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AN IDLE FANCY.

I sat with my soul, idly weaving a rhyme
As the fancy came to me;
And I said: Sad soul, there cometh a time
When the stars drop into the sea;
When they lie like gems
From diadems
In the blue of the midnight sea.
The daisy is just as it was of old,
And the sunflower turns to the sea;
And there lies in the west a land of gold
When the summer's day is done;
But the bud that blew
In the morning dew
At night is withered and gone.
And what is life but a leaf that grows
On the tip of an idle spray?
And beauty—what but a red, red rose
That blossoms for only a day?
And the red that tips
The sweetest lips
Soonest turns to leaden gray.
Ah, soul so sad, the riddle canst guess,
Why the rainbow after the rain
Our human eyes doth a moment bless,
Then waneth and fadeth again?
Why life doth seem
But an idle dream
That ends in a cry of pain?
Of the things that are, my soul replied,
God knoweth the bow and when;
And the roses of June have only died
That roses may come again;
And the day that dies
Leaves golden skies
As a promise of morrow to men.
—Harper's Weekly.

UNCLE JOB'S GUEST.

Aunt Huldah and Uncle Job were writing the invitations to their own golden wedding. It was an unusual and arduous undertaking. They had selected an elegant formula from a Complete Letter Writer, which represented to Aunt Huldah's mind the acme of all social etiquette, and she now sat dictating to Uncle Job, who was a fair scribe but a poor speller.

Thus far all had gone well. Aunt Huldah derived great satisfaction from this close contact with "dictionary words." The two old heads bobbed eagerly over the long list of guests to be invited, including almost the entire countryside, until Uncle Job's pen traced the name of Miss Abigail Appleby.

"You ain't goin' to ask her!" cried Aunt Hulda, aghast. "Why, Job, man, they do tell the queerest things of her! I believe the woman is plumb crazy! Livin' all alone as she does in that little house of Dickinson's, comin' from no one knows where, and fillin' it from garret to cellar with Totton flannel animiles the like of which was never seen in the ark or out of it since! An' doin' her housework in gloves, an' tyin' ribbons to her cow's horns last Fourth of July! I wonder she wasn't hooked sky-high for it. Ef you ask her to our weddin', who knows but what she'll come a-fetchin' up with an elephant under one arm and a camel under t'other?"

"I think she's a poor, lonesome old critter," said Uncle Job, in a mild, determined voice. "She may be a leetle teched, Huld; I don't deny it, but she lives within sight of our house, and I'm not goin' to have every one of our neighbors here, an' slight her."

"Well, but she ain't fit to come to any sech getherin'. She don't seem p'inted at makin' friends, either."

"Mebbe folks don't go the right way to work," said the old man, dryly. "I mean to take this invite over myself, and urge her to come."

Aunt Huldah set her spectacles firmly on her nose, and surveyed her obstinate husband.

"Jest as you say then. But if she does bring us a heathen beast to set up in our parlor, you'll do the thankin', Job, for I won't!"

"I will, I will," promised Farmer Satterlee, sealing the note and his triumph together with a twinkling little smile.

The wedding day was a crisp and golden one, such a day as October alone knows, how to fashion. Aunt Huldah had been up since dawn. The old house, full of quaint furniture, had needed an immense amount of scrubbing and polishing to bring it up to its mistress's ideal.

At last Aunt Huldah surveyed her house interior with a sigh of satisfaction. She was giving some asparagus broom a little "tasty twist," as she called it, when a scramble on the front porch announced the first visitors. Millicent and Hetty, her two grand daughters, released from boarding school to celebrate this anniversary, rushed into the room.

"We walked up from the station, you know, grandma. Such a charming day! Leaves perfectly beautiful! Well, how are you? Hetty, isn't she as handsome a

grandmother as two harum-scarum girls were ever blessed with?"

They both hugged her in rapturous school-girl fashion.

"By the way, grandma, can't we have the best bedroom, with the big mirror? Hetty and I want to come out in butterfly style."

"I s'pose so," said Aunt Huldah, leniently, looking with a suspicion of tears at the tall, handsome girls. She was wishing their father, her only son, had lived to see this day. A few minutes later she followed them up to the best chamber.

"Laws a massy me! What upon airth ain't you got crammed into that bag? You call that packin', do you! Is that all you're learnin' of ladylike ways?"

Hetty looked up with flushing cheeks at this condemnation called down on Millicent, who only laughed. "Pshaw, grandma! You have to squeeze things into a cabas. Look at this dress," and she pulled out a flimsy garment of shimmering satin covered with lace, and gay with scarlet bows.

"Goin' to wear that?" cried Aunt Huldah, in dismay.

Hetty smiled quietly, and brushed her own pretty blue cloth. Millicent bit her lip in mortification, but she arrayed herself in the condemned garment and ran down into the sitting-room, where Uncle Job sat in all the dignity of his old broadcloth wedding coat, nibbling flag-root and looking contented. The sight of Millicent brought a deep frown to his brows.

"Now, Millicent, I ain't a-goin' to have the plain, old-fashioned folks a-comin' here to-night put out with the sight of sech airs in my gran'darter! Take that flummiddiddle rig straight off, an' come down here in a dress like your sister's, or not a step into my parlors do you go!"

Millicent rushed back up stairs, flung the despised dress on a heap on a chair, and cried heartily. She upset Hetty's violet water trying to efface the tear stains, and finally, arrayed in her travelling-dress, tripped demurely into the parlor to join her sister in conversation with the minister, a young man, with the stamp of college fresh upon him. He was the earliest guest.

Most of the guests arrived at the same time, so that within half an hour the parlors were filled. A stiffness hung over this assemblage of old neighbors and acquaintances, which turned into astonishment when Miss Appleby bobbed into the room.

She was an odd figure, clad in a rusty black dress, with a scarlet silk handkerchief across her shoulders and a large bunch of salvia, very much askew, over one ear. To complete this strange holiday gear she had two enormous bottles dangling clumsily from each side, and bore under one arm, true to Aunt Huldah's prophecy, a large cotton-flannel giraffe decked out in ink-spots as large as ten-cent pieces, while a chicken-bone artfully fastened on, graced its nondescript head.

Bowing to the company, she placed her gift on the table, where it careened backward on abnormally thick legs in a tragic attitude, and then she looked around the silent room for her hostess.

Aunt Huldah was absent. Hearing no welcoming word or invitation, the old lady shrank back timidly, and her hands fluttered up and down her dress. Millicent had been hiding her smiles behind a fan, but at the sight of the nervous, disturbed glance she went impulsively to the rescue.

"Dear Miss Appleby, grandma will be so glad you came! Take this chair. I suppose you know Miss Appleby, ladies and gentlemen."

There were friendly nods and murmurs now in response to Miss Appleby's queer curtsy, as pretty Millicent placed her gently in a chair and chatted kindly with her.

Aunt Huldah and Uncle Job were to be addressed after the fashion of the old service by the minister. "I want to stand as we did long ago," said Aunt Huldah, "when we had no idea of life; and I want to realize the solemnity of it."

So now they came into the room hand in hand, both heads silver gray and both hearts quietly happy. The second service had all the solemnity of a first ceremony about it, and the minister's remarks were very felicitous. As his voice ceased and a rustling silence succeeded it, suddenly Miss Appleby lifted her head, sniffed audibly and dashed from the room, pausing at the foot of the staircase and then darting up it like a squirrel.

Every eye in the room followed her in amazement, and Aunt Huldah looked shocked and vexed. Instantly, upstairs,

there was the noise of a downfall and then a terrific crash. Millicent and her grandfather ran upstairs, and the entire company streamed after them.

In the middle of the best bedroom stood Miss Appleby, calmly untying the necks of the two great bottles from the string that fastened them to her waist. The main part of them lay on the floor, shivered into fragments on the smoking ruins of Millicent's lace dress and one bed-curtain, hastily wrenched down.

"It takes me to smell smoke," she said, nodding sagely at the horrified people crowding into the door. "I mortally fear fire an' always go to big assemblages with my two hand-grenades somewhere about me; that is, ever since I was burnt out o' house and home three year ago. It must 'a' been a candle left burnin', an' it toppled over somehow. La, it's out now! Don't look so white, Mis' Satterlee. Half a bed-curtain an' a grimcrack dress ain't much to lose! an' that's really all that happened."

Millicent's sorrow over her dress, half-nonsense, half-earnest, made every one laugh, and under cover of this laughter Aunt Huldah thanked Miss Appleby with heartfelt earnestness.

It now was easy for the sly, queer old lady to get acquainted with the company. As Uncle Job took her to supper on his arm, she was happier than she had been for many a long day. Hearty invitations to two quilting parties and a husking frolic were accepted with a pleasure which admitted no remembrance of former neglect. She danced in the Virginia reel, and finally went home serenely happy on Uncle Job's arm, with the memory of kind words and the girls' warm kisses to cheer her solitary hours.

When the last guest had departed Millicent and Hetty slipped into the parlor. Their grandmother was surveying the giraffe with dubious admiration on her face.

"What do you think of it, grandma?" asked Hetty.

"I think," said grandma, seriously, "that it's a terrible-lookin' beast an' no mistake; but it's goin' to stay right here in this parlor for a reminder—you girls needn't ask jest what—of your grand-father's wisdom. My Job has a head an' an' a heart to match each other, an' that's an uncommon thing nowadays."

The giraffe was induced to stand upright on a little table in a corner, and now when Miss Appleby, who is a welcome visitor, runs over to Aunt Huldah's to spend the afternoon, she always takes a sly peep into the parlor to gaze reverently at that artistic creation of her fertile brain which has come to such high honor. She secretly thinks that it is the most beautiful ornament in the house.—Youth's Companion.

Execution Methods in China.

The Soo-Chow correspondent of the North China Herald, reporting recently the execution of eleven pirates in that city, refers to the manner in which executions in China are fixed. In other countries the criminal knows beforehand the day of his death, and has time to prepare for his fate. But in China all is different. At Pekin the vermilion pencil marks the death warrant, which is immediately handed to a courier, who instantly mounts a horse and rides off to his destination. The post supplies fresh horses, and he goes onward, sleeping and eating in his saddle, never halting by day or night, in sunshine or rain. After riding 700 miles he reaches Soo-Chow and delivers the warrant to the Governor. Three messengers are instantly dispatched, one to the district magistrate, who presides at the execution and who repairs at once to the place, a second to the camp for an escort and the third to the jail. The victims are bound, dragged before the image of the lord of hades, which is in the prison, and pay their respects. They are then placed in cages, carried on coolies' backs, and at a rough trot the cortege sets out for the execution ground. The nerve and blade of one executioner is never trusted in Soo-Chow to take off more than three or four heads. If there is a greater number of criminals assistants are employed. There are generally from fifty to one hundred executions per annum in Soo-Chow, where all the criminals of Kiang-Soo, with a population of 21,000,000, are executed. They are mostly pirates.

The number of horses in European Russia is 21,000,000. The Russian Government devotes annually \$80,000 to the purchase of stallions, and so widespread has been the interest of late years in improving this stock that races, trotting matches and shows have been largely increased all over the country.

HORSE ABATTOIRS.

THE USE OF HORSEFLESH FOR FOOD IN PARIS.

Only Aged and Worn-out Animals are Slaughtered—How the Horses are Killed—The Flesh Rather Tough and Repulsive.

Frenchmen are too economic to throw away anything, and when horses become used up with work what remains of them is killed and eaten. There were 15,000 horses and 300 asses eaten in Paris last year. There are four special abattoirs for slaughtering them, and horseflesh is eaten in all forms. Strangers, however, will have some difficulty in obtaining a horse steak for the asking, although it is often palmed off on them under another name. It is deftly concealed in beef a la mode, or is used in making soups and stews. A visit to one of the horse abattoirs in Paris is not calculated to make one a confirmed hippophagist, or horseflesh eater. The writer visited one of the largest of these slaughter houses early one morning, and saw the sort of animals that are thought fit for human food in Paris. This abattoir is in the south of Paris in the Boulevard de l'Hospital, not many yards from the famous Manufacture des Gobelins. There were forty horses waiting to be slaughtered. They were decrepit old invalids, lame, spavined, diseased and fleshless old hacks, suffering all the infirmities which afflict the equine race. When a horse becomes useless for everything else he is taken to these abattoirs and killed, unless he dies on the way. Some of those in the stables were so rickety that they could not stand up. There were several asses among the stock. When alive the ass is characterized by great endurance and phenomenal toughness, and it preserves those qualities when dead.

The butchers did not spare the horses' feelings, and that they still had feelings was evident from the way the poor brutes trembled when brought forth to await their fate. Before a horse was killed his shoes were knocked off, his mane and tail clipped, and while these preliminaries were being performed he was allowed to stand and see others being knocked down. He appeared to understand what was going on and what was awaiting him.

A blind was placed over the animal's eyes, and a sharp pointed hammer driven into its skull a little above the eyes. A horse is easier killed than an ox. After the skin was removed what remained was to all appearance a mass of bones. But they were carted away all the same by the butchers and sold to the poor people and the cheap restaurants. It was during the siege of Paris that the French people became habituated to the use of horseflesh. Before the imprisoned Parisians were reduced to eating dogs, cats and rats, horseflesh was the staple article of food for many weeks. The consumption of horseflesh, however, had been authorized several years before the war. The first horse abattoir was opened in Paris in 1865, and a restaurant, where nothing but dishes made from horse flesh was served, was established in the Latin Quarter in 1866. The siege popularized the food, and ever since then the quantity consumed has increased every year.

French soldiers kill and eat their wounded horses. When Napoleon's army was retreating from Moscow amid the snows of Russia the only food of the soldiers was horseflesh. During the Crimean war, when the commissariat of the French and English troops was in a bad way, the French soldiers lived sumptuously on horseflesh, the English were almost dying of starvation. The French also fed their horseflesh in the Franco-German war.

From a point of view there is no reason why horseflesh should not be eaten by man. Its wholesomeness depends on the condition of the horse, and horses are not usually raised for the shambles. Before the consumption of horseflesh was authorized in France, a number of scientific men held a series of conferences and banquets to demonstrate that the horse was good for food. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire declared that it was absurd for the French people to lose millions of pounds of good meat every year, when thousands of poor people were in want of food. M. de Quatre-fages tried to prove that horseflesh was superior to beef. The fibre was much finer he said. These scientific gentlemen, in order to show that they were not afraid of a piece of horse themselves, held a hippophagist banquet, at which the menu consisted of horse soup, horse sausage, boiled horse meat, roast and ragout, and salad dressed with horse fat.

A young horse which has not been worn out with work may be good to eat, but, except one now and then that is accidentally wounded and rendered unfit for work all the horses slaughtered in Paris are old hacks. Unless the smell of the flesh is deftly concealed or changed by the cook, horseflesh is somewhat repulsive, and soup made of it has an oily appearance. But the natural repugnance which people have for horseflesh arises more from inherited ideas than anything else. In Pagan times the horse was a sacred animal, just as the cow is among Hindus to-day. Hares used to be considered unfit for human food, and are still in some parts of Russia. Religion prevents the Jews, Turks, and Arabs from eating pork.

Horseflesh is eaten openly in Berlin and Vienna, but not to the same extent as in Paris. A Frenchman opened a store for the sale of horse meat in London a few years ago, but it wasn't a success. Many thousand horses are killed for cats' meat in London every year, and in poor districts it is sold in place of beef. There is no law against the consumption of horseflesh, if sold as such, but every now and then some butcher is prosecuted for selling horseflesh as beef.—New York Sun.

Axtell, the \$105,000 Colt.

Since the great Dexter excitement of more than twenty years ago, no event has occurred in the horse-world which has created so much interest as the achievements and sale of the young stallion Axtell. In fact, the latter event so far surpassed the former that a comparison of the two forcibly illustrates the great advance of the American road-horse during the period of a little more than twenty years. When Dexter made his record of a mile in 2:17½, he was of mature age, and at the summit of his powers. Yet this speed was so far in advance of previous performances that the gelding was sold soon after for \$33,000. In the more recent event Axtell is only three years old, yet he goes a mile in 2:12, and is sold for a price nearly three and a quarter times greater than was paid for Dexter.

The history of Axtell is as brief as sensational. He was foaled in 1886, bred, raised, trained, and driven by Charles H. Williams, a young man, of Independence, Iowa. His first victory was at Keokuk, Iowa, August 9, 1889, where he won in three straight heats, in 2:50½, 2:41½, and 2:31½. As it was a race for three-year-olds, he was protested, and the protest sustained. But this, though it deprived his owner of the immediate results of the victory, made it the more remarkable. During the same year the colt was trotted at Chicago, Minneapolis, Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Lexington, Ky., retiring with the unexampled record, for a two-year-old, of 2:23.

On the opening of the season of 1889, Axtell was an object of eager interest and great expectations which he has more than fulfilled. He began by winning a stallion race at Chicago in 2:19, 2:14, and 2:20. This left him the champion of three-year-olds. He wore this honor but a few weeks, however, when the California filly Sunol trotted in 2:13½. But her triumph was short-lived, for at Indianapolis, October 11, Axtell trotted a mile in 2:12, beating his own time by two seconds, the three-year-old record by one and three-quarter seconds, the stallion record by one and one-quarter seconds, and making him the most famous horse in the world. Soon after the race Axtell was sold for \$105,000 to Col. J. W. Conley, of Chicago, who represented a syndicate, which included Col. Conley, W. P. Ijams, of Terre Haute, A. E. Brush, and F. T. Moran, both of Detroit.

Axtell represents a large proportion of Mambrino blood, combined with that of George Wilkes, Rysdyk's Hambletonian, Seeley's American Star, and Clay, upon a thoroughbred foundation.—American Agriculturist.

A Printer's Bull.

Jack Roberts, one of the white-haired veterans who patrol Park Row each day, was "subbing" on the World where the style reads: "All time to go in figures." Jack saw a chance for a fight when, after a trip to the hook, he found it "panned out" a take of poetry, which contained the line: "Meet me in the lane, love, at half-past nine." He set it up: "Meet me in the lane, love, at 9:30 p. m." Yes, there was a fight. The foreman decided that the line didn't rhyme with its mate in the couplet, and also, that Jack didn't rhyme with his idea of employes.—The Journalist.

FUN.

The pig who gets into clover thinks the sward is mightier than the pen.

Fowls cannot be classed as gourmands, if they do eat by the peck.—Pittsburg Chronicle.

A rooster doesn't vary his drinks. Wherever he goes he takes a cocktail.—Binghamton Republican.

"Single or otherwise?" asked the census taker. "Both." "Oh, come now, madam, you can't be both." "Yes, I can. I'm a twin."—New York Sun.

Ethel—"Would you mind sitting on my hat, pa?" Father—"What under the sun do you wish me to sit on your hat for?" "I want to see if I can't invent a new style."—Time.

"Is that dog of yours dead?" asked the tramp. "Yes." "Then I will take some of that sausage. Revenge is sweet. Last year he bit me. This year—ah!"—Munsey's Weekly.

"Ha!" whinnied the horse, "we ought to be able to get out even though the stable-door is locked. We have a key here." "What kind of one?" brayed an ass in the next stall. "Why, a donkey?"—Judge.

"Dear me! Dear me!" said Miss Bostonbred, laying down the paper she had been reading with a shocked expression. "Here is a long and harrowing account of a party of cannibals who killed and ate several American missionaries! How very, very rude and uncultured those cannibals must be!"

A Baltimore anarchist says he has invented a sort of percussion cap, no larger than a three cent piece, which, when filled with the new explosive extralite and scattered on the sidewalk, will blow up every man who treads on one. It has never occurred to any anarchist to invent a new kind of working tool or to manufacture a new brand of soap.—Detroit Free Press.

Mr. Slowboy (delighted)—"Under certain circumstances, you say, Miss Keemoit, you wouldn't object to marrying me. Thank you so much. Now, will you tell me what those circumstances are?" Miss Keemoit (slowly)—"Well, you see, Mr. Slowboy, I would be perfectly willing to marry you if—if—if you were the very last of your sex."—Philadelphia Inquirer.

The Author of "Home, Sweet Home."

John Howard Payne, author of "Home, Sweet Home," was born in New York, June 6, 1792; died in Tunis, April 10, 1852. He was very precocious, and when only thirteen years old edited the Theopian Mirror, and two years later started a paper called the Pastime, of which only twenty-five numbers were published. On the 26th of February, 1809, he made his first appearance on the stage as Norval at the old Park Theatre, New York. Afterward he made a tour of the chief American cities. In 1812 he went to London, where he played for several years, and wrote and adapted many plays. For the drama called "Clari, or the Maid of Milan," he wrote the song of "Home, Sweet Home," upon which his fame chiefly rests. His tragedy of "Brutus" was brought out at Drury Lane in 1818. He also wrote "Virginian" and "Charles I.," which were also produced in London. He became the friend and correspondent of Lamb and Coleridge. In 1832 he returned to the United States, and after ten years of a life of vicissitudes, he was appointed United States Consul at Tunis by President Tyler. He served until 1845, when he was recalled, but in 1851 President Fillmore reappointed him to the same position, in which he died.—No Name Magazine.

Cinchona Trees in America.

Adolph Sutor is trying the experiment of raising cinchona trees at his grounds above the Cliff House. It is from the bark of about a dozen varieties of this tree that quinine is extracted, and if they will thrive in this climate the trees will become very valuable.

Moreover, the cinchona is a very showy tree and highly ornamental, some of them growing to a height of eighty feet. The enormous medicinal consumption of the bark of the cinchona has caused the tree to be extensively cultivated in India and Java. It grows in high altitudes in New Grenada, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, where there is a great deal of moisture. It has been tried with success in Australia, near the seacoast, and Mr. Sutor thinks some of the varieties will grow here, where there is a moisture in the atmosphere all the year round.—San Francisco Examiner.