

The Happiest Heart.

Who drives the horses of the sun
Shall lord it but a day;
Better the lowly deed were done,
And kept the humble way.

The rust will find the sword of fame;
The dust will hide the crown;
Ay, none shall nail so high his name
Time will not tear it down.

The happiest heart that ever beat
Was in some quiet breast
That found the common daylight sweet
And left to heaven the rest.

—John Vance Cheney.

IN A BOTTLE.

It was a beautiful day in midsummer, and the half-a-hundred-odd cabin passengers on the good steamship *Antio* were listlessly lounging about the deck.

They were already nine days out from Liverpool, and owing to an unfortunate accident, which had occurred early on the voyage, only half the distance to their port of destination had been accomplished.

The accident had been attended with no danger to the precious human freight, but the monotony of the voyage was becoming unbearable, and the passengers were beginning to grumble.

Every artifice had been resorted to to relieve the tedium of the slowly moving days, and now they were literally at their wits' end.

Charades, mock trials, skittles and amateur theatricals, had in turn been resorted to, but now, with their faces turned longingly toward home, they gazed about the deck, and bemoaned their sad fate.

A particularly discontented group leaned against the port-rail, amid-ship, composed of two young ladies, howly dressed, two young men who looked rather jaunty in their semi-sailor dress, a stout, red-faced, coarse-looking man, and an equally stout, red-faced and coarse-looking woman.

The two latter were called "papa" and "mamma" by the simpering young ladies, and deferentially addressed as Mr. and Mrs. Gale by the young men in semi-sailor dress.

They were venting their indignation against the steamship, and the combination of untoward circumstances that had delayed their voyage.

Standing a little apart from the group was a slim, pale-faced girl, in a dress of quiet gray, unrelieved save at the throat, where a bit of cherry-colored ribbon was gathered into a prim bow.

This was Elsie Annabel, and she was maid and companion to the Misses Gale, who were named respectively Agnes and Eunice.

She took no part in the conversation, but there was a sad and wistful look in the gray eyes, as she turned her face toward the western horizon.

"It's outrageous!" cried Papa Gale.

"Shameful!" echoed his wife.

"It's killing me!" sighed Miss Eunice.

"I am really faint with ennui!" shrieked Miss Agnes.

"It's deucedly unfortunate!" chided the young men.

"If something would only happen!" continued Agnes.

"I tell you what," cried the elder of the young men, addressing Miss Eunice, in particular.

"Well?" interrogated that young lady, with a listless attempt at interest.

"Let's write letters to our friends, enclose them in bottles, and throw them overboard. They're no doubt considerably worried over our long absence, and as it's impossible to tap the cable and telegraph them a message, we'll make old ocean's waves our letter carrier."

"Pshaw, Rob!" retorted Miss Eunice, shrugging her shoulders. "How sentimental you are! As though a letter put into a bottle and thrown into the sea would ever reach anywhere!"

"I've read somewhere," said Rob Carrington, "that shipwrecked sailors often send messages to their friends that way. We're about as bad as shipwrecked, why can't we?"

"Let's ask the captain!" said Eunice; and she walked toward that officer, who was moodily pacing up and down the bridge.

The others followed.

"Yes, Miss," answered the captain, "Eunice had asked him about the possibility of the bottles being washed ashore. 'I've no doubt they'll reach and somewhere. The steward will furnish you with bottles if you desire to make the experiment.'"

There was something novel in the idea, and every empty bottle on shipboard was soon brought on deck.

Everybody, young and old, began to write letters—everybody except Elsie Annabel.

She waited kindred anxiously ex-

pected her return, and the only real friend she had ever had, handsome Guy Chalmers, was lost to her.

Two years before she had engaged herself to the young artist, but they had quarreled, and separated in anger, as lovers will.

She was too proud to ask his forgiveness, and he was too stubborn to ask hers.

Gradually they had drifted apart, and finally they lost all sight of each other.

Elsie sighed as these thoughts of the past surged through her mind, and she sighed—a bitter, quivering sigh.

Papa Gale was a rich pork merchant, and, in his rough way, was kind to her.

He paid her liberally for the service she rendered in polishing up the somewhat neglected educations of his two daughters, but they were selfish and capricious, and her lot was not, by any means, a happy one.

The steamship's deck now rang with joyous laughter and merry jest, as the passengers prepared the messages that they confidently hoped would be wafted shoreward.

All sorts of letters were written, read over laughingly, placed in their frail receptacles, and cast into the sea.

Even the sailors became interested in the experiment, and sent out messages to waiting friends, or anxious sweethearts in dear America.

"Have you written your message yet, Miss Annabel?" asked Agnes Gale, halting for a moment beside her maid, as she leaned over the rail and watched the tightly-corked bottles, as they bobbed up and down.

"My message?" cried Elsie, with a guilty start, for she had just been thinking of Guy Chalmers. "Ah—eh—really—I have no one to write to!"

"No one?" persisted Agnes.

"No!" was the low answer, and Elsie's eyes dropped.

"That's too bad!" said Agnes, commiseratingly. "Everybody is sending out a message. If I were you I'd just write something and send it off at random. You could sign your name and address, and perhaps some one would find it who'd be anxious to know who you are and would write. That would be romantic!"

"I've no taste for romance!" answered Elsie, but she nevertheless procured a bottle, and after a moment's thought, wrote on a piece of paper.

"IN MID-OCEAN ON STEAMER NANTIC, August 12—An accident which happened to our propeller has delayed our voyage, and we are nine days out from Liverpool. The captain says we are just half way between that port and New York. Everybody is well.

"ELSIE ANNABEL,
"Care of John Gale, Esq.,
"Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, Ohio."

She placed this simple message in a bottle, corked and sealed it, and tossed it overboard.

The bottle was particularly long-necked, bright green in color, and her inexperienced hand had smeared the whole top with red ink.

She stood watching it a long time, but finally it disappeared, and, with a weary sigh, she turned and went below.

The Nantic ultimately reached New York, and Mr. John Gale hurried back to Cincinnati, to attend to his pork.

Rob Carrington and his cousin, Arthur Stevens, bade the Misses Gale farewell, and secretly promised to correspond with them.

The Gales had been home nearly a month, when one morning a hired hack came slowly up the long carriage road, which wound through the rich pork-packer's extensive grounds, and, when it finally reached the house, the door opened and a young man leaped lightly to the ground.

He inquired of the servant who answered his ring for Miss Elsie Annabel, and the man showed him into the back parlor.

Elsie was considerably surprised when told that a gentleman wished to see her below, but she went down, and timidly approached the back parlor.

She stopped for a moment on the threshold, and the gentleman, who had been idly drumming on the window, turned.

At the sight of his face she recoiled, and would have fallen had he not sprang forward and caught her in his arms.

"Elsie, my darling!" he said, holding her very tightly. "Have you no word of welcome for me?"

"Oh, Guy!" she murmured, as her eyes met his. "Have you really come back to me? I have been so lonely without you! Forgive me for my cruelty."

"It is I who have come to ask forgiveness!" said Guy, leading her to a seat. "After we parted, two years ago, and I got over my stubbornness, I tried to find you, but you had disappeared, leaving no trace behind

you. I was inconsolable, and reproached myself for my harshness, because it was all my fault. Finally, however, I grew moody and cynical, but I could never bring myself to think of you with aught but love and tenderness. Six months after you disappeared my old uncle died, and left me his heir. Since that time I have hunted for you far and wide. Last summer I took a run along the coast in my yacht, stopping at every port. Two weeks ago we were lying off Cape Breton in a dead calm. One of the sailors called my attention to a bottle that was drifting by us. I fished it up with a scoop net. It was sealed, and all gathered around to see what it contained. I broke the neck, and found this little note," and he produced from an inner pocket the identical message she had written on board the Nantic, in mid-ocean. "You can imagine my joy at the strange discovery of your hiding-place, and, a breeze springing up, I ordered the yacht put about, and we ran into Halifax. I have come to you as fast as steam would carry me, to ask your forgiveness, and assure you that I have never ceased to love you."

What answer she made him can but be imagined. Anyway when Papa Gale returned to dinner he heard the whole story, and declared in his hearty way that he'd give away the bride.

Accordingly as soon as a suitable trousseau could be prepared, the two so strangely reunited were made one.

The Misses Gale officiated as bridesmaids, and Bob Carrington and his cousin were the groom's best men.

Papa Gale, true to his word, gave the bride away, and the great pyramid of flowers which occupied the centre of the banquet table was crowned by the identical bottle that was responsible for the happy event.

Iceberg Phenomena.

The occurrence of ice in the comparatively low latitudes of Cape Horn and the Falkland Islands is easily explained, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The ice has originally formed part of the great barrier which, with very few breaks, surrounds the vast Antarctic continent, rising to an average height of from 150 feet to 200 feet above, and sinking from 1,100 feet to 1,400 feet below the level of the sea, and having, moreover, a thickness of something like 1,200 feet or 1,500 feet. It is a solid perpendicular wall of ice, formed by the descent over the low lands into the sea of the ice and snow which form on the mountains inland, and when the forefronts are pushed into depths of about 300 or 400 fathoms large stretches are broken off and float away northward with the current. When they start on their aimless careers they may be miles in extent, and though, as a rule, they break up by collision and erosion, it is not at all unusual to encounter an island miles long in the neighborhood of the extreme ice limit. For instance, the Coldingham in this region passed about 500 bergs, one of which was ten miles long. The *Cutty Sark*, again, in latitude 50 south, longitude 47 west, is found by cross bearings and distance run that the east side of one berg which she encountered was nineteen miles long. At first the masses are straight, flat-topped and horizontally stratified—altogether unlike those met with in the north. By the action of the waves they are cut at the water's edge into oaves caverns of a heavenly blue color. Then, as they collide or get melted away at the base by the action of the water, they turn over and show to the wondering mariner those fantastic shapes which simply beggar all description. Naturally, as they travel further north, they become smaller and still more strangely shaped and ultimately melt away.

European Libraries.

Austria possesses more libraries and books than any other country in Europe. It has 677 libraries and 6,475,748 books, besides manuscripts. Next comes France, with 503 libraries, 4,538,100 books and 135,890 manuscripts; Italy, with 495 libraries, 4,339,281 books and 350,570 manuscripts; Germany, with 398 libraries, 2,640,250 books and 59,000 manuscripts; England, with 290 libraries, 2,871,494 books and 16,000 manuscripts; Bavaria, with 169 libraries, 1,368,500 books and 23,000 manuscripts; Russia, with 145 libraries, 952,000 books and 26,800 manuscripts.

The largest national library is in France. It has 2,080,000 books. The British Museum has over 1,000,000 books; The Munich Museum, 800,000 books; The Berlin Museum, 700,000 books; Dresden 500,000 books, Vienna, 420,000 books. The Oxford University has 300,000 books; the Heidelberg University, 300,000 books. The Vatican library contains 30,000 books, and is the richest in manuscripts, reaching 25,000 in number.

A RABBIT PEST.

California Threatened With a Plague Like Australia.

Various Unsuccessful Attempts to Exterminate the Animals.

California's rabbit nuisance is assuming proportions and making progress which, according to the *New York Sun*, most unpleasantly suggest comparison with the actual plague of rabbits that afflicts Australia; afflicts it in a hopeless degree, according to the latest reports of the various colonial governments. California has lately adopted some Australian methods of thinning out the rabbits, and apparently with about the same limited measure of success. In Australia the attempt to exterminate them has been given up, and every effort is now directed to confining the rabbits to certain areas, or rather to keeping them out of certain cultivated regions. Even this entails enormous expense on the governments and landowners, is by no means sure, and often is unsuccessful.

It is stated that in one county alone in California the loss to farmers from rabbits and hares amounted last year to fully \$600,000. Many experiments with poison have been made, but the farmers have about concluded that the only thing to do is occasionally to thin out the rabbits by holding big round-up hunts or drives. It is estimated that as a result of 140 drives in all held in California 356,400 rabbits have been killed. But the latest reports say there is no appreciable diminution in their numbers.

Some years ago the government of New South Wales offered a reward of \$125,000 to any one who suggested a really efficient method of getting rid of the rabbits. This offer stood open for several years, and more than 2,000 schemes were offered, coming from all parts of the world. Many were tried, but none was found to be wholly satisfactory, and finally the offer was withdrawn, and the Australians tried to make up their minds to the inevitable permanence of the pest. Ferrets, stoats, and weasels were imported and bred in thousands, and they have done good work. Poisons of all sorts were tried with but little success. Cats were introduced, and they also did good service. But the rabbits multiply at such an astounding rate that they have much more than held their own, and have spread into new regions, destroying a large proportion of all crops wherever they have penetrated.

The government estimates that no less than 37,750,000 acres of land, farming and grazing, in the colony of Victoria, is infested by rabbits.

Many schemes have been offered for making use of the rabbits commercially, and thus recouping at least a little of the loss they cause. Many thousands are killed and their skins used, and something of a trade has been built up in the shipment of rabbits to England and elsewhere for food, either canned or frozen. But the world can't live on rabbit meat, and it would need to be in order to afford to the Australians a profitable way of making use of their rabbits. The skins are largely used for many purposes. One concern in Victoria uses 374,000 rabbit skins every year, and in the last seventeen years about 68,000,000 skins have been exported from Victoria.

There have been intercolonial conferences, attended by representatives of the various governments and delegates from the agricultural societies, at which every phase of the question has been considered. The final decision seems to be that extermination is impossible, and that the most effectual way of dealing with the evil is in building long fences of rabbit-proof netting to keep the animals out of areas not yet infested, to cut them off from food supplies and also to get them together as much as possible so that they can be raided by means of drives.

Some of the fences are hundreds of miles long. One starts at Barrington, on the Queensland border, follows the Main Trunk line from Bourke, and ends at Corowa, extending in an unbroken line for 407 miles. There is another such fence along the entire western boundary of New South Wales, 346 miles long. But even this heroic remedy is not unailing. The fences are liable to break down, especially in times of flood, and particularly where they cross rivers and creeks. It is impossible to keep the fences under complete and constant supervision in order that breaks may be repaired immediately, and it does not take long for a few thousand rabbits to pour through a break once they find it. It is stated that in many instances hundreds of thousands of

rabbits have been seen dead or dying on the outer side of the fence, having eaten up all the available food supplies, and making vain efforts to leap over the closely woven wire netting.

These fences are expensive to build, and expensive to maintain. They have to be sunk a considerable depth as well as built up quite high. But after many years of heavy loss and disheartening struggles, the Australians have come to consider this as the only means of dealing with the pest.

Change Wrought by Modern Chemistry

Modern chemistry has wrought great changes in agate coloring, as in other arts, a secret having been discovered by which chalcidony of any single color can be made to assume any two or more colors, so that an onyx of any shape or variety of colors can be made. If a sunken center of another color is required it can be made so that the figure when cut out remains in a hollow, forming a cameo *intaglio*. In this manner the fine cutting of the cameo is protected. A white figure may be made in a black stone, a red figure in a brown stone, or a white one in a red stone. By this process the entire stone is first changed to the color desired for the outer layer, then a cavity is cut in the top and a solution put into it, which alters it to the required color. It is this discovery that has made a formerly valuable onyx worth now only a nominal sum.

Agates are thus made to assume the onyx character, which is desired by the lapidary for the production of cameos and *intaglios* in imitation of the antique sculptured gems. In cameos the figures are in relief and of a different color from the ground. *Intaglios* are usually all of one color. In Persia inscriptions or devices are written on beads of carnelian and other forms of agate with carbonate of soda, and other chemicals; they are then burnt and the inscription appears white in contrast to the other color.

The principal supply of agates for the last hundred years has come from Brazil, and other South American countries, where it is mostly found by Germans who leave Oldenburg for that purpose, and who persevere until they find it. Thence it is sent to Germany for cutting, chiefly to Oberstein and Idar. Every fortnight from five to ten tons of the rough material is sold in Idar at public auction, usually in assorted lots of 100 or 200 pounds. The industry yields to the district an annual net profit of \$500,000; and good agate workers are among the best paid laborers in Germany, earning from \$1.50 to \$2 per day.—*Atlanta Constitution*.

The Queen's Favorite Jewel.

Of late years Queen Victoria has had Indian servants in native dress as personal attendants; she is also an assiduous student of Hindustani, being able to speak and write in that language, and her favorite State jewel is the priceless Koh-i-Noor, about which hangs a tale. When it came in possession of the East India Company, in 1850, it was handed at a Board meeting to John Lawrence (afterward Lord Lawrence), a Viceroy, for safe-keeping. The precious diamond was laid among folds of linen in a small box, and Lord Lawrence slipped it into his waistcoat pocket and forgot all about it until some days later it was suggested that he should forward it to the Queen. One can imagine his consternation when he rushed to his house to see if it was to be found. "Have you seen a small box in one of my waistcoat pockets?" he asked breathlessly of his servant. "Yes, sahib," was the reply. "I found it and put it in one of your boxes. 'Bring it here and open it and see what it contains,'" said his master. "There is nothing in it, sahib, but a bit of glass," the man replied in wonderment. The "bit of glass" was in due course dispatched to the Queen, whose crown it was to adorn, but she has preferred to wear it on occasions as a magnificent brooch in the centre of her bodice. The cutting of the diamond was personally superintended by the Prince Consort. It is always kept at Windsor, a fac-simile being in the royal crown at the Tower.—*The Woman-at-Home*.

Facts About the Poet Laureate.

The salary of the Poet Laureate is £72 (about \$360) a year, which is paid by the Queen out of the civil list, besides some perquisites. Mr. Austin will be entitled to draw at once the accumulation of salary which has been accruing since Lord Tennyson died, in October, 1892. The Poet Laureate is officially a member of the sovereign's household, in the department of the Lord Chamberlain, who is the functionary by whom the appointment is formally notified.—*London Truth*.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

No bird of prey has the gift of song.

In Arabia milk is not measured, but is sold by weight.

A police judge at Minneapolis, Kan., has had only one case before him in the four years he has held office.

The woodland area of the United States now covers about 450,000,000 acres, or 26 percent of the whole area.

Mount Ararat is the highest point of land in Armenia. It is 12,700 feet high and the inhabitants believe that under the perennial snows which crown its summit Noah's ark is hidden.

Surgery is not in a very advanced state in Persia. When it becomes necessary to amputate a man's arm or leg it is hacked off with a great meat ax, and the stump plunged into boiling pitch.

A couple of enterprising Chicagoans have started a frog farm for the purpose of supplying bait to amateur fishermen. Small frogs bring from forty to fifty cents a dozen all summer, with an active demand.

A citizen of Carthage, Mo., who was sentenced to serve seven days in the town jail surprised the proprietor of the local paper by ordering that it be sent to his changed address for the week of his incarceration.

Maunel Cocoo, an Indian, said to have been born at San Luis Rey in 1871, was a witness in a trial at Santa Cruz, Cal., recently. He has lived in Santa Cruz more than sixty years, and there is said to be every proof of his great age.

A colored man living near Nason's, Orange County, Va., is gradually turning white. His body is covered with patches of clear, white skin, which are gradually growing larger. Similar cases have been noted, but they are not common.

The death sentence was read to wife murderer George Windisch by warden Beland of Wilkesbarre, Penn. Windisch only remarked coolly that the warrant wasted a good deal of paper, and that he would rather hang than go to prison for twenty years.

E. R. Leaming, a well-to-do citizen of Yakima, Wash., fitted up a prairie schooner as a house on wheels and started, with his wife, for a drive down into Mexico. They are traveling for their health, and expect the trip to occupy about five months.

Some able-bodied burglars broke into a blacksmith's shop in Alpena, Mich., a few days ago, and carried off two big anvils along with everything else of value in the place. The owner of the shop says the stuff the burglars got safely away weighed about two tons.

Chinese Treatment of Children.

However little liked the Chinaman may be by his white neighbors, I have at all times found that the Chinese had at least one good and praiseworthy quality—the kindness shown by all of them towards their children. The poorest parents always seem able to save enough money to array their little ones in gay garments on New Year's day or other holidays. The children in turn seem to be remarkably well-behaved and respectful towards their elders, and rarely if ever, receive corporal punishment. They seem very happy, and apparently enjoy their childhood more than most American children. On almost any sunny day the fond and proud father may be seen at every turn in Chinatown carrying his brightly attired youngster in his arms. Other little tots hardly old enough to feel quite steady on their legs, toddle about with infants strapped on their backs. They do not appear to mind this, and it does not seem to interfere with their childish pastimes. About the time of the Chinese New Year Chinese children are particularly favored, and the fond fathers deny them nothing. The little ones always appear to be well provided with pocket-money to buy toys and candies.—*St. Nicholas*.

Hail Storms in the Orange Free State.

One of these republics—the Orange Free State—is very nearly as large as England, and just as large as the state of New York. It lies from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea, and is mostly level, with some low ranges of hills. The surface is bare of wood, except in a few sheltered spots along the streams, but is well covered with herbage. The air is pure and bracing, much like that of Colorado or Wyoming. There are, happily, no blizzards; but violent thunder-storms are not uncommon, and the hailstones—I have seen them bigger than pigeon's eggs—which fall during such storms sometimes kill the smaller animals and even men.—*Century*.