous famine upon the people.

And when he had risen he did basely stow the spoons and forks in his pockets. And he wunk unto himself and said, 'These will fetch cash.'

For he meditated not on the baseness of the act.

And he wiped off his chin and pulled down his vest and betook himself unto the woodpile aforesaid.

And when he concentrated his vision upon the wood, and had seen that it was tough even unto hickory, his heart failed him, and he leaped the fence and did exclaim: "Blamed if I'll chop it."

And he went his way and was seen no more in that place forever.

Now when the even had come, the wealthy and benevolent old gent returned home and hied him straightway unto the woodpile, that he might feast his eyes upon the wood which, in his simplicity, he believed the tramp had hewn.

But when he had drawn nigh unto it, behold! it was as he had left it on the morn—untouched by the hand of man!

And he marveled greatly as one who sees a thing he can't exactly get the rights of.

And when he had discovered how that the tramp had played him false, even unto the pulling of the wool over his eyes, he tore his hair and beat his breast and kicked himself in divers places; and gave himself up to sore lamentation, crying out at the top of his voice, "I'll be blarsted if I'll ever be such a goshburned fool again."

A Forgotten Story.

In a diary kept by an early colonist during the years 1737 to 1746, and preserved by his descendants, occur the outlines of a remarkable story which may be of interest to our readers.

The passions and temptations of men are the same in all ages, but the half-barbarous condition of the country in those early days, and the remoteness of nations from each other, gave to human tragedies a more sombre and dramatic background.

Stripped of wordy description, the incidents are briefly as follows:

Two young men, members of wealthy mercantile families in London, immigrated to Pennsylvania about the year 1700, and went into business, one as a physician, the other as a merchant.

In a year or two the former, Doctor Whiting (as we shall call him, though that was not his real name), was betrothed to a beautiful young girl in Delaware. The marriage was set for June in the coming year.

In the meantime he resolved to return to London and look after the little patrimony which had fallen to his share, and after some difficulty he persuaded his friend Truefelt, the merchant, to accompany him.

A voyage across the Atlantic was then a matter of months, not to be undertaken save for important cause, and we find it set down as proof of the frivolity of the two young men that, without any real necessity, Truefelt consented thus to endanger, as it was thought, his life.

While in London, Dr. Whiting was led into dissipation. He drank heavily, and gambled away much of the money which he had received. Of this, Truefelt was cognizant.

The men sailed for home together on the barkentine Judith. Vessels never ventured alone at that time across the mighty deep. There were storms and hurricanes to face, and worse than all, the pirates, who were said, truly or not, to infest the southern coast; a coast peopled, according to popular belief, by cannibals. The barkentine, was one of a fleet of ships which left port at one time, and kept together for mutual protection.

Dr. Whiting and his friend quarrelled during the greater part of the voyage. Truefelt used the knowledge he had acquired of the doctor's misdeeds in London as a rod to control him. Finally, in a fit of passion, he declared his intention of making known the whole matter to Whiting's betrothed.

From that moment, as the physician afterwards declared, he held Truefelt in dire hate and dread.

"I felt that by some means I must be rid of him, else I was undone."

Chance put the means in his way. The fleet anchored to take in water at an unknown island. The passengers landed, and the two companions strolled up into the tropical forest in company. Truefelt, overpowered by the heat, lay down and fell asleep, charging Whiting to summon him when it was time to return to the vessel.

"Then I thought within myself, I can now be clear of this man, and so I left him sleeping there, and returned to the vessel, saying that he had fallen into the sea from the rocks to the southward, and was drowned. They would have made search for his body, but the other vessels had set sail, and the captain was forced in great distress of mind, unwillingly to weigh anchor."

We can imagine the flash of guilty joy and relief that, at first, filled Whiting's breast at thus being rid of his enemy. Then, as the ship sailed out into the ocean, he remembered that this man was his friend, and that he was left there forever. There was no possibility that he could ever escape. The island was a savage wilderness, out of the usual track of vessels. It was murder—murder by starvation.

"Then I was beset by a great terror and agony, he says. "I also thought that I saw a dark figure on the shore holding out his hands to the vessel. I would have asked the captain to return, but dared not, knowing that it was impossible for him to do so."

There is no record of Truefelt's condition after he awoke and found himself deserted on this rock in the midst of the sea. He sustained life, we are told, by means of the fruit and roots which grew abundantly on the island. There are one or two notes only that the diary gives of Truefelt's experience during his solitary life, which lasted for nearly a year.

"His great fear was that he should lose the power of speech, and he was used to practice himself therein, singing and talking, in different voices as it were, so that one might suppose, to hear him, that he had many companions."

And again: "Finding a cat which had escaped, probably, from some ship, he trained it and made it his constant companion. And he was wont to think over the many hundreds of his friends and acquaintances; their wit, their excellent parts, their virtues, and the affection they bore him, and to reproach himself in that he had not been more grateful, saying, 'Out of the full world of living things, there is left to me only the hairy limbs and dumb tongue of this poor little beast."

Truefelt must have possessed a womanly, gentle nature. He does not appear to have cherished any bitterness or plan of revenge against Whiting; his sole feeling seemed to be intense self-pity.

Dr. Whiting, returning home, married, and lived in luxury. But his health failed. He grew to be the mere skeleton of his former self. He gave up his connection with the church, neglected his patients, and became a prey to an intractable gloom.

At last he announced to his wife that he must make a sea-voyage; that he was about to die, and God had given him a work to do before death. As soon as she consented to this (she thinking him to be insane), he partially regained his former energy, and vigorously set on foot preparations for his voyage.

Now here is the strange part of the story. The night before the ship was to sail, Dr. Whiting, returning home, was compelled to pass through a lonely part of the town, where the streets abutted on the forest. Within the borders of the wood he saw a man, apparently unarmed, beset by two ruffians. Highwaymen were common in those days in the larger colonial towns. Dr. Whiting at once attacked the thieves, and laid about him with a sword-cane which he carried.

The ruffians fled, but not before they had stabbed him through the breast. As he fell, the traveler whom he had defended caught him and supported him until the tardy watch came.

The stranger was Truefelt! Dr. Whiting, insensible from loss of blood, did not recognize him. Truefelt's emotions would be a strange study as he stood there holding in his arms the man who had tried to murder him, and now had saved his life. He did not make himself known until he had helped the watch to carry Whiting to the stoop of his own house.

Then he said, "You have risked your life to save mine. You know what you owed me. I think we can go scot-free of each other." And ending this singular homily with a laugh, withdrew.

Truefelt, it appears, had been rescued by some vessel, and brought to a Northern port, from which he had found his way home. Whiting gave up his voyage. He recovered his health and with it his spirits. After a year or two, the men renewed their old intimacy, but they were known as more sober, honest, God fearing citizens than they had been formerly. The truth of the strange story was never revealed until both were dead.

He Never Squared.

In the years agone, when De Witt, Clinton Co., Michigan, was the county seat and a right smart village in the woods, or on the way to be, the editor of its weekly paper had some subsribers who had paid in wood, others in produce, others in fur, and others yet who didn't pay at all. One of these latter classes was named Lemon, but to squeeze anything out of him was next to impossible. He had excuses at his tongue's end for not paying, and the longer the debt stood the more reasonable his excuses seemed to his creditors. One day the editor met him on the street, and after a general greeting began on him with:

"Mr. Lemon, you have been owing me for two years."

"Yes, but I had bad luck in my sugar-bush."

"But you might have brought wood."

"So I should, but I broke two new axes and couldn't buy another."

"I offered to take it out in turnips and corn."

"I know, but the crows ate my corn up and the Injuns stole all my turnips."

"Well, how are you getting along now?" asked the editor.

"First-rate."

"Have you a good run of sugar!"

"Yes."

"Corn doing well?"

"Splendid."

"Wheat all right?"

"Yes, all right."

"Well, if corn, wheat, potatoes and turnips turn out good, and you keep well, and you have no losses, will you pay me in the fall?"

The farmer scratched his head and took a full minute to think over it before he replied:

"That's an honest debt and orter be paid, but I won't positively agree to square up this fall until I know what sort of a corn season we are to have!"

It is needless to say that he never squared.

Trees and Health.

Everybody knows that trees take the carbonic acid thrown out in the breath of men and animals, separate it into component parts, carbon and oxygen—give back the latter to be used over again, and work up the former into wood and fruits.

It is also coming to be generally understood that forest trees do important service in promoting rainfalls, and in helping to retain the surface water for springs, streams and general use.

It is also known that certain species planted in malarial localities, help to render the latter healthy by somehow using up the deadly miasma.

It would now appear that trees growing near drains carry of the sewerage water.

A gentleman, whose cess-drain was constructed just like his neighbor's and in the same kind of soil, had found it unnecessary to clean it out, while the others had to be cleaned out frequently.

An examination showed that three large trees, whose roots had penetrated into the vicinity of his second, or waste cess-pool, were clearly channels through which the waste all escaped.

Whether it was changed into plant-food, as is likely, or was exhaled through the leaves, in either case it was disposed of with equal safety.

The Female Mind.

The other day old Mr. Pungleup, of Nob Hill, was commenting on the railroad velocity with which young ladies jabber to each other when they meet, without either in the least understanding or replying to what the other says.

"It's just a mean falsehood gotten up by you good-for-nothing men!" said the youngest Pungleup girl, indignantly.

"All right," said her father, benignantly; "we'll try an experiment. I see your friend, Miss Gluckerson, coming up the street. Now, I'll wager that new walking-suit you want so much that you can say Roast turkey and cranberry-sauce, in response to the half-dozen remarks she makes without her noticing the fact."

"I never heard anything so perfectly absurd," replied Miss P——; however, I might as well have that suit—it's just too lovely for anything—so I'll just do it to teach you a lesson."

"Mind, now," said her father, as the front door bell rang, "fair play. You musn't change your expression in the least, and you must repeat the sentence in your usual voice and manner—that is to say, in a single breath—all run together, as it were."

Just then Miss Gluckerson was shown into the parlor, and through the library door old P——heard Miss G——exclaim, without even the smallest comma in the whole remark:

"O! you lazy thing been here a perfect age don't look on this hat perfect fright going to have flowers set back and bow changed why weren't you at the matinee? Harry was there."

"Roast turkey and cranberry sauce," rapidly inserted Miss P——, accompanying the words with that peculiar preliminary and concluding gurgle with which all women, for some occult reason, invariably adorn their conversation when desirous of being agreeable.

"Going to Mrs. Bladger's party?" continued Miss Gluckerson, with the serene rattle of a brook over the pebbles. "Molly Smith is going they tell me she paints pa's promised me a phaeton in the spring saw that hateful Mrs. Guppery on the street buff overskirt and green ruching just fancy."

"Roast turkey and cranberry—"

"O, George Skidmore's mother's dead. Ouch! got a flea in my sleeve little beast just eating me up alive bury her next Sunday did you get that edging at Gimps?"

"Roast turkey and cran—"

"The girls at Clark's are going to graduate next Thursday Jennie Giggles is going to be square cut with inside illusion and white kid boots can't you come around for dinner to-morrow and stay all—"

"Roast turkey and—"

"Night and show Milly your new basque? That man with a light overcoat stared at me yesterday Jim O'Neil is going East this candy is frightfully stale."

"Roast turkey—" "Ma thinks Mrs. Brown ain't proper those ferns are just too lovely look at these cuffs clean this morning are my crimps coming out yours ain't Lillie Skippen says you met Charlie Boggs the other night and said something nice about me tell me quick!"

"Roast turk—"

"Why, how perfectly absurd you are, Linda," interrupted the visitor, angrily. "You don't listen to a word I say; I was asking about Charles Boggs, not roast turkey. George Shelly thinks you're awful nice. Now tell me what he did say. Good gracious! what are you hugging me for!"

"And, Tilda," thoughtfully remarked Miss Pungleup, after the matter had been explained, and her father admitted that he had lost by a scratch, "I believe in my heart that if you hadn't thought about Charlie just then I shouldn't have had any new suit this winter."

How and When to Cut Flowers.

The proper stage at which to cut flowers for decoration is the most important part of the subject of flower supply next to the production. Never cut any flowers until fully developed. Flowers which open when cut, as the gladiolus, may be exceptions to this rule, but trusses of pelargoniums and bouvardias should not be cut until fully developed. Nor is this all. Flowers are allowed to remain on the plants as long as they will continue in good condition. To gather a bloom which would last for a week or two, and pass over a bloom which would be useless in a few days, is disadvantageous in two ways. In the first place, the young bloom is sacrificed at a time when it is not needed, and the older bloom is entirely wasted. This system will in a short time change a sufficient quantity into scarcity. Another matter can only be settled by experience, and that is cutting more flowers than are required at one time. It is also quite possible to use very many more flowers in decorating vases than are necessary, to the detriment of the flowers, which invariably last longer when thinly arranged. Every flower ought to stand entirely clear of its neighbor. This is effected by employing foliage freely, filling large glasses with foliage, and then inserting the flowers. Water is always used, as being most cleanly and keeping the flowers in good condition for a longer period than any other medium. The harmonizing and contrasting of colors is also a question of some importance, but in this the varied tastes of employers have in a great degree to be studied. White flowers and the few yellow ones that may be used do well with any color; dark blue or purple flowers are not suitable at this season; pink shades are best with white or yellow flowers. All flowers, ferns and foliage should be cut with the longest possible stems. I do not strip the leaves off flower stems and ferns, more especially as a denhair ferns; I also have a portion of the fronds inserted in the water. These last much longer for various purposes if cut and placed for two days in water before using. In hot rooms the glasses require periodical filling. When the flowers are freshly arranged, the glasses should be washed before being refilled. Many flowers last a long time at this season, such as cyclamens, pelargoniums, orchids and others; these should never be left longer than three or four days without having fresh water and being re-arranged.

Wedding Pin Lore.

Among the superstitions about pins is that the bride in removing her bridal robe and chaplet at the completion of the marriage ceremony must take especially care to throw away every pin worn on this eventful day. Evil fortune, it is affirmed, will sooner or later inevitably overtake the bride who keeps even one pin used in the marriage toilet. Woe also to the bridesmaids if they retain any of them, as their chances of marriage will thereby be materially lessened, and anyhow they must give up all hope of being married before the following Whitsuntide. On the other hand, in some parts of England, a bride, on her return home from church, is often at once robbed of all the pins about her dress by her single friends present, from the belief that whosoever possesses one of them will be married in the course of a year.

BRIEFS.

—Four British M. P.'s are 80 and upward.

—Melikoff has accepted the Premiership of Russia.

—Boston's area has increased from 778 to 23,061 acres.

—The salary of the Emperor of Russia is $10,000,000.

—Victor Hugo has a $380,000 interest in a Brussels bank.

—Locusts have devoured the rice and corn crops of Bolivia.

—Fishes have been taught to come when called by their names.

—The Jews talk of erecting a national synagogue in Washington.

—A female spider will suffer death before she will forsake her eggs.

—Illinois reports an increased acreage and a damage of 22 per cent.

—It costs the United States $80,000 per annum to print its postage stamps.

—The Pope Monument Fund now amounts to about five thousand dollars.

—The inhabitants of the globe profess more than 1,000 different religions.

—Sixty tons of steel are annually consumed in the manufacture of steel pens.

—The King of Portug