

DUST.

I stood within an old, deserted room  
Long given over to the spider's play,  
And watched the busy insect at his loom  
While dropped the sun behind the hills away.

Brown dust lay scattered on the mold-  
ing floor—  
Dust filled each nook in that drear,  
silent place—  
And as I gazed, a million fragments  
more  
Fell noiselessly through scarce re-  
sisting space.

Long time I stood in meditation deep—  
Then asked my soul: "What are the  
grains of dust  
That in the confines of this chamber  
sleep  
Eternally, mid draperies of dust?"

My soul made answer: "This deserted  
room  
O'er which the dying crimson sunlight  
plays  
Is thy past life. The dust motes in its  
loam  
Are but the ghosts of fruitless yester-  
days."  
W. F. Kirk, in Milwaukee Sentinel.

# "PUSSUM."

An Amusing Story of a Stray Cat Who Walked Up a Screen-Door and Into the Hearts of the Family Within.

By ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE.

He came to us in his early life, during the first summer of our suburban residence. He was not an ostentatious cat, but a bedrabbled and bleary-eyed shred of gray that sat guarding our milk bottles one morning when I opened the back door. Indeed, I have seldom seen a more forlorn specimen than was our stately "Pussum" at this the moment of our introduction.

Perhaps he was a prodigal that had traveled far, wasting his substance in riotous living. At least he was very foot-sore, and had no substance left that seemed of any value to respectable people. A vagabond and a tramp, depending on charity and odd jobs to help him on his way, he was doubtless guarding our milk supply with the hope of some slight reward. We didn't need his protection, but from the depths of my heart and one of the bottles a modest salvage was granted. I put some milk in a pan, and he drank it greedily, without thanks. I did not invite him in. We had no cat as yet, but we had one planned, and it was not of this design. I hoped that when filled he would fare onward to lay protection and tribute on other milk-bottles than ours.

I forgot him presently, and was rather surprised when somewhat later I heard the "little woman" announce that there was a kitten clinging to the screen door, and crying to come in. I went out to investigate, and found him half way up the screen. Not being able to get through the wire, he had climbed it.

"It is unnecessary to come in," I said. "You can thank me from where you stand, or sit, or whatever you call it. I appreciate your desire, now that the pangs of hunger are allayed, to make due acknowledgment; but time is precious, and you should be on your way. There are other milk-bottles to be saved. The future is full of them. Besides, it is pleasanter without, and we have no servant within. We are barely settled. We could not entertain you properly, even if we could. Go your way. Get off our screen door, and hence! Rapidly!"

He refused to hence. With food he had acquired vigor, and a voice strong for his size.

"Perhaps," I said, "he wishes more food."

I pushed open the screen, and begged him to descend. This was impossible—he had not planned for retreat. His tendency was to climb higher. I was not eager to touch him, but there seemed no alternative. I detached him from the wire, and placed him before the pan. Again he ate. Again, filled with the milk of human kindness, he climbed up to vociferate his thanks and his intentions of abiding with us always.

I tried to shake him off—it was no use. I unhooked him repeatedly, and replaced him in remote corners of the property. He could beat me back to the screen door, even allowing me as much as ten yards start. We repeated this race, until finally, I beat him. He was fully five steps behind when I got my hand on the knob, and he was coming with headway. I was rather warm now, and slightly annoyed by his overweening desire to become our guest. With my hand still on the knob, I awaited him grimly. I did not kick him. I would scorn to kick a cat, especially such a cat. I simply lifted him with my foot, and planted him in our experiment garden. He described an arc, and disappeared among the tomato vines. Flung wide the door, I rushed in, unwilling to investigate the result of my violence. A sound from behind caused me to start and turn. He was half-way up the screen, and going higher.

I opened the portal gently. "Come in, little stranger," I said. And thus it was the prodigal became a part of our household.

As the days passed, the stranger grew strong and named. Not being pure Maltese, I named him at first "Maltine;" but this title somehow seemed frivolous, and favored of advertising, whereas "Pussum" came trippingly from the tongue, and expressed more affectionately the deep regard and admiration which he presently awakened in us all. Whatever may have been his past, it was left behind with his bleary eyes and his emaciated tail. Both were fine and expressive within the month, and daily he grew in grace and noble self-respect. None knew him but to love him, and the occasional mouse, which I caught for him in a trap, was a slight token awarded in appreciation of his sterling qualities and unflinching appetite.

I have never seen a cat display more eagerness for mice. For as much as half a day, sometimes, he would watch the empty trap, doubtless recalling joys already tasted and those still to come. For me to begin setting it was the sig-

building a new addition to our house, and in our gardening, we were too busy to take more than a passing interest in "Pussum's" affairs.

On the whole, it seemed to be a rather hard summer for "Pussum." His favorite corners were disordered; his favorite cushions tumbled and upset. Less than this has driven more than one bachelor to domesticity, and perhaps, after all, we were to blame.

When the house was settled at last, he returned much as usual, and presently fell into disfavor, through a persistence in occupying a newly and blueily upholstered chair, which we were trying to keep handsome and free from hairs. Repeated eviction, and dire threats were of no avail. "Pussum" slept in the chair whenever it stood upright, and protested when it was made uninhabitable with a book, or when its angle made rest a matter of discomfort and peril.

It was this later unkindness on our part that resulted in disaster to the chair and in deep disgrace on the part of "Pussum." I suppose I tipped the chair a little too suddenly, and "Pussum" being dreaming, perhaps thought he was falling over a precipice. At all events, he clawed and clung desperately, with the result that there were two long slits in the blue fabric, that were as wounds in our hearts. When he was finally captured and banished I said that this was the end. At sunrise, he should die. It was simply a question whether I would dig my little feline brother to a tree and use him for target-practice, or take him down cellar and quietly remove his head with my new saw. On the whole, I preferred the saw, but the "precious ones" became violent at mention of either method. They were for overlooking the whole matter, and declared that nothing should harm a hair of their "darling cat." Still I was unforgiving, and the next forenoon—which was sunny and Sunday—when I saw him blinking at me from the steps, which I filled some vases from the marigold patch. I was indifferent and cool in my manner toward him. Presently something was rubbing against my leg, and purring. I was surprised at this—it was not "Pussum's" way. Neither was it "Pussum" for when I looked down I saw it was the slender, and hitherto wild, black-and-white cat from the vacant cellar next door.

"Well," I said, "what does this mean? What do you want?"

The black-and-white cat looked up pleadingly, and continued to purr and purr.

"No, go away," I growled; "we do not want you. We've got one cat too many now."

The black-and-white cat looked up. "That's just what I want to talk about," she purred. "Our poor 'Pussum'."

"Oh, our poor 'Pussum'! Um-well, never mind our poor 'Pussum.' He's in disgrace. He's torn my beautiful new chair with his claws!"

"Yes," assented the black-and-white cat, thoughtfully. "I know. But do you always like to be pushed out of your favorite seat? And don't you sometimes have accidents, too?"

"What has that to do with it? 'Pussum' is a cat. We gave him a good home—he should appreciate it. He was a stray cat, and we took him in."

"I—I am a stray, too," murmured the black-and-white cat.

"Well, what of it? What has that to do with 'Pussum'?"

"I know how much he must appreciate his nice home," the black-and-white cat purred, softly. "I know he does, too, for he has told me about it, and of how good you are to him. I hope you will forgive him."

"Oh, well," I said, "I suppose we must. Go away now, and don't bother me."

The black-and-white cat nestled closer. "One thing more," she said. "Do you know that I—I'm 'Pussum's' comfort, his companion in grief and sorrow, and that I have no friends or home?"

What was the use? After that the black-and-white cat took up residence in "Pussum's" cellar, and ate out of "Pussum's" pan.

Their family came along in time to brighten the dull winter days. There were three of them, and the resemblance was quite strong on both sides. I have never seen a prouder mother than the black-and-white cat. As for "Pussum," his interest was one of curiosity rather than of paternal solicitude. He removed his quarters to a distant part of the cellar, perhaps so that he might enjoy a night's rest. When I brought him to the box of excelsior, and dropped him down among his family, he seemed disturbed, and the lavish endearments of the black-and-white cat, who put her face to his and purred and murmured and caressed him, only caused him to draw away with mingled embarrassment and indifference.—Women's Home Companion.

The English Way.

An Englishman who, has made his fortune in America says: "You do not seem to appreciate the method of the English courts over here in America. The United States is alive with ticket-of-leave men from the Mother country, and most of them are doing well. And there is another class that come here and often succeed. I refer to the worthless chaps who become nuisances in their own home places. They are haled to court, and being found penniless are thus advised by the judge: 'You cannot pay a fine. You cannot pay costs. The jails are overflowing. The court will give you ten days to leave England and start life anew in a country where you are unknown.' Where do those fellows land? In America, of course."—New York Press.

The mercantile fleet of Japan ranks seventh in the world's shipping.

COURTLY MANNERS OF OLD.

Gracious Bearing of Older Days Crowded Out by Hurried Life of To-Day.

You often hear the expression "a fine old gentleman" or lady of the ancient school"—meaning thereby a stately courtesy and dignified though kindly bearing, which were common in great-grandmother's days, but which are too often lost sight of in our own, says the Lancaster (Pa.) Examiner and Express.

The hurry of business has invaded social circles and has been accompanied by a brusqueness of manner that entirely disregards the feelings of others. For wit we have substituted rudeness, which has nothing in common with wit except the element of the unexpected. We make a conflict of all our social intercourse, and are more anxious to say or do something that will hurt one's feelings or cover one with embarrassment than to say a pleasant thing that has not enough point to it to excite remark or win applause.

The success of a witticism is so instantaneous, it is so spontaneous and unaccounted, that it is demoralizing, feeding our vanity and stimulating our invention without informing our judgment. Other labors as good must wait for recognition, but wit, however light—or heavy—has its immediate reward. In the days of our grandmothers they took life more leisurely, more easily, and were not in a hurry even for the laugh. They dwelt more on the pleasant things of life, studied more the pleasure and comfort of their kinsfolk and acquaintances, and this mere practice of a virtue as the fashion of the day shed abroad in the heart a kindness and a grace for which we have nothing in modern times to correspond. One has only to meet for a moment one of these old ladies to note the serenity, the thoughtful consideration, the almost formal respect, not for the feelings alone, but for the mere opinions of every one present. It is well to have a grandmother in the house, if for no other purpose than to teach the young how to behave toward one another; to show them by precept and example the worthlessness of any pleasure purchased at the cost of pain to others. The best teacher a man ever had was his old-fashioned grandmother.

There is no doubt that the "new riches," which sprang up since the Civil War, have vulgarized manners by ignorant display. Money can never make a gentleman. The latter is the product of blood, inheritance and education. The old-time courteous, brave, foolishly extravagant and altogether too passionate planter of the old regime lives only in fiction. The Knickerbocker of New York is squeezed out by the imposing, massive frontage and ostentatious liveries of the new 400. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' "Brahmin" class in New England is extinct. Truly, the "fine old Irish gentleman" in our days would be snowballed on the streets and laughed at in the ballroom. But if riches are often vulgar they are generous. Never before have we spent so much on education, higher and lower, or given more to increase the true and beautiful in art or "sweetness and light" in literature and science.

The Illusion of Being Busy.

A ridiculous notion is common that we live in a time when there are more important world affairs on hand than has ever been known before; and there are silly people, both men and women, who expect to be admired for a useless expenditure of their nervous and physical energies on all sorts of absolutely foolish objects into which no particle of intellect enters. Simply to be always busy, always occupied, always doing something, passing restlessly from one piece of work to another, to have their hands full, never to be idle, as they say, seems to be their ideal of life.

These precious muddlers, who plume themselves on never being idle, pass their time doing useless things under the pretext of being busy; and they assume credit for a purposeless activity. The biggest people, those who have really thought out their plan of life, do not make the mistake of doing what need not be done. They have time for everything because they do not imagine they must not. They are economizing time by occupying every few spare minutes in being necessarily busy.—Saturday Review.

Indian Blanket Made of 728 Elk Teeth.

The famous elk tooth robe that belonged to a daughter of Old Crow, a Cheyenne chief, has been purchased by the proprietors of the Thomas Tribune. Old Crow's household was loath to part with the relic that had been the pride of the Cheyenne and Sioux Indians for several generations. The 728 teeth represented 364 bull elk, as there are only two good teeth in the head of each animal.

When the robe changed hands Old Crow's entire family of about fifteen aborigines was present to see that the deal was pulled off according to the latest rules of commerce. When the money was handed over there was a grand rush for the "wohaw" (meat) market, and the "chuck" that was hauled to Old Crow's tepee that evening was sufficient to feed a company of soldiers. The Indian is a free spender. He believes in the admonition to "eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die."—Thomas (Okla.) Tribune.

Lessons For the Police.

Taking the London police as his model, the chief of the Zurich (Geneva) police means to make his men as good, if not better. In future the grandfines are to receive lessons from professors in civility and deportment. The lessons are to take place at the police stations, where those who are not on duty will be paraded before the professor of dancing and put through their steps and attitudes.

# Humor of Today

Devotion.

He paid her compliments, before,  
But now he pays her bills.  
Is 't just to say that marriage  
A man's devotion chills?—Puck.

Made It Warm For Him.

She—"And did her face light up?"  
Arthur—"In a way. Her eyes  
snapped fire and her cheeks burned  
with rage."

An Unheard-of Thing.

Janitor—"I'm going to make it hot for you."  
Tenant—"But isn't that contrary to all precedents?"—Town Topics.

Rich Americans.

"What makes you think they are such rich Americans?"  
"Because they know so much more about other countries than their own."

An Exception.

Belle—"Is it true that suburban firemen are always slow?"  
Eva—"No; I had one to propose to me in two days after first meeting."—Chicago News.

The Point of Similarity.

He—"Her complexion is just like strawberries and cream, isn't it?"  
She—"It is something like strawberries; it comes in a box."—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Doubt.

Mrs. Newrocks—"And we shall enter society?"  
Newrocks—"Well, I don't know. I've heard that sometimes you can't buy an admission ticket."—Puck.

Too Realistic.

Soubrette—"So you went out with a sea drama? I suppose there was a skipper in the play?"  
Comedian—"Yes, the manager skipped with our salaries."—Chicago News.



She Needs the Tim.

"What have you got your hat on for? The train doesn't start for two hours."  
"Don't worry, John, I may decide not to wear this one. Then I'll have to unpack my trunk and get out another one."—New York American.

Too Late.

Old Jilson—"One of my most trusted clerks got married."  
Mrs. Jilson—"I suppose you gave him a lot of good advice."  
Old Jilson—"No; he was married before I knew it—too late."—Cleveland Leader.

He Did.

"I should have thought the old man would have done something handsome by you when you married his daughter."  
"He did. He had her teeth fixed before we were married."—Cleveland Leader.

Last Choice.

Clare—"Was he nervous when he proposed?"  
Mae—"Not in the least."  
Clare—"He was when he proposed to me, but—oh, well, possibly he has had a lot of practice since then."—Cleveland Leader.

Laying a Foundation.

"What do you think about the war in Asia?"  
"My friend," answered the man who is slow but sure, "I haven't yet learned to spell and pronounce it. I haven't begun to think about it."—Washington Star.

A Terrible Struggle.

Mr. Huggard—"If you can't stop looking so sweet I'll kiss you."  
Miss Koy—"No, you won't."  
Mr. Huggard—"Why won't I?"  
Miss Koy—"You won't unless you can keep me from screaming, and—er—you know you can."—Philadelphia Press.

No Hurry.

Miss Sweetest to young man who has just proposed—"Indeed, Mr. Brisque, I was not expecting this. You embarrass me very much."  
"Mr. Brisque (looking at his watch)—"I will give you one minute, Miss Vera, to recover from your embarrassment."—Chicago Tribune.

Hard on Them.

"If these verses should be accepted," said Woody Riter, "I think I'll have them published anonymously."  
"Don't do it," said Crittick; "it isn't right."  
"No."  
"Just think of all the good fellows they might be blamed upon."—Philadelphia Press.

Please Call Again.

Slopay—"I'll have to ask you to excuse me to-day. I'm not well and besides you'll have to see my wife about this bill."  
Collector—"Oh! See here! You contracted this bill yourself and you should pay it yourself without—"  
Slopay—"But I tell you I'm not myself to-day."—Philadelphia Press.

# KEYSTONE STATE CULLINGS

THREE DIED FROM NEGLECT.

Father, Daughter and Child Found Dead in Cabin—Croatian Patterson Will Be Tried in May.

A cabin in lonely woods, near the State line, is the scene of the latest tragedy that has startled the residents of Wayne county. There, last Friday, William H. Hull was found dying alongside the unconscious form of his 14-year-old daughter, Mattie, and the dead body of a three-day-old infant. The discovery was made by neighbors whose suspicions had been aroused by the non-appearance for weeks of anybody from the lonesome house in the woods. A physician who afterward examined the three bodies declared that the man had died of pneumonia, and that the daughter and child had died of neglect. Investigation of the house failed to unearth a morsel of food and there is every indication that nothing in the way of provisions had been in the house for some days past.

One of the largest coal deals recently consummated in Washington county has been closed by C. E. and M. L. Hutchinson and Frank P. Jones of Wheeling. It is a \$1,000,000 transaction and means the establishment of a new coal mining town southwest of Washington, on the line of the Washab to Pittsburg. Thirty-five hundred acres have been purchased for over \$300 an acre and assurances have been received from the Washab railroad that it will supply all necessary shipping facilities by July.

At the hearing of the applicants for liquor license in Westmoreland county, Judge L. W. Doty intimated that the brewery agents who have been working in the county for years will have to go the agency and solicitor side of the brewery business having been profitable of a number of convictions for illegal liquor selling during the year. Judge Doty has determined that the responsibility for the unlawful sale of liquor will be placed where it properly belongs, on the principal and not upon the agent. Brewers will not be permitted to sell in prohibitory districts such as Derry and West Newton.

Fred Galbreath, aged 30 years, of Wampum, was arrested and charged with being implicated in the robbery of the Wampum station of the Pennsylvania railroad. An attempt to rob the Pittsburg & Lake Erie station at Wampum was frustrated by Acting Agent J. D. Robinson, who was awakened by hearing the burglars prying open a window.

The court at Washington made an order extending the May term of Criminal court one week, in order that the case of Milovay Patterson, the Croatian, charged with the killing of Contractor Samuel Ferguson, near West Middleton, may also be heard. There are three other homicide cases listed for the May term.

John Copen, employed in the Freeport mine of the Dunbar Furnace Company, was instantly killed by a fall of coal. Copen is said to have been violating the State mining law when he met his death. Preparatory to placing a blast he mined the full length of his body and the mass gave way.

After a month's shut down the Standard Steel Car works at Butler resumed operations in the punching, shearing and pressing departments. Four hundred men went to work. By next Monday the factory will be operating full turn with a force of 2,000 men. Large orders for cars have been received.

A joint committee from Washington and West Washington decided to recommend to the council of each borough that the two towns be consolidated. Councils will set a date for an election. With the addition of West Washington, Washington will have a population of more than 25,000.

A bloody duel with razors was fought by negroes in Main street, Irwin. For over two minutes the combatants thrust at each other desperately and they only desisted when their weapons became useless. Both men were covered with blood at the close of the encounter.

The postoffice at Goff was broken into and the safe blown open by safe-crackers who secured about \$25 in stamps and a small amount of money. The amount of dynamite used was so heavy that the building was partially wrecked.

Jacob Fry, Jr., convicted in 1902 of felonious assault and battery in Armstrong county, and who escaped from jail, was captured at Leechburg. Fry was supposed to have been killed in a railroad wreck.

Charles J. Kirk, president of the New Castle chamber of commerce, has received notice from Washington that work upon the erection of the \$125,000 Government building will be begun within 90 days.

The body of a padder, named Louis Sanks, was found in a pond near Petersburg. He is believed to have been murdered, as his body was badly cut and bruised. No arrests have been made.

Father Charles B. J. Kornapfel, pastor of the New Castle Independent Catholic Slav church, has brought suit for \$5,000 damages against John Lekyon, of his parish. The priest alleges slander.

The Pittsburg, Bessemer and Lake Erie railroad bridge, at Meadville, collapsed, precipitating five cars into French creek. None of the trainmen was hurt, but the property loss is heavy.

Philip D. Minor and Charles W. Ashcraft were elected first and second lieutenants, respectively, of Company C, Tenth regiment, N. G. P., of Uniontown.

Mrs. Anna Bryson, of Sharon, brought suit against William B. Doerr, charging cruelty to a dog. Doerr is the official dog catcher of the town.