

COUNTING APPLESEEDS.

Beside the hearth one winter night Made rosy by the great log's light, That flaring by the chimney dark, Lit every cranny, every nook, Sat curled, in a pose demure and staid.

Here a tear rolls brightly down, What the secret she has won? Who can say? But just behind Sounds a voice so soft and kind: "Look again! Thou must indeed Find for me another seed!"

Booster her bright cheeks glow In the firelight's ruddy glow, Sure enough! A culprit seed— "From thy lips I fain would hear What the sixth one means, my dear.

"Six he loves," she murmured low, And the firelight's flickering glow, Two happy faces now disclose With cheeks aglowing like the rose. But here will let the curtain fall For the end is best of all.

—Sacramento Union.

THE MAHOGANY SETTLE.

BY HELEN FORREST GRAVES.

MRS. OAKLEY—bless her kind heart!—was not of a jealous nature. It does not behoove a minister's wife to be jealous; but the dinner was already on the table—a well-browned roast chicken, with bread sauce, and a baked

Indian pudding to follow—and it was undoubtedly a relief when her husband came out of the study and seated himself. "Was that Miss Penriff?" said she. "Yes," Mr. Oakley answered, "it was Miss Penriff. She wants to sell her old mahogany settle."

"What!" cried Mrs. Oakley, "that delightful old settle, with the griffins' bumpy heads at the top and the claw feet at the bottom? I didn't know that anything would induce her to part with that."

And then Mr. Oakley pronounced the blessing. "I wish I could afford to buy it!" added Mrs. Oakley, tucking a bib-apron under the youngest Oakley's plump chin. "What did you tell her, Simon?"

"Why, I told her I'd write to that big antique-buying firm in New York," said Oakley. "They're the only people who can deal with her to any advantage. A big hall-settle like that is only appropriate for big houses, with wide entrances, such as, according to all reports, that poor, desolate old maid once lived in. And big houses are mostly found in big cities."

"Poor thing!" said Mrs. Oakley. And she helped her husband to apple-sauce. While Keziah Penriff went slowly home to the old red house under the hill, where Dolly was making tomato catsup in the kitchen.

"Well, Dorothy," said she, "I've done it." "Done what, Aunt Kizzy?" "I've sold the old hall-settle." Dolly looked up from the scarlet steam of the tomatoes to the cool hall opposite, where the griffin's wooden eye seemed to leer at her out of the shadows, and one carved and shining claw was poised on the floor, as if about to take a forward step.

"Oh, Aunt Kizzy!" said she. "Yes, I know," sighed the elder woman. "But there's got to be an end to everything, Dolly. I'm a poor woman now, and I can't afford to hold on to luxuries that are nothing but luxuries."

"I don't know," said she, "but—I think it's Johnny Barton." "Oh!" said Miss Penriff. "Has that young man gone into the express business?" "Not exactly," said Dolly, busying herself among the tomato jars. "But I think he drives around picking up old china and brass fire-dogs, and all such things for some big collector in New York."

"Oh!" again uttered Miss Penriff. And there was a whole volume of meaning in the one little word. "He's a very nice young man," said Dolly, timidly. "I don't doubt it," said Miss Penriff. "But I wonder what he wants here?"

The little discussion was terminated by the sudden tapping of Johnny Barton's whip-handle against the side of the open door. Yes, he was a very nice young man—blue-eyed and frank-faced, with yellow hair curling away from his temples, and white teeth which shone every time he smiled.

He had only been in Rodendale a few weeks. Miss Penriff had seen him now and then, but she hardly remembered him. "How do you do, Miss Penriff?" said he, with stupendous self-possession. "Mr. Barton, aunt," said Dolly, in a hurried sort of way. "This is my aunt, Miss Penriff, Johnny."

"I don't know what has procured me the honor of this call," said Miss Penriff, straightening herself up. For she never could forget, this poor, faded elderly woman, that her father, Squire Peregrine Penriff, had once been the richest man in the county.

"Well, I don't know much about the honor of the thing," said John Barton, laughing. "But I've just heard from Mr. Oakley that you wanted to sell an old carved settle. I'm buying up that sort of thing."

"Perhaps you would allow me to look at it?" went on Johnny, resolved on business. Dolly hung open the hall window that was generally kept closed and curtained. A blaze of yellow sunlight flooded the hall, a gust of sweet, autumn, leaf-scented air came in and the carved griffins seemed to wink their wooden satisfaction.

"There!" cried Dolly. "Isn't it a beauty? And heavy—oh, what a piece of solid heaviness! Oh, that isn't a secret drawer! It's only a place to put umbrellas and canes in. I used to be certain there was a secret drawer in it when I was a child. But I've changed my mind now."

John Barton walked slowly around the settle, eyeing it from every point of view. Miss Penriff watched him. "Yes, it is a beauty!" said he. "What will you take for it, Miss Penriff?"

"I hardly think you can afford to buy it, young man," said the elderly lady grimly. John Barton reddened a little. "Oh, as for that," said he, rather awkwardly. "I'm representing some one else. Personally, perhaps—"

"Well," said Miss Penriff, "it cost three hundred dollars. But I don't expect to get its full value." "Aunt Keziah would take a hundred," fluttered Dolly, "if—"

"Very well," said Mr. Barton, "it's a bargain. Is there a man about the place who could help me lift it into the wagon?" "There's old Silas Wiggins beyond the big rock," suggested Dolly.

And while Johnnie Barton was gone for him, the old lady sat down on the settle, where the yellow sunshine glimmered and the smell of late mignonnette came in at the window. "Here was where I used to sit," said she. "There was a big stained glass window in the hall just over it, and a great fireplace beyond, where they burned such big black logs of cold, winter nights. And there, in the other corner, my lover used to sit."

Her voice quivered; a tear sparkled in the faded blue eyes behind the steel-rimmed spectacles. "Oh, Aunt Keziah!" cried Dolly, suddenly flinging her arms around the old lady's neck. "I never knew you had a lover."

"Does any woman ever live to be twenty without a lover, child?" said Miss Penriff. "But your grandfather was a very ambitious man. He was losing money in those South Sea shipping ventures even then, though I didn't know it—and he wanted me to marry a rich man and retrieve the family fortunes. And Henry was poor."

"I don't care for money or rank. I only know that I love John!" And she slipped back into the shadows as Johnny Barton and old Silas Wiggins came to lift out the mahogany settle. Miss Penriff watched them through a mist of tears.

Here was the blossoming out of truth and love, and all that blessed disregard of ways and means that only comes in the dawn of life. She had outgrown it all, but it was a story that repeated itself with each new generation.

She remembered that Mr. Oakley had said that John Barton was a good young fellow enough. She looked at the old settle, where she and Henry Hartford had sat years ago, and she beckoned softly to Dolly. "Dorothy," said she, "if you love the lad, take him. I—I was young once!"

And then she went back into the house, so that she might not see the old griffins, with the claw feet, being carried away. Only two weeks afterward Dolly came eagerly to her aunt.

"John's uncle is coming down from New York," said she—"the gentleman who bought the mahogany settle. It wasn't for a store, Aunt Keziah, that John bought it. I was for his own house. He's very rich, and John is his only heir. And he liked my photograph, and he's coming to see you to-night. Doesn't it sound exactly like a newspaper story?" faltered happy Dolly. "Who's that knocking at the door? It can't be John's uncle already!"

Miss Penriff's drawn face had brightened into sudden radiance. "It's Henry!" said she, with a start. Dolly looked half frightened, but at the same moment the door opened and John Barton came in with another gentleman, gray and portly.

"He arrived by the four-o'clock train, Dolly," said he. "And only think—he used to know your aunt's quarter of a century ago!" "Henry!" faltered Miss Penriff. "Keziah!"

To the young people, full of the ineffable arrogance of youth, it was the meeting of two gray, wrinkled old people—to Henry Hartford and Keziah Penriff, time had gone backward, and they stood, radiantly happy, on the threshold of long ago. "Keziah, why did you not tell me where you were?"

"Henry, why did you not say something to let me know you cared for me still?" And the next day all Rodendale was convulsed with the news that there was to be a double wedding in the place.

"As for Johnny Barton and pretty Dorothy Hall, it's all right and proper enough," said the voice of popular opinion. "But for old people like Miss Penriff and that fat New York millionaire—well, no one can set limits to the ridiculous!"

But how was popular opinion to know that, to all intents and purposes, Uncle Henry and Aunt Kizzy had been dipped in the waters of the fountain of youth? John and Dorothy might go to Richmond on their wedding trip, but was it not happiness enough for their elders to sit side by side on the old mahogany settle once more?—Saturday Night.

A Royal Train. A new imperial train for the Czar of Russia is at present being built at the Alexandrowski Wagon Manufactory at St. Petersburg. It consists of eleven carriages, of which one is reserved for the railway officials, a kitchen carriage and two luggage vans. With the exception of wheels and the axles, which have been supplied by Krupp, at Essen, the whole of the material is of Russian origin and manufacture.

By means of a very powerful automatic brake the train can be brought to a standstill in a minimum of time from every one of the carriages. The interior of the carriages is appointed with much taste. The windows are different on both sides; the side with the corridor has windows of a uniform size, while the windows on the other side are made in accordance with the requirements of the various compartments. The passages between the various cars are vestibuled.

The carriage of the Czar and Czarina is connected directly with the dining room; then comes the large saloon car, the carriages of the grand dukes, etc. The carriages will be sent on a trial trip to Copenhagen; some of them have already been sent to Vienna and back.—Railway Review.

Speed of the Earth's Journey. The earth does not travel at the same rate all through its journey. Its orbit being elliptical, it must at some time approach nearer to the sun than at others, and will take less time in moving through one part of its path than through another. In winter the earth is nearer the sun than in summer and moves through space more rapidly. On January 1 the earth is about 3,090,000 miles nearer the sun than it is on July 1, and, as the velocity of a planet increases with its nearness to the sun, the earth passes over one-half of its orbit in less time than over the other half. Between the vernal equinox, which happens on March 21, and the autumnal equinox, which falls on September 23, the earth is 186 days in accomplishing that half of her journey round the sun, while the other half occupies only 179 days. It has been said that, owing to the friction caused by the tides and other reasons, the earth is moving more slowly than it used to do, and that the days are consequently lengthening; but as this is only to the extent of half a second in a century, it will be a long time before there will be any apparent difference.—Brooklyn Eagle

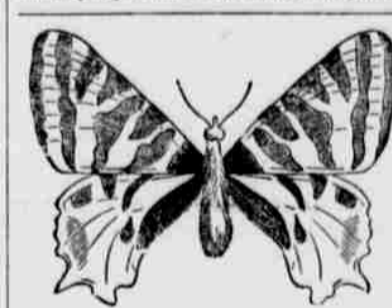
A Jacket Subject to Many Changes. The jacket here illustrated has that most desirable quality of being able to alter its form at will. It is an invention of a London dressmaker. The sketch will show exactly the shape of this jacket, and the many ap-



pects it may assume. In the centre picture it is open, displaying the waistcoat, the long revers kept in place by a button on each side. It can be closed to the waist, or sufficiently to show only the necktie or much or little waistcoat.

Missing Insect Links.

For some time Dr. Behr, the entomologist of the Academy of Sciences, has been engaged in arranging and classifying a small but interesting col-



THE LEIODOLPHIA PUZILOI—A MISSING LINK

lection of Japanese butterflies and crepuscular moths. All the specimens are interesting, and several are both exceedingly rare and necessary to establish kindred relations between families of butterflies hitherto unconnected with one another. In other words, the collection includes "missing links" that indicate the evolution of one kind of butterfly from another.

There are 20,000 specimens in Dr. Behr's collection, and the variety of color and formation presented to the eye is wonderful. This is especially true of the Japanese collection. The varieties are comparatively small, but the colorings are beautiful.

An entomological treasure in the collection is a perfectly preserved Leiodolphia Puziloi. Its value is comprised in the fact that it is a connecting link between two genera of butterflies that are apparently very dissimilar. It is colored beautifully and is found in Corea as well as in parts of Japan.

One case contains several insect mammoths. One specimen is nearly seven inches in width and is an entomological monster. Dr. Behr relates that when Prince Newnied, an enthusiastic collector, was in South America his Indian guide saw one of these leviathans on a tree. Dispensing with the usual net the guide pinned the butterfly with an arrow accurately shot from a bow. That is the native method of catching the specimen.

One of the unique specimens in Dr. Behr's collection is the Eurylochus Caligo, whose back presents an absolutely perfect representation of an owl's face. There are the great round



BUTTERFLY THAT LOOKS LIKE AN OWL.

eyes apparently deep set, and stolid in expression, the curved beak—in fact the physiognomy of the owl is perfectly etched on the wings of this wonderful creature. Strangest of all, the caligo seems to know that in this resemblance lies its safety in time of danger. Unlike other butterflies, the caligo does not attempt to escape by flight when pursued by a bird. It simply drops to the ground, turns its back to the enemy and the frightened bird sees a malevolent owl staring out from the place where the butterfly was. The deception always succeeds, and the caligo is blessed with a longer life than most of its fellow butterflies.—San Francisco Examiner.

As far back as 1854 Hamburg embroidery was imported from Switzerland into the United States. The trade has grown steadily until now Switzerland exports \$12,000,000 worth of these machine embroideries annually. The work was first started in Switzerland in 1827.

Bird Against Snake.

In South Africa the secretary bird pursues every snake, even the most venomous. Warned by instinct of the terrible enemy he has met, the reptile at first seeks safety in flight; the secretary follows him on foot, and the ardor of the chase does not prevent him from being constantly on guard. This is because the snake, finding himself nearly overtaken, suddenly turns round, ready to use his defensive weapons. The bird stops, and turns in one of his wings to protect the lower parts of his body. A real duel then begins. The snake throws himself on his enemy, who at each stroke parries with the end of his wing; the fangs are buried in the great feathers which terminate it, and there leave their poison without producing any effect. All this time with the other wing the secretary repeatedly strikes the reptile, who is at last

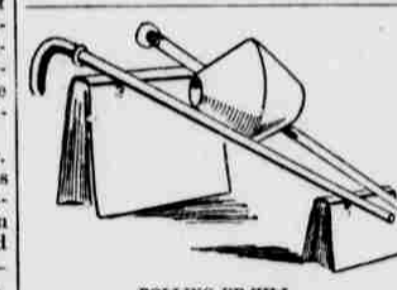


SECRETARY BIRD AND SNAKE.

stunned, and rolls over on the earth. The conqueror rapidly thrusts his beak into his skull, throws his victim into the air, and swallows him.—Popular Science Monthly.

A Curious Illusion.

A curious trick may be performed by means of two conical bodies and a couple of walking sticks. Take two lamp shades and fasten the edges to-



ROLLING UP HILL.

gether. Then make an in inclined plane by means of two walking sticks in the manner shown in our illustration. Let the space between the two sticks be wider at the higher than at the lower end. Then place the double cone at the bottom of the incline, and it will roll to the top. Although at first sight the trick suggests a disturbance of the natural law of gravitation, it is only an adaptation of that well known principle. As the sticks widen the cone is correspondingly depressed, and the center of gravity is equally lowered.

A Rising Man.

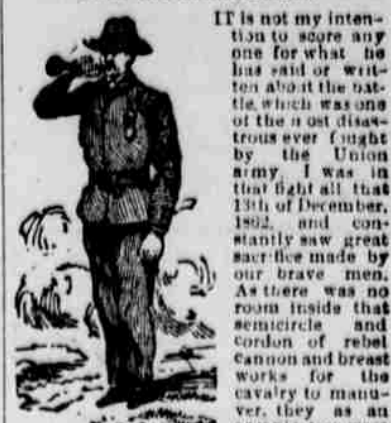


Wandering William—"I had a very all dinner to-day, Weary." Weary Walker—"Zat so? What d ye git?" Wandering William—"A glass of water an' a quart of dried apples."—Judge.

SOLDIERS' COLUMN

UNABLE TO HELP.

Men Obligated to Sit Their Horses in Stables at Fredericksburg.



It is not my intention to score any one for what he has said or written about the battle, which was one of the most disastrous ever fought by the Union army. I was in that fight all that 13th of December, 1862, and I can constantly see the great sacrifice made by our brave men. As there was no room inside that semicircle and cordon of rebel cannon and breast works for the cavalry to maneuver, they as an organization were mercifully excused from participating in the slaughter. An order was read by our captain (Hughes) for a detail of men from Co. K, 4th Pa. Cav. to cross the pontoon and act as bodyguard for Gen. A. A. Humphreys, commanding I think the Second Division of the Third Corps, and to act as Orderlies and dispatch bearers for the General on the field. We received this order, I think, about 9 o'clock. A heavy cannonade had been in progress for 24 hours, and our heavy guns saturated. One could not see for the great volume of smoke and the discharges of the guns on both sides made the earth shake and tremble.

That morning early the rebel sharpshooters had been dislodged and our infantry were crossing on the pontoons at the time. The rebels had their cannon so placed that the pontoons were swept by their fire, but we had to cross all the same. I remember looking at the infantry crossing a short time before we did and seeing great gaps and holes made in the ranks as they sat and heard the cries of the wounded. Stout hearted though we were in those days, we quailed and shuddered at the awful sight of carnage so near, which we were unable to prevent. The pontoon we crossed, I think, was the one farthest to the right of our army and on the rebel left.

We followed the brave general across the pontoon and on to the position assigned him, a full view of the rebel guns and in front of the city, I should say a half mile away.

All we had to do was to sit on our horses and look at the rebels shooting our men down. We are not supposed to fight unless attacked at close range, but all the same we were good marks for the rebels to shoot at, being mounted and stationed in a body, including the General who sat on the right. The men of his division were drawn up in the form of a square—about 9,000 men. I looked on and saw men fall in that square every moment, the stretcher and ambulance men were in and out as the time passed. I was there from about 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. The cries of the wounded were dreadful. A comrade by my side was shot in the forehead and he never knew what hurt him. Several were wounded and we had several horses killed. All this time we were inactive, no order of battle was given. I remember I lived a long time during those seven hours, I never expected to come out alive. I saw so many going every minute I actually got used to it and said to myself, you will be the about the next one.

Some time in the afternoon the General suddenly went down. I thought it was all day with him, but he soon jumped up and let off sulphurous anathemas at the rebels for killing his \$1,700 horse. After his passion had subsided he very politely ordered our Captain or Lieutenant for the loan of a horse until he could get his man to charge and capture a lot of them.

A short time afterward he was ordered to charge his men against that stone wall on our front. I heard the General make his speech to the men before the charge, and saw him raise his hat as a signal for the fray. Later I heard him order the "Retreat" and cry "They are cutting my men to pieces, get them here as quick as you can."

At that charge over 2,000 men went down. The fire from the rebels was like a blast from a furnace. Their time was one continuous sheet of fire. I wonder that any returned alive. I saw many hanging on the picket fence in front of the rebel breast-works.

Shortly afterward, about dusk, the fire slackened on both sides and we all went back to the city to spend the night as best we could. The lights could be made for a rebel bullet would be there instantly. I opened a door of one of the houses to find a bed for the boys and myself and shelter from the cold and immediately fell on a corpse of some one who had lingered too long when the citizens evacuated the city. We could not stand that kind of a surprise, warriors though we were, we felt very suddenly and tried another one. I called on one of my comrades to investigate another house, which he did and found the bed to be occupied by corpses. We concluded the city must be a charnel house, we tied our steel to posts, spread our blankets on an open lot crept into them and slept the sleep of the soldier, for we had performed our duty.

There are so many circumstances crowding my memory of what happened those two days and two nights we were in range of the rebel bullets and shells. Some of them were ludicrous and laughable in the extreme. Next day (Sunday) while sauntering around among the stores, now full of soldiers, I entered a book store and found the books on the floor, making a rough carpet for the boys to walk on. I had never before seen such waton destruction of property. All kinds of stores were raided much the same manner. I saw the negroes take the most interest in the grocery department. I remember particularly one very black old ducky was rolling a barrel of flour across the street, when a ball from a rebel battery struck the barrel in the end, passed through the flour, and covered the ducky with a coat of white quicker than you could say Jack Robinson. He must have been scared out of a ten years' growth, for he jumped at least five feet high.

We went through many of the houses that Sunday and I find that the people had gone, leaving everything in their houses same as when they lived there. The rebels fired but one shot on Sunday, that I heard, and that was in the morning, and aimed at a three gun battery we had posted on one of the highest streets in the western part of the city.

The second night we slept as before, and near morning we got up and saw long lines of our men marching toward the river, and we knew then the battle had ended. Burnside had commenced the retreat, and that we had been whipped. W. C. YARD in National Tribune.

Alligators Not Extinct in China. It seems strange, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that the Chinese alligator, which has long been supposed to be extinct, has been rediscovered and specimens of it sent to the Royal Zoological Gardens in London. Marco Polo was the last author to describe it. In his description he mentions "curious superstition, etc., that its gall was a specific for the cure of hydrophobia."—St. Louis Republic.

Tax man who will steal chickens is often found hiding behind a hypocrite in the church.