

DOLICE FAR NIENTE.

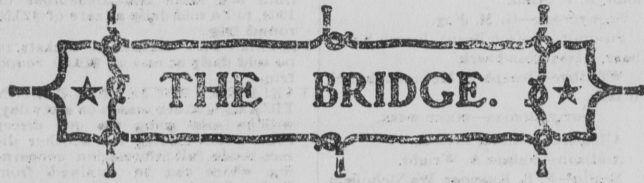
A little time of silence in the heat,
A little time of indolent delight,
A little slumber at her gentle feet,
Who brings enchantment and excess of light;
A little languid dreaming in the sun,
And, ah, how simply happiness is won!

Long have we toiled in dusty city ways,
To spare the flying form that will not turn
And bless us, all our bitter, strenuous days;
Long have we borne with hearts that throb and yearn,
The sting of sorrow, every human woe
Has stricken us, and yet we did not know.

We did not know what happy dreamers guess,
That only when the busy hands are still,
And thought contents itself in idleness,
Is she subservient to our grasping will.
Then, 'twixt a slumber and a sigh, man hears
The merry haunting music of the years.

A little time spent in with flow'rs and leaves,
A little space to watch the clouds go by,
Drifting in depths of blue, and sadness leaves
The heart as fresh and radiant as the sky;
And she who scorn'd us when we could but weep,
Visits our hearts when they are prone to sleep.

—Pall Mall Gazette.



MR. PONTIFF lived in a land of dreams—that beautiful isle of anywhere. Her lines were cast in places that admitted of an almost total exemption from the sordid affairs of domesticity. When, as it occasionally chanced, plain, practical Mr. Pontiff requested from her some service demanding action, the look of gentle, surprised reproach she turned upon him, made him feel that he was a thing of clay. Her eyes, like old folks' memories, excelled in sights at long range. With ears, eyes and thoughts for away she was a combination of amiability, absent-mindedness and visionary abstraction.

One morning Mr. Pontiff received a telegram from an en route sister.

"She will have to be met, Helen," he said, impressively.

"We will meet but we will miss her," murmured Sonny Pontiff.

"Her train arrives at 12.50, don't forget, Helen."

"She can remember that, because it'll be ten to one if she catches it," argued Sonny.

"I'll telephone up to you when it is time to start," said the head of the family, ignoring the interpellations of his offspring.

"It's such a beautiful day, I think I will walk to the station," said Mrs. Pontiff sweetly.

"I fear you will forget your destination," said her husband anxiously.

"Oh, Henry, I am not quite as bad as that," faintly protested Mrs. Pontiff. "You really exaggerate by failing."

"Helen," replied Mr. Pontiff earnestly, "I couldn't do that. When I recall the time you alighted from the street car and left little Sonny to take five round trips before you remembered his existence, I do not feel as if there was anything you could fasten in your memory."

Mrs. Pontiff sighed. "That was some years ago. There are times now when I wish I could forget Sonny for that length of time."

"Her forgetting me wasn't half so remarkable as her squandering eight cold dollars on a pair of slippers to wear to the charity ball and then forgetting to take off her rubbers," chimed in Sonny.

"Now, who is it, Helen, you are going to meet?" asked Mr. Pontiff warningly, as he started for the office.

"Your sister," she replied triumphantly.

"And what time does her train arrive?"

"One-ten," she said, hesitatingly, while Sonny laughed in his delight.

"Oh, Helen, 12.50," prompted Mr. Pontiff.

"Now, Sonny surely said one-ten."

"Never pay the slightest attention to what Sonny says."

"She had better this time, if she is going to walk to the station. Now, mother, don't try to swim across the river or look for a ferry. You know they tore up the bridge six months ago to build a new one, and people are using a little foot bridge."

"Why, I didn't know they were building a new bridge," exclaimed Mrs. Pontiff in surprise. "but then, I haven't been on the street in a year."

"Why, mother! It's the widest bridge in the United States!"

"How perfectly foolish to build the widest bridge in the country across the narrowest river in the world!"

"Well, then, don't you see," laughed Sonny, "that it is then the shortest bridge in the world, so it is as broad as it is long."

"You are getting into deep waters, Sonny," interposed Mr. Pontiff. "You remind me of a man who was President of a street car line that was only a mile long. He was posing at a national meeting of the Street Car Association as a magnate. He made a speech, and in one of his most impressive pauses some one sneered: 'Sit down! Your road's only a mile long.' 'True,' he said, 'true, my road is only a mile long, but it is just as wide as any road in the world.'"

"The day was one of those indescribable links between late spring and early summer. There were delightful promises in the air of coming beauties, and Mrs. Pontiff, as she made her way stationward, felt at peace with all mankind, even unto her coming sister-in-law.

She walked on in dreamy forgetfulness of all about her save the liquid sky, the soft air and the delicate

breeze until she came to the river. Must she cross on that single narrow beam extending from shore to shore? She looked helplessly about her. It was the noon hour and no one was in speaking distance save a solitary laborer on the opposite bank. She could never get her courage to walk that plank. Then she recalled what Sonny had said about people using this temporary foot bridge.

"I ought to be ashamed," she reasoned, "to be afraid to do what probably thousands of people do daily. I suppose every man, woman and child in Elkton have tripped across this river on this plank. I am always the last one in town to do anything."

Encouraged by these self-suggestions, she put one slender, unsteady foot on the beam. Then another tremulous step and she poised on the brink.

"Oh, I can't!" she wailed.

Then she remembered Henry's tales of how his pioneer mother, in her early days, went to a Western wilderness to live and used to cross Little Bear on strings.

Reinforced by this colorful recollection, she took a few steps. Then the effect of the stimulating reflections passed away and left her weak, helpless and scared dromedary, across the sluggish, mild stream, which now seemed to her a roaring cataract. "How could I have ever said it was the narrowest river in the world?" she thought.

She was now utterly paralyzed from terror and unable to take another step. There was only one thing she could do, and she did it strenuously. She screamed. The lone laborer working on the opposite side turned and saw her.

"Well, wouldn't that get you!" he ejaculated, and then called out:

"Hold on there! I'm a-comeing!" and he hastened toward her.

Never in the world had anything looked more beautiful to her than the sight of this stogy, red-faced, blue-overalled, black-pinked laborer approaching her with a step of ease and air of security. When he reached her he turned about.

"Put your arms around me," he said, "shut your eyes and hang on tight!"

She obeyed these instructions so implicitly that the laborer felt as if he had an electric rheumatic belt about his waist.

Mrs. Pontiff had always been conscious of an instinctive shrinking from the "common people," but she followed this plebeian coarse-garbed toiler blindly and willingly.

"Here we be!" he announced cheerfully, and Mrs. Pontiff opened her frightened eyes to find herself once more on the beloved terra firma. With a hysterical laugh she sank down on a pile of lumber.

"Say, was you doing it on a bet?" asked her rescuer, curiously.

"What!" she exclaimed, staring at him.

"Well, I heard Kit Dooligan and one or two women say how they were a-going to be the first to walk the plank, and the fellows about town have been giving them dars and pitting 'em on money on them, and I thought maybe you society folks was doing the same. You're a winner, though. The first but me to cross that ere plank."

Mrs. Pontiff shuddered. "What do you mean? Isn't that the bridge people use right along? How do they cross?"

It was his turn for a shock now.

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated. "Didn't you see that bridge over there?"

She followed his index finger. On the other side of the piers of the proposed bridge were terraced steps leading down to the water's edge, where was constructed a snug little bridge securely railed.

She was silent a moment. Then she turned to him.

"I was getting dizzy when you came to my help, and in another moment I should have fallen in and drowned. I wish you would take this; it's all I have with me," and she put a ten-dollar bill into his surprised hand.

"Yes," she said, in reply to his faint protestations, "it's little enough, and please never tell any one."

As she hurried on to the station, she thought:

"I wouldn't have Henry and Sonny know about it for the world!"

At the station she encountered her husband pacing the platform.

"Why, right on time!" he said in a

pleased, surprised tone. "I telephoned to the house, but you had left. I got another telegram from Carrie, and she can't come to-day."

Mrs. Pontiff made no response.

"I'll ride up home with you," he said, hailing a carriage.

When the cabman had closed the door, Mrs. Pontiff burst into tears.

"Why, Helen," remonstrated her husband, "you can't be disappointed at Carrie's non-appearance, or are those tears of relief?"

"Maybe she will come to-morrow," sobbed Mr. Pontiff.

"Well, never mind! Don't cross bridges until you come to them!"

At this injunction his wife, to his surprise, changed her tears to laughter.

"Helen's nature is even more delicate and sensitive than I thought," he reflected. "I must be more careful of her."

That evening Mr. Pontiff picked up the Evening Journal and Sonny did likewise the Herald. Then there issued from each an exclamation of surprise.

"With dread forebodings, Mrs. Pontiff hastened to look over her lord and master's shoulder.

Then she fell into his arms more terrified than she had been during her trial on the river. For in startling headlines she caught the words:

"She stood on the bridge. A plucky woman! Mrs. Pontiff the first person to cross the first plank of the new bridge!"

"What does it mean, Helen?" he gasped.

Between her sobs and laughs she related her experience.

"It's all my fault, Helen," he said soothingly. "I shall take better care of you after this."

"You had more grit than Kit," exclaimed Sonny.

When Mr. Pontiff had succeeded in quieting his wife, he took Sonny one side and threatened him with punishment dire if he ever by look, thought or deed alluded to the matter to his mother or to any one.

There were times when Sonny sorely longed to sing "There's One More River to Cross," but he forebore—Belle Maniates, in the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Three Scotch Stories.

A shoemaker came to the minister asking his advice because "that sweep, his landon, had given him notice to quit and he would have nowhere to lay his head." The minister could only advise him to lay his case before the Lord. A week later the minister returned and found the shoemaker busy and merry. "That was grand advice ye gied me, minister," said the man. "I laid my case before the Lord, and ye tellt me, an' noo the sweep's deid."

At a funeral in Glasgow a stranger, who had taken his seat in one of the mourning coaches, excited the curiosity of one of the other three occupants, one of whom at last addressed him: "Ye'll be a brither o' the corp?" "No, I'm not a brither o' the corp," was the prompt reply. "Weel, then, ye'll be his cousin?" "No, I'm not that." "No, then ye'll be at least a frien' o' the corp?" "Not that either. To tell the truth, I've not been weel myself," and as his doctor has ordered me some carriage exercise, I thocht this wad be the cheapest way to tak' it."

A clergyman was rebuked by one of the ruling elders for sauntering on the Sunday along the hillside above the manse. The clergyman took the rebuke in good part, but tried to show the remonstrant that the action of which he complained was innocent and lawful, and he was about to cite the famous example of a Sabbath walk, with the plucking of the ears of corn, as set forth in the Gospels, when he was interrupted with the remark, "Ou ay, sir, I ken weel what you mean to say, 'bit for my pairt I hae nefer thocht the better o' them for breakin' the Sabbath.'"—Gleikie's "Scottish Reminiscences."

Paper From Rags.

It is not a pleasant thought that the brilliant white paper which your hand rests upon may have in it the fibers from the filthy garment of some Egyptian fellah after it has passed through all the stages of decay until it is saved by a ragpicker from the gutter of an Egyptian town; and yet it is a fact that hundreds of tons of Egyptian rags are exported every year into America to supply our paper mills. At Mannheim on the Rhine the American importers have their ragpicking houses where the rags are collected from all over Europe, the disease infected Levant not excepted, and where women and children, too poor to earn a better living, work day after day, with wet sponges tied over their mouths, sorting these filthy scraps for shipment to New York. Our best papers are made of these rags and our common ones of wood pulp, which is obtained by grinding and macerating huge blocks from some of our soft-wooded forest trees.—David G. Fairchild, in the National Geographic Magazine.

Their Only Shell Fish.

Ex-Justice Julius Mayer is a great lover of things that come out of the sea, and while in Chicago, Ill., attending the Republican convention, he sought to indulge his taste in a well-known restaurant. He ordered little-neck clams, and the colored waiter informed him that they were out of them. The Judge thought that, in the absence of clams, a broiled lobster might do; but the lobster, likewise, were out. Soft-shelled crabs were his next choice, but the waiter regretfully informed him that the crabs were also among the absent. "Then why do you keep these things on the bill? Have you any shellfish at all?" the Judge demanded. "Only eggs, sah," replied the waiter.

HISTORY OF THE SWORD IS HISTORY OF MANKIND

From the Washington Post.

COL. PAUL BECKWITH'S history of the sword, which was read before the Anthropological Society at one of its recent meetings, has struck a popular chord in the minds of fenceurs in the city, and while strictly technical in treatment, has yet been a theme of conversation among the young swordsmen. It has lent that now fashionable weapon a new meaning for with the dryer history of this, the earliest weapon of mankind, Col. Beckwith has deftly interwoven a lot of romance gathered from history.

In his talk, Col. Beckwith said that to learn the history of the sword, one must study the history of man, for it is the oldest, has been the most universal, and the only weapon that has lived from the earliest period of man to the present time, and is as popular now, in the day of many weapons, as in the past, when it stood alone as man's only artificial means of defense.

"We read of the sword of God, or holy sword, the sword of the Lord of Gideon," said Col. Beckwith, "it was the favorite weapon of the gods and demi-gods; a gift of magic sent down from heaven. By the ancients the sword was consecrated to the deities, and stood in the temples and churches. To it was attributed superhuman powers; it was an object of affection, and its loss mourned as the passing of near kindred. In ancient times, as in the battles of to-day, to surrender the sword means submission; to break it disgrace. It was the symbol of justice, as well as martyrdom and alike accompanied its owner to the feast and to the grave. The sword raised the northern races upon the ruins of important savagery and has carried in her wake the progress of art and science."

"Oaths were taken upon the sword, the point being thrust into the ground; the hilt was cruciform and, therefore, sacred. The oath was always taken with the hand resting upon the hilt. Among the pagan Germans the blade of the sword was considered sacred. According to Amianus Marcellinus, the Quadi, like the pagan Saxons, took oath upon a drawn sword. Even in the Middle Ages, the sword instead of the cross, was used in administering the oath, while the free jurors in the sacred tribunals of Westphalia took their oaths with their hands resting upon the broad sword. In Holstein this mode of swearing was practiced to a later period than in any other country."

MEANT FREEDOM.

In the olden times the presentation of a sword to a slave was to give him freedom. Until late in the seventeenth century members of Parliament wore the sword at their sittings as a sign of their political and judicial authority. When a Goth wished to adopt a son he handed a sword to the object of his desire, and it was in this manner that Theodoric adopted the King of Heruli as his son.

"With the English, in the first days of their monarchy, the sword was used as the symbol of dominion. The kings who preceded Henry III. are represented on their great seals bearing the sword in the right hand instead of the scepter. Lands and dominions were transferred by means of the sword of Germany under the reign of Frederick I. It was also the custom of Germany for the ancient counts never to attend court without this weapon. When a free court was to be invested with authority over life and death he was given a sword and a rope. Until a quite recent date the Hidalgo de España y Horen, or the noble of the sword and gibbet in Spain superintended their penal jurisdiction over their estates.

"Even in the nuptials of past generations the sword was employed symbolically. In a Frisian bridal party one young man led the procession, carrying in his hand a drawn sword, which was supposed to be emblematic of the authority the husband had over the life of his wife. By some ancient peoples the drawn sword was used at marriages by proxy. It was placed in the thalamus, between the bride and the representatives of the bridegroom. This custom was still in vogue in the fifteenth century, when the Duke and subsequently Emperor Maximilian was married by proxy to Mary of Burgundy.

"When the sword and a pair of scissors, according to Gregory of Tours, was sent to the Queen by the King Childbert and Lothaire, it was meant for her to choose the fate of her sons, whether they should be put to death, or deprived of their hair, or enter a convent.

ARMOR PLATED BANKS.

Mode of Protecting the Valuables in Wyoming's Depositories.

The First National Bank of Lander is a little steel fortress. The counter is faced with solid metal, and the teller does business from within a coming tower. When you go into the bank you cannot see anyone, and it is so arranged that a band of hold-ups could be riddled from front and flank. One of the worst bandits that ever disturbed Wyoming bankers used to be a small ranchman. A big cattle outfit had a mortgage on his herd. They claimed his cattle were irregularly obtained, and on a round-up they "voided his brand"; that is, put a mark through it, to indicate that it no longer represented ownership. Then there was trouble about a horse. Discrepancies of brand are the beginning of danger out there, and this man served three years. When he came out he robbed a good many banks in broad daylight, at the point of a pistol. Yet for some reason half the sheriffs and most of the people were his friends. As one cowboy said to me, "The same owners are the ones that used to pay five dollars for every maverick we could get under their branding irons. They taught us how to steal, and then presented every man who did any of it on his own account." Anyways they never got this particular bandit again, and the banks of the West are acquiring the armorplate habit.

Beyond Lander the road runs for seventy miles across the Shoshone Indian reservation. Sixteen miles from Lander is Fort Washakie, where there are troops, and the agency and the post-trader's store, and Indian teepees with stoves in them. Where sagebrush is the principal firewood a stove is a good thing.—From "In the Big Dry Country," by Frederic Island, in Scribner's.

London's Great Thirst.

The quantity of water used in the 968,620 houses supplied by the metropolitan water companies in 1903 reached the immense total of 77,133,114.770 gallons, says the London Express.

It is estimated that the population inhabiting these houses numbered 6,509,817.

The average daily supply of water during the year amounted to 254 gallons per house and thirty-four gallons for each person.

July was the month when most water was used, the consumption reaching thirty-nine gallons per head. In December, however, it fell to thirty-two gallons, this being the month when least water was used.

Music That Draws Everybody.

That the music called classical often falls while the old familiar melodies never lose their power to charm, was demonstrated recently in front of the Metropolitan Opera House. The orchestra rehearsal room is at the thirty-ninth street corner of the Broadway front, and from its opened windows came the sounds of snatches of harmonies that never once took the form of what might be called a tune. The rehearsal went on for an hour, but none of the passersby stopped for a moment to listen.

Suddenly the orchestra struck into "Auld Lang Syne" and Broadway came to a halt. As long as the well known air lasted, so long did every one pause to listen, until there were a couple of hundred persons standing on the opposite side of the street, gazing up at tall windows out of which the music was coming. It came to an end with a fortissimo flourish, the classical music was resumed, and then the crowd moved on.

"There," said a man who had been looking on, "you have an illustration of the principle that the appeal to the heart, whether it be in music, literature or any of the other arts, is always much more the surer than the appeal to the heads."—New York Press.

Senator Dubois' Presence of Mind.

Senator Dubois, of Idaho, during the days when he was practicing law in Boise City, was on a certain occasion sternly reprimanded by the Judge of a court in that city because of alleged contempt of court, and in addition was fined in the sum of \$50.

The next day, according to the custom followed in the Idaho courts, the Judge called upon Mr. Dubois to occupy the bench for him during the transaction of some comparatively unimportant business. After the Judge's departure from the court room Mr. Dubois exhibited an instance of that remarkable presence of mind for which he has ever been noted. The future Senator said to the clerk of the court: "Turning to the records of this court yesterday, Mr. Clerk, you will observe recorded a fine of \$50 against one Frederick T. Dubois. You will kindly make a note to the effect that such fine has been remitted by order of the court."—Saturday Evening Post.

SWORDS OF FAMOUS COMBAT-ANTS.

"It was always the custom to preserve the sword of famous combatants, and they were not infrequently carried into war. The Maid of Orleans used a battle sword which she secured from the burial vaults of an ancient church. Charlemagne's sword, which he called Joyeuse, is still preserved in the Church of St. Denis, and was carried in front of the processions at the coronation of the kings of France. Nearly all heroic legends of that age make mention of swords which bore special names. The Cid, for example, had the Tizona. When a hero died his sword was carried at the funeral and deposited in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, where it remained as the only local relic of the crusades.

Circumlocution Department.

A correspondent at Kieff tells a story of the censor's department. Vassili Yaruschkin, a brilliant graduate of Moscow University, has just died there in poverty at the age of fifty. Twenty-three years ago Yaruschkin wrote a work on physiology, embodying a number of remarkable discoveries he had made. His scientific friends pronounced it epoch-making. The manuscript went to the censor in 1883. It never came back. Again and again the author applied for permission to print, and for the return of his manuscript. He accumulated a drawer of formal replies, saying that the matter would receive attention. Soured and disappointed, Mr. Yaruschkin never undertook other work, and eventually died. On the morning of the funeral a packet of MS. arrived at the house where he died, with the stereotyped approval of the censor expressed in a formal note.—St. James' Gazette.

Why Men Hunt and Fish.

It has been said that every man has within him something of the savage, indicated by longings to return at times to primal conditions of life. Certainly to many there come irresistible yearnings for the haunts of nature, for the searching of forest and stream for the daily food—depending on one's prowess for his dinner. In the gratification of this desire there is a zest which makes of a vacation a rejuvenation. If the appetite for this sort of thing be lacking or dormant, it should be cultivated or aroused.—Senator W. P. Frye, in the Independent.

"Electric Honey."

Electricity in all its phases is entering into a great variety of operations, but in one startling report at least its use seems to be given rather undue prominence. "Making Honey by Electricity" is the caption of this report, and as we read we find that in New Jersey is an apiary; that the bees are fed on glucose; that the glucose is manufactured at Edgewater; that \$1,000,000 is invested in the glucose plant; that the daily output is 12,000 barrels, and that electric machinery is used in its manufacture. Hence "Making Honey by Electricity."

Where Music Failed to Charm.

A violin player witnessed a lively street fight in Paris not long ago, and began to play in order to soothe the two combatants. It had the opposite effect, however, for one of the fighters drew a knife and stabbed the violinist.

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