

A Presage.

I have a friend, a dear one,
Her name—but why I confess
You very rarely hear one
More fascinating—guess
Her merry voice is sweeter
Than any rillet's flow;
Her laugh has more of metre
Than any song I know.
Her lovely eyes that lighten
When robbins softly sing
Are like the skies that brighten
At dawn in early spring;
Her cheeks—his brain is duller
Than dunce's who'll not own
They've all the pinky color
Of apple buds half-blown.
You will agree it's pleasant
That such a one should send
Each year a charming present
To me, "her dearest friend."
And this year I've a presage—
It makes my pulses start—
That with a tender message
She'll give to me her heart.
—Bissell Clinton in Harper's Magazine.

"A NICE OLD WOMAN."

BY FLORENCE ALLEN.

"Oh dear!"
It was a pretty little face which was all puckered up into such a lot of worried little wrinkles; pretty in spite of the shadow of care in the fair blue eyes, and the tired drop at the corner of the girlish mouth. The owner of the face and the wrinkles and the blue eyes and the mouth in question, was a slight, rather delicate-looking girl of about 18 who stood, attired in a faded calico dress, in the doorway of a small wood-colored cottage (or "cabin" as they more truthfully call such edifices in the mountains) looking out at the sunny slope of the road before her.
Two fresh-faced smiling girls of her own age had just gone by, stopping to say a pleasant word or two as they passed; and the sight of their pretty, though simple, lawn dresses and floating ribbons had brought, as they departed, those worried wrinkles to the face that should have been as bright as theirs, and the impatient exclamation with which our story begins to her generally uncomplaining lips.
As a general thing Phrosoy Miller (she was Euphrosyne by rights, through the instrumentality of her father, who had found the name in his somewhat limited reading, and had delighted in its long-drawn sweetness,) was a very cheerful and contented girl in spite of the troubles and hard work that had come into her young life so early; but just at present, there was something especial upon her mind, and that was the picnic.
It was to be in just four weeks from today, and all the girls were going; and she, who had stayed at home so much and so patiently for the last year, felt as though she really must go, too. But how? That was the question that brought the worried little wrinkles to the front so conspicuously. All the girls were going to have new lawn dresses and fresh ribbons for the occasion, and "do up" her blue muslin as best she could (and she was something wonderful in the laundress line all her neighbors said,) it would not look any way but old and faded; and her ribbons—well, her small stock thereof had been cleaned and dyed and "done over" so often that they were merely a travesty upon their kind. Of course a new dress and the requisite adornments would cost very little; but, as Phrosoy said, tersely but truly, "If diamonds could be bought for a nickel apiece and one didn't have the nickel, where would be the comfort of it?"
Money had been very tight in the Miller family ever since Mr. Miller's long illness, ending in his death, had put the little household under a load of debt which seemed at first, simply overwhelming.
Ben Miller—a wild and reckless young fellow he had been while his father was well and strong and able to care for the mother and sister—had steadied down wonderfully and taken the burden of existence on his shoulders patiently and manfully. Mrs. Miller and Phrosoy had economized in every way, even to the extent of taking some of the many wood-choppers about as boarders, and they had worked early and late and sewed and denied themselves until the debt was paid, and the future began to look a little brighter. Then fate frowned on them once again. Mrs. Miller, a large, heavy and somewhat unwholesome woman, in going down the back-steps one day made a misstep and fell, receiving an injury to her side which made her utterly helpless. Since then Phrosoy had found life harder than ever. Additional doctor's bills piled in upon them; Mrs. Miller

instead of helping as before was now as helpless as a baby and so nervously irritable that keeping boarders longer was an impossibility even had Phrosoy been able to do the work. So it was that every cent that came into the family had to be earned by Ben; and so it was that the new lawn dress, so ardently desired, seemed to be among the impossibilities of existence, for Ben's wages were small at best and there were at least a dozen ways for every dollar.
And Phrosoy thought altogether too much of her patient and kind-hearted brother, who denied himself so much to keep her and his invalid mother from want, to add to his burdens by telling him her own troubles.
"If there was only something that I could do myself to earn a little money," she said to herself, "but there doesn't seem to be. Mother wouldn't hear of my running the machine steadily, even if I could get sewing to do, and there is nothing else. It's a hopeless case, I guess." And, sighing heavily, Phrosoy turned to enter the house in answer to a fretful call from within, but as she did so her eyes fell upon the clothes-line in the side-yard.
"In one minute, mother," she said cheerily. "I'll just bring Ben's shirts in as I come by,—they're all ready to raw-starch and I can iron them by the supper fire."
How white and clean and sweet they were! As Phrosoy gathered them into a stiffly awkward bundle in her arms she could not help bending her head to inhale the "smell of outdoors" (as she called it) that came from them.
"They smell different from Chinese washing," she thought. "There's one thing certain,—poor as we are Ben's shirts are always the nicest done up in town," and then as that thought passed through her mind it left an inspiration behind it.
That night after supper, when Ben was resting himself from his day's labor by "puttering" around the chicken-house and back-yard generally, and Mrs. Miller was chatting with a neighbor who had opportunely dropped in, Phrosoy, pleading an errand at the store, slipped away from them all and proceeded to put her inspiration to the test of practicality.
"It might be a good idea," said kindly Mrs. Jenkins, to whom she had gone in her emergency, "but there's so many of them plaguery Chinese around that it brings prices down dreadful, and most folks don't care how a thing is done so it is done cheap."
"But my things don't smell of opium and nastiness as the Chinamen's do," averred Phrosoy stoutly, "there must be some one who would rather pay a little higher and have things nice."
"Such folks is scarcer than diamonds in dust heaps," was the sententious reply. "I would myself, of course, but old Ma'am Gilman has kind of got a mortgage on me, and though she's failing dreadful and don't send things home fit to be seen some weeks, I kinder can't go back on her all at once."
"Of course not," assented Phrosoy unhesitatingly, "that isn't what I want at all. But—see here—you ask Joe to inquire around up to Loren's mill and I do believe he'll find something for me. I don't care to say a word to Ben or he'd fly all to pieces—nor you needn't tell Joe who it is that wants the things—just let him say 'some one who'll do them the best they can be done and needs the money.'"
"All right," said Mrs. Jenkins, "I'll keep it as still as mice, whether it turns out well or not. You come by tomorrow night and I'll tell you the verdict." And so, full of hopes and fears and fond imaginings, Phrosoy went home.
The next night Mrs. Jenkins met her with her broad face beaming. "I've got six for you," she said, delightedly, "and six times two bits is a dollar and a half you are in luck, Phrosoy! 'Tain't one of the mill hands either, but a young fellow that has bought out the old Bradbury ranch. He's been up to the city for the last week and more and come home with about a carload of dirty things—its been that hot up there, Joe says, that you can't keep nothing decent two minutes, and old Mrs. Bulgal that cooks up there don't know beans about doing up, so the grist naturally comes to your mill, and I'm glad of it for one."
"And I for two," answered Phrosoy gleefully, and then, with a light and thankful heart she took possession of her somewhat bulky bundle and went merrily homeward.

The next day six white shirts fluttered upon the Millers' clothes-line; the next day—stiff and shiny and odorous only of Heaven's pure breezes—they went to their owner, and Joe brought back to his mother in return the silver which looked to Phrosoy brighter and better than silver ever looked before. He brought something else, too, an overgrown bundle of shirts which had evidently seen sorrow and had not lived the lives that aristocratic white shirts ought to live.
"These belong to the mill boys," he explained, "they got a sight at the others and nothing to do but they must send these down. They're a pretty hard lot," (meaning the shirts and not the mill boys) "but I guess your old woman can get 'em clean, mother."
And his mother, chuckling a little as she thought of "her old woman" took the bundle and informed her son that anything of the kind was welcome until further orders.
That week, in the neighbors' estimations, Ben Miller fairly blossomed with shirts, for the number of those useful and ornamental garments that hung on the Millers' line was something absolutely unprecedented.
"Thirteen shirts for one poor workman is the worst I ever heard!" asseverated the woman next door, whose propinquity gave her, in her own estimation, a right to criticise the Millers with more frankness than "manners."
"I wouldn't slave myself to death for the sake of Ben's vanity if I was his sister!"
But Phrosoy smiled serenely.
"I don't call Ben over vain myself," she answered, "and I'm sure I am not slaving myself to death or near it for any one, and as long as I'm satisfied I don't see what difference the size of my washings ought to make to any one else." And with this the officious and would-be inquisitive neighbor was forced to retire discomfited.
Phrosoy went to the picnic under Mrs. Jenkins' protecting wing (one of Mrs. Miller's whimsical cronies consenting gladly to come and spend the day with her) and she had on a fresh pink lawn and ribbons to match and looked for all the world like a peach-blossom.
The picnic was near the "old Bradbury ranch" and its new owner—a tall, sun-burned, masterful young fellow with a plain, sensible face and a pair of eyes that seemed to Phrosoy the kindest that she had ever seen—made them welcome to his home and was as hospitable as a true Californian always is; and some way Phrosoy was shyly conscious, after the first, that those kind eyes looked a trifle more kindly upon her than they did upon some of the more noticeable girls.
Phrosoy was always one of the useful ones, and when it fell to her lot to oversee the arrangement of the lunch her new acquaintance very quietly disengaged himself from the others and devoted himself to her assistance, and Ben Miller, looking on from a distance, saw and approved.
"Phrosoy's worth her weight in gold," he said to himself, "and Dalton is just the kind of a fellow that she ought to have. I'd give four bits to have it turn out that way."
That night Phrosoy came home tired but radiant. John Dalton had harnessed up his two-horse team and brought part of the picnicers down to the village himself, "just to be sociable," he had said; and he had invited her to sit beside him on the front seat, and he had, moreover, told Ben that he was coming down to play him a game of checkers now and then when the evenings got a little longer.
What wonder was it that the world seemed rose-colored to Phrosoy? and what wonder was it that when John Dalton—not waiting for the evenings to lengthen perceptibly—made his appearance in her home and, after making friends with her mother, proceeded to devote himself especially to that lady's daughter, that she thought herself the happiest girl in the world. Only one thing shadowed her heart. Supposing that he should be angry when he found out that the shirts, which still came, through Mrs. Jenkins, to that mysterious "old woman" were her task, and that he was making love to his washerwoman? That fear made her almost cowardly after she began to feel that she was growing to care for this quiet, manly, young fellow as she had never cared for any one else before; and although she knew that she must tell him some day, she put that day off as long as possible and grew, girl-fashion, as nervous and feverish and miserable as

possible over her innocent little secret, until even her mother noticed that Phrosoy was "fretting" as she called it, and wondered thereat.
One day, John Dalton brought matters to a focus by simply and seriously asking Phrosoy if she could make up her mind to come to him, and let him take care of her as he had longed to do ever since he first met her.
"I think that I fell in love with you at first sight," he said, in his straightforward way, "and ever since then I have been hoping that you would let me make things easier for you some day. Do you care for me enough to be my wife, Phrosoy?"
Poor Phrosoy—she blushed and hesitated and then put her hands like a frightened child.
"—I am afraid I do," she faltered, "but first I must tell you about—about the shirts!"
John Dalton was mystified, but certainly there was nothing about shirts that could separate them. He pruned the pleading hands lovingly and smiled down into her blushing face. "Never mind the shirts," he said, "Ben must get some one else to do his up for the future; and, as for me, you'll never have any trouble about mine, for there is a nice old woman who does mine up like new—you couldn't get the job away from her if you wanted to, my dear."
Phrosoy's face was a sight to see now, between laughing and crying, embarrassment and half-frightened amusement. "Oh, John Dalton!" she said, pushing him away very feebly, "you'll never want to marry me now, for it isn't Ben's shirts I am thinking of at all—it's yours; and I—I never meant to deceive you at all, but I wanted a new dress so badly, at first; and then, afterwards, it was such an easy way to earn a little, and it helped along so. Please don't be angry, and please don't laugh, but I'm the 'nice old woman,' John, and I am very sorry!"
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Phrosoy Miller is Mrs. John Dalton now, and is as happy as possible in her lovely home, where her mother has grown strong and well, and where Ben has always a room and place of his own. She doesn't "do up" shirts at all now, for the babies claim her attention; but as her husband's linen is always immaculate it is to be supposed that some other "nice old woman" has been found who gives satisfaction in that line.—*The Household.*

Japanese Hatred of Foreigners.
An incident occurred in Yokohama only a few years ago which will serve to show how intense the feeling against foreigners may become. A dispute had arisen between one of the foreign firms and a native tea merchant as to the price the former was to pay for the fragrant herb. A public meeting of the native tea men was called to discuss the matter (boycotts of native against the foreign houses are common) and two foreign merchants who understood the language were present. For a few minutes everything went smoothly, when suddenly an eloquent young Japanese launched forth a torrent of invective and abuse against foreigners in general, calling them a curse to Japan, a race whose only God was dollars and cents, and hoping that the fair Land of the Morning would one day be rid of their accursed presence. The assembly became very much excited; threats were uttered, and the two merchants, remembering the fierce passions hidden beneath the polite exterior of the Japanese, deemed it prudent to leave, and retreated in good order. The story of the affair ran over Yokohama like fire in cotton, gathering energy as it went. Next day the native journals referred to it. Knots of people collected on the streets to discuss it. Foreigners, whose business or pleasure took them into the native town, were met with scowls. The jirikisha-men, usually the meekest of mortals, assumed airs of importance and waxed impudent. The servants in the homes of the foreigners showed its influence. Small and unimportant as was the beginning, in 24 hours this swelling wave of national feeling had swept through the lower classes, stirring every heart and serving to show how intense and near the surface is the dislike to the foreigner.
The Japanese have been for centuries a nation of soldiers, and their courage is beyond question. But they are gentle, hospitable, kind and polite. Those who know the temper of the people have long believed that the large sums which have for years been spent upon war material, military and naval, have not been intended for the ordinary defense of the country alone, but were preparations for the day when Japan, having exhausted every effort to expunge the hated extra-territorial clause, would tear up the treaties and demand freedom or non-intercourse and stand ready for the alternative of war.—*New York Times.*

Old Songs.
Over and over again,
In every time and tongue,
In every style and strain
Have the world's old songs been sung:
Since the sigh from the soul was stirred,
Since the heart of a man was broken,
Have the notes of despair been heard
And the rhythm of pain been spoken.
The song that you sing today,
Sweet on the printed pages,
Was sung in the far away,
In the youth of the worn-out ages;
The charm of your love-born tune,
The gems that your lines uncover,
Were set in some savage tune
By the heart of some pagan lover.
The fancies that fill your rhymes,
The visions that haunt your lays,
Are the spectres of olden times
And the ghosts of forgotten days;
Ye players on notes of woe,
Ye dreamers of love and sorrow,
They sang in the years ago
The songs you will sing to-morrow.
But what if the rhymes are new,
And what if the thoughts are old,
If the touch of the chord be true
And the flight of the singer bold!
Let them come to us still again,
To-morrow and yet hereafter,
Fresh as a morning's rain,
Old as the sob and the laughter.

HUMOROUS.

A flourishing man—The professor of penmanship.
Why not call a balloon a tramp? It has no visible means of support.
First Cucumber—I'm in bad shape.
Second Cucumber—You do look seedy.
It is not surprising to find that air ship schemes are supported entirely on wind.
The eagle is dear to the American heart, but the double eagle is twice as dear.
The monkey goes to the sunny side of the tree when he wants a warmer climb.
Some bard should arise to sing the mourning caused by the individual's inhumanity to himself.
It would seem that when seamen get tired of ship's fare they would try to gather some ocean currents.
The sentence "Ten dollars or thirty days" is another proof of the truth of the adage that time is money.
"I never explain my jokes, sir," said the humorist, curtly. "That's where you're wise, old boy," a bystander remarked.
The Philosopher at the Boarding-house—"Mrs. Brown, am I so very large today, or is it the slice of bread that is so small?"
Sarcastic Individual (pointedly)—Well, the fools are n't all dead yet. The Other Man—What's the matter—don't you feel well?
We know men who insist at every point upon beating their way through life, but we observe that they all draw the line at a carpet.
Stanley has taught the Africans something about exploration, but he has not taught them how to spell. The names of some of the places he has visited would break a Russian's jaw.
She got herself wedged in the doorway and kept a score of people waiting. "Just like a woman," muttered a male growler. "Yes," replied the woman, sweetly; "of course, you do. What a pity the sentiment isn't returned."
The correspondent who wants to know "how to cook cabbage without having an odor in the house," is informed that it can be accomplished by boiling the cabbage in the back yard, keeping the doors and windows of the house tightly closed while it is cooking.

The Triumphs of Surgery.

A remarkable instance of surgical progress which occurred in the practice of Prof. von Bergmann of Berlin the other day is reported. The Professor had two patients who were simultaneously brought to him for operations, one requiring amputation of the thigh at the hip joint, the other needing a portion of the humerus removed on account of the bone being extensively diseased. The first operation to be done was the amputation, and immediately afterwards the surgeon proceeded to excise the diseased portion of the humerus. The result of this latter procedure was necessarily to make a gap in the bone, but a piece of the thigh bone was taken from the limb which had just been amputated and fixed in the gap, by which the continuity of the humerus was completely restored. Perfect union took place, and the patient recovered with a useful arm.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

How to Take Care of the Eyes.

Dr. Lincoln of Boston formulates the following rules for the care of the eyes for school work:
1. A comfortable temperature, and especially late the feet be warm and dry.
2. Good ventilation.
3. Clothing at the neck loose; the same as regards the rest of the body.
4. Posture erect; never read lying down or stooping.
5. Little study before breakfast or directly after a hearty meal; none at all at twilight or late at night.
6. Great caution about study after recovery from fevers.
7. Light abundant, but not dazzling.
8. Sun not shining on desk or on objects in front of the scholar.
9. Light coming from the left hand, or left and rear, under some circumstances from in front.
10. The book held at right angle to the line of sight, or nearly so.
11. Frequently rest by looking up.
12. Distance of book from the eye about fifteen inches.

Ancient Babylon.

Babylon, the great city of the Chaldeans, was five times as large as the London of today. Its walls were as high as lofty church steeples—340 feet from the ground. The palace of Nebuchadnezzar, the destroyer of Jerusalem, was seven miles in circumference. The bed of the great Euphrates was paved with bricks. The palaces and temples were full of wonderful triumphs of painter, sculptor, and of libraries of history, science and letters. The Babylonians were astronomers of great proficiency, considering the age in which they lived, and they watched the movements of the heavenly bodies with intense interest and recorded them with accuracy. The moon was the object of their especial regard, and her changes were noted with unflagging assiduity and recorded in calendar. They called her the father of the sea

A Touching Episode.

A statue commemorating a touching little episode in the life of the late German emperor, Frederick, is about to be erected at Kaiserslauten. When Frederick was crown prince he visited one of the orphan asylums of that town. Among the children was a sickly and sad-faced little boy. Frederick noticed him, took him in his arms and therupon agreed to become his godfather. The child, to whom a caress was a stranger, appeared somewhat frightened at first, but soon got over his difficulty and began to play with the Prince's medals and decorations. The statue in question will represent the Prince with a baby in his arms, and the youngster tugging at his cordons and crosses.