

THE PROFIT OF TEARS.

Is it raining, little flower?
Be glad of rain.
The sun that veils itself from thee
Will shine again.
The clouds are very black, 'tis true;
But just behind them shines the blue.

Art thou weary, tender heart?
Be glad of pain.
In sorrow sweetest things will grow,
As flowers in rain.
God watches, and thou wilt have sun
When clouds their perfect work have done.

—Mary F. Butte.

A TRIP ACROSS NIAGARA FALLS ABOVE THE SEETHING WATERS.

(Two Bold Boys in a Basket)

Alex Lee and George Frost were boys when General Roebling undertook to build the great suspension bridge across Niagara Falls. This was more than fifty years ago. The boys lived on the American side of the river, within sight of the falls, and very near the spot upon which the bridge was to be built.

There was great interest in the project, for the plan was regarded as one of the most remarkable that had ever been attempted by engineering skill.

The workmen were divided into two parties, one working on the American and the other upon the Canadian side. There was no means of getting across except by taking rowboats several miles below the falls.

The chief engineer, under General Roebling, took up his residence very near to the homes of these two boys, and they were so constantly on hand whenever he went to the river that he could not escape an acquaintance with them.

He was a rather silent man, and they were both surprised, therefore, when he turned one day and said to them: "Here, boys! Can you fly a kite?"

"Yes, sir," they promptly responded.

"Can you fly one well?" he continued, looking at them keenly.

"Pretty well, sir," replied Alex modestly.

"If you can fly one well," replied the engineer, "you will help me to build the great suspension bridge."

Alex's eyes grew big and so did George's. Help build the suspension bridge.

The engineer saw the effect of his words and added: "Come down this afternoon with the best kite you have and we shall see if you can send it to the Canadian shore. If you can, you will be the lads to carry across the first cable for one of the most remarkable bridges in the world."

Then for the first time the boys saw what he meant. They looked at each other a moment and then set off for home as fast as their bare feet would carry them.

They said nothing to the family, but betook themselves to the woods, where they set to work with a will. Kite-flying had always been one of their greatest sports, and they had made dozens of kites as season followed season. The frame of one that had been a favorite still hung in the shed. They got it down and covered it with the strongest but lightest paper they could secure. It was nothing but an ordinary homemade kite, but they felt sure of its flying qualities when it was ready to be taken down to the river.

Upon their arrival the engineer examined the kite, while they looked on with mingled hope and fear. At length he said, taking up a ball of twine: "Put this on in place of the string you have. It is light, but very strong. The wind is in the right direction and blowing well. You ought to succeed."

They quickly tied on the new cord, and then Alex took the ball, while George went to a short distance with the kite, ready to give it a push. It started well. Then there came a sudden puff of wind, followed by a full; the kite veered, staggered and came to the ground with a flop. George picked it up quickly. Some small boys standing about shouted derisively, but the engineer said: "Never mind, boys, you are not the only people who have failed the first time. Try again."

Once more George held the kite as high as he could. Alex got a good start, and in a moment more the kite was sailing away in a steady course toward the river. Alex ran to the bank, then began to play out his line as evenly as his excitement would permit. It was a glorious sight, and all watched with keen interest as the kite grew smaller and soared steadily.

At last a shout went up from the opposite bank, and everyone knew the kite was over the Canadian shore. Unrolling the remainder of the cord upon the ground, Alex suddenly let the line slack. The kite wavered, made a wild dive and dropped.

"Well done, boys," exclaimed General Roebling, as a great cheer arose from both sides of the river. Two prouder boys than George and Alex you can scarcely imagine. "It is clear sailing now," added the engineer, as he fastened a heavier cord to the kite string, and then signaled the men on the opposite shore to draw it over. Each successive line was heavier and stronger than the last, and finally a one-inch cable was pulled, beneath which roared the mighty river.

The cable was made secure by drawing it over a wooden tower on each bank, embedding the ends in the solid rock and fastening them with a key or melted lead. After the cable was laid the men were instructed to

build an immense iron basket which could be drawn from shore to shore over the cable, by means of ropes and a windlass on each bank. This was intended to carry the tools, and even the men themselves, to and fro.

The boys hardly found time to eat their meals during these days. The afternoon the basket was being finished George was obliged to pile a cord of wood, and Alex volunteered to help him. It was late when they finished, but the next morning found them again at the bridge.

"Now, boys," said the engineer, as he showed the completed basket, "since you helped us so well with our cable, I think you should be allowed to make the first trip across the river. Would you like to?"

Without stopping to consider, they both exclaimed, "Yes, indeed!" thinking only of the glory of the feat.

"All right, jump in," was the response, and the workmen drew the basket close to the shore.

If their hearts misgave them nothing could have induced them to show it now.

They settled themselves in the basket, which was deep and large enough to hold both comfortably. Then the signal was given and the men on the farther shore began to turn the windlass. The basket moved slowly forward and the boys waved their caps to the men.

At first the excitement of the adventure kept their spirits at a high pitch. The basket went forward steadily, but it swayed back and forth below the cable with a motion which was not altogether agreeable. The boys had lived near the falls all their lives and its noise was a familiar sound, but now, for the first time, the terrific roar of the water impressed them with its mighty force and power.

George looked off to the falls. Never before had they seemed of such immense height. The view was a new one. Then he looked down. One hundred and sixty feet below him was the roaring, seething mass of water, and he felt suddenly faint and sick. He glanced at the cable; it seemed like a thread, measured by the space beneath, and it was all that held them over that awful chasm. He could hear the water churn and surge below him, but he dared not look down again. Alex was as white as a ghost. George glanced ahead at the farther shore; they had not gone one-third of the distance, and it was twelve hundred feet from shore to shore. The distance was appalling. He grew dizzy again and curled down in the bottom of the basket. It seemed hours that he lay there. At last he looked up; the sky seemed nearer than the water, and so he kept his eyes on the floating clouds. Gradually he began to feel better.

"Alex," he said, "we must be brave. We are nearly to shore, and we don't want to show the white feather. Keep your eyes on the sky, but sit up."

Alex did as he suggested, and when they finally neared the shore they were able to respond to the cheers and greetings of the men. But the joy of landing was completely swallowed up by the thought of the return trip. Still, there was no alternative, and pride made them try to hide their feelings from the men.

After a rest of about ten minutes the workmen made ready to start the basket back. The boys stepping in, setting their teeth hard, and shouting a farewell which stuck hard in their throats.

The basket swung off again, but, though the motion was as unpleasant as ever, and the roar of the water was as great, they had learned to look skyward, and the giddiness was not so great. At last they heard voices from the shore, and bracing themselves they looked forward. They were so near that they could see among the throng on the bank the white faces of George's father and mother, looking stern and anxious. But so limp and white did the boys look, as they crept ashore, that it was thought they had been punished enough.

The crowd of boys shouted and never tired of having Alex and George tell of their wonderful trip.

—Washington Star.

First Stage Coach Into Denver.

On the 17th of May, 1859, Denver turned out to welcome the first through coach of what was destined to grow into the "Overland Mail," an enterprise which, for sheer American pluck and daring, must be forever linked with the fame of the "Pony Express."

Red shirts drifted to the outskirts of the hamlet and dotted the hills around. Hard-faced bartenders made ready for the "hottest night that ever tore the camp loose." The artillery of holster and saddle-boot was unlimbered for an ecstatic fusillade. There was lively betting in dust and nuggets that the first through stage had been gathered in by Indians, with takers as eager to stake their faith that the scalps of driver and guard would come through intact.

At length a swirl of dust showed far down the trail. It grew into a yellow cloud that crept toward the eager hamlet. Then six mules, stretched out on the gallop emerged from this curtain and behind them was the lumbering, swaying stage, come safely through, on time, and Denver was in touch with the world where men wore white shirts and lived in real houses. The cheers that roared a welcome to this heroic enterprise were echoed in every Western town which hoped and longed for a link of its own with the home country, "way back East."—"The Story of the Overland Mail," in the *Outing Magazine*.

PRESENTIMENTS.

What is a presentiment in distinction from similar modes of perception? Are presentiments of frequent occurrence, and are there some authentic cases of fulfilled presentiments? Why are there no presentiments of good as well as of evil? Is it possible, with any known principle of the human mind, to offer any satisfactory explanation of this mysterious phenomenon?

From the New York Tribune.

A presentiment (from the Latin presentire, to perceive beforehand) in the broadest sense is a direct, though vague, perception of a future event or a feeling which seems to be such a perception. Specifically, it is an antecedent impression or conviction, produced instinctively and without any known cause, of something about to happen. Though presentiments of good are common and often fulfilled, as their results are not tragical they are seldom remembered or confounded with hope, and for this reason the word presentiment is confined almost exclusively to the anticipation of impending evil, and is practically the equivalent of foreboding. Dreams often afford similar materials for erroneous reasonings, but as they originate in the mind, they are sometimes so similar to presentiments that it is impossible to decide whether a presentiment caused the dream or the dream the presentiment.

Novelists, poets, and even historians, have so often told us of presentiments, have so often attributed them to their real or fictitious personages, that we have come to regard this sort of obscure vision of the future as a common and natural phenomenon. The historian tells us of Captain So-and-So, who, overwhelmed on the eve of battle with the fatal presentiment that he should not survive the combat, actually met his death; the novelist attributes to his heroine the presentiment of a catastrophe impending over her soldier lover, which happens in realization of her gloomy forebodings, and they speak of these things as constantly recurring, well established facts of which there are numerous examples that could not well be disputed. Even animals are said to be gifted with a presentiment of danger. Thus, according to Buffon, birds of passage have been observed to stay away from their nests at the approach of an earthquake; according to Raynal, dogs by continual long howling manifested their presentiment of an approaching earthquake, and it is a generally prevailing belief that rats will, a few days before the occurrence, leave a house that is about to fall down or a ship that is about to sink.

But, while in animals this phenomenon admits of an explanation by the assumption of instinct, which seems to be given them by nature for their preservation, this convenient apology for our ignorance cannot be made in the case of man, because he has reason, instead of instinct, for his guide. Yet it has been contended, and by persons of no mean understanding, that fatal presentiments are conveyed to the mind by means, if not supernatural, at all events mysterious and wonderful, and numerous examples, as we shall presently see, have been adduced in proof of the certainty of the warning, as well as of its mysterious occurrence.

Piutarch, in his tragic account of Julius Caesar's assassination, mentions the foreboding dream of Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, in the night preceding the fatal event. In her dream she first saw blood flowing from her husband's statue, and then she dreamed that the roof of her house was falling down and that Caesar, his body all covered with blood, expired in her arms. Terrified by these dreams she related them to Caesar, imploring him not to go out on that day. Caesar, however, laughed at her fears, went to the Senate, and was stabbed to death by his assassins. It is related that not only did Henry IV himself have a presentiment of his death, but also Maria de Medicis was forewarned in a dream of the danger threatening the king. One night she started from her sleep with a shriek and her eyes bathed in tears. Asked by Henry IV for the cause of her terror, she replied, "I dreamed you were murdered!" To remove her fears the king said smiling: "Fortunately, dreams, according to the saying, are but fumes of the stomach." A few days later the dagger of a fanatic robbed France of the best of her kings. It must, however, be added that to-day the queen is much suspected of having plotted with d'Epemon the king's assassination, or at least of having had some knowledge of the plot, her vague terror, therefore, only expressed her own part in the matter. Mozart's premonition of his death is even more wonderful. A stranger having called on him to order a requiem, he at once felt the presentiment that this requiem was destined to serve for his own funeral, contracted an incurable disease and died immediately after composing it. President Lincoln, as is well known, had a presentiment of impending death. As numerous, mostly amplified, versions exist of this incident, we give it here as published by Gideon Welles in an article printed in *The Galaxy* for April, 1872: "In the last cabinet meeting in the Executive Mansion of Friday, April 14, which was also attended by Mr. Welles, General Grant expressed his anxiety as to the news from Sherman. The President remarked that the news would come soon and come favorably, he had no doubt, for he had last night his usual dream which had preceded nearly every event of the war. Welles inquired the particulars of this remark-

able dream. The President said it was in Welles' department—it related to water; that he seemed to be in a singular and indescribable vessel, but always the same, and that he was moving with great rapidity toward a dark and indefinite shore; that he had had this singular dream preceding the Bragg on Sumter, the battles of Bull Run, Antietam, Gettysburg, Stone River, Vicksburg, etc. General Grant answered with some emphasis and asperity that Stone River was no victory—that a few such victories would have ruined the country, and he knew of no important results from it. The President said that perhaps he should not altogether agree with him, but whatever might be the facts his singular dream preceded that fight. Victory did not always follow the dream, but the event and results were very important. Great events did indeed follow. Within a few hours the man who narrated his dream was assassinated, and the murder which closed forever his earthly career affected for years, and perhaps forever, the welfare of the country.

In this example it is not difficult to account for the modus operandi of the presentiment. From the very beginning of his Presidency Mr. Lincoln had been constantly subjected to the threats of his enemies and the warnings of his friends. The threats came in every form; his mail was infested with brutal and vulgar menaces, most anonymous. The warnings were not less numerous. He knew, indeed, that incitements to murder him were not uncommon. What wonder, then, that his dreams should be haunted by gloomy pictures, generally interpreted as forebodings of death.

There are also presentiments of good, but we hear less of them, because, as a rule, they are disappointed. The reader will find no difficulty to charge the memory with abundant proofs of the prevalence but also the unreliability of such presentiments. Who has not some time in his life felt, without any apparent cause, arise in his heart a hope bordering on conviction of getting rich by one of those sudden fortunes that astonish the world, or of obtaining the position craved for, or having his salary raised by his employer, or similar foolish hopes, to be doomed to disappointment? To give only one historical example of a good though unfulfilled presentiment: The great Turenne exclaimed: "I do not mean to be killed to-day," but a few moments afterward he was struck down by a cannon ball.

Supposing, then the occurrence of presentiments be firmly established and the cases as adduced by the authors proven beyond doubt, we can still discount by a good deal the part played by divination and the supernatural in the phenomenon. Thus, with regard to the extraordinary tales told of presentiments on the eve of battle, it is not wonderful at all that soldiers and sailors, proverbially superstitious, should sometimes in moments of depression conclude that they would die in the next battle, and that under the given circumstances their presentiment should sometimes also happen to come true. Nor does the explanation of numerous other fatal presentiments require the intervention of some so far undiscovered mysterious power and faculty of the mind. The human mind is a strange machine, and when excited by intense anxiety and wound up to its highest pitch by despair or fear it is no hard matter to conjure up those "signs and tokens" which are now considered as sure and fatal prognostications of the worst human calamities. In such a state the ordering of a requiem by a stranger may easily become to a Mozart an omen of sufficient magnitude to cause his dissolution. And as evil overtakes the majority of mankind, such general forebodings are pretty certain of fulfillment. And it may also be urged that a person thus fatally possessed may become so careless of existence as thereby to insure his destruction.

However this be, the divination of future events, in one's own or another's life, that makes some presentiments so remarkable is ultimately nothing but the result of instinctive reasoning applied to probable events, a deduction drawn from known facts, from the motives to be feared or hoped for. Some temperaments, especially among women, are capable of discerning the slightest indications that would pass unnoticed by others. Thus, in a great number of cases the presentiment is but a foresight based upon a hies intuition of the circumstances; what is taken for an internal voice is but a well done calculation. The other cases must be ranged among the superstitions. The greatest calamities which have befallen most persons have come without any warning whatever, except such as could be inferred from existing situations. All mankind has had to rely upon experience, foresight and guidance by ordinary sagacity. The occasional fulfillment of dreams, premonitions, visions and so-called inner voices are at best coincidences, and the only inner voice which, when followed, will always lead us right is—the voice of reason.

On Being Obvious.

By Randolph Forbes.



In a recent magazine article, a certain clever writer jokes some innocent fun at the commonplace people of this commonplace world who are prone to make what one might call "obvious remarks." The man is laughed at, who, when he takes a glass of water at a gulp, says to you: "After all, old man, there's nothing like a good cold glass of water to quench one's thirst!"

But is it just to laugh at him? Think how simple he makes your share in the conversation. All you have to reply is, "Yes," and he is wholly satisfied, and you are saved the exertion of trying to make a clever reply to what might have been from him a brilliant epigram.

There lies the whole trouble. If you mingle constantly with inordinately clever people you will soon find yourself endeavoring to be as witty and bright as they; and unless you have been endowed by Nature with a gift for the light quip and jest, you are apt to become an awful bore—and from all bores, good Lord deliver us!

Personally, I am fond of the steady, easy-going people who tell me that they prefer comedy to tragedy because there is so much tragedy in real life; or those who invariably tell you that "anyhow, education is something that no one can take away from you;" or, "How time flies!" or "You wouldn't enjoy your meals at hotels so much if you could have a peep at some of the kitchen staff;" they save me my breath, and they are very restful—if I do not stay with them too long. They certainly keep me from attempting to be too clever; and with all my heart and soul I loathe people who are too clever.—From Puck.

Miscalled English Conservatism

By Louise Imogen Guiney.



THE most singular circumstance about this modern national inertia, miscalled conservatism (true conservatism being a most militant thing), is that it proves to be a source of prodigious pride to the kingdom which has complacently sunk into it. It is locked upon as "English"—that is, it means dignity, safety, moderation, peace. That it means provincialism, that it means death, is patent to nobody but some upstart bonnet rouge of a critic. It is hard to get people to see that as in the world of thought doubt is cheap and belief the intellectual thing, so in the world of action perfunctiveness is cheap and enthusiasm the intellectual thing. Whenever a man of genius is bred in England, endowed necessarily with faiths and ardors of one sort or another, he usually stands out from his racial environment in an absolutely bewildering way. In the United States the man of genius is a far less frequent phenomenon, for Nature uses her phosphorus freely there on divers and sundry, and has no surplussage and arrears of brains to make him out of; but when he does appear, is he not curiously like Americans in general? The man of genius overseas is not so homogeneous. Would it be rash to hint that he, too, is often curiously like Americans in general? This is simply because ideas and their purveyors have no standing to speak of in one country, and are the very life of the other. An idea arriving in New York harbor is recognized instantly, and to its own dismay, as a prince travelling in disguise, who must be interviewed before the gangway is fixed at the dock; whereas in England every idea is de facto a pauper and vagrant, repeatedly hauled before the magistrates and accused of brawling in churches, or else (only too accurately!) of having no visible means of support.—From "English Reserve," in the Scribner's Magazine.

Chinese Opinion Kindly To Missionaries

By Chester Holcombe.



THE Chinese Imperial Government has recently despatched two commissions, composed of officials of high rank and a numerous staff, to visit and study various important subjects in America and Europe. When arrangements were being made for the visit of the first of these commissions to Boston, and a long list of points in or near the city which they might wish to see was submitted to them, among the first selected were the offices of the American Board, the parent of all foreign missionary organizations in the United States and having large interests in that work in China. The selection of this active centre of foreign evangelistic effort was unguided and entirely spontaneous. In their addresses and informal remarks during the visit to those offices the commissioners expressed in unqualified terms their appreciation and strong approval of the missionary enterprise in China and their gratitude for what had been and was being done there. "We know who are our friends," said they again and again. Yet neither of the Chinese commissioners was a convert to Christianity; they were under no obligation to visit one of the headquarters of American missionary effort in China or, being there, to go beyond polite and non-committal remarks. Hence, and all the more, their declarations must in all fairness be taken as strong official indorsement and approval. With much the same feelings they expressed their delight at what they saw at Wellesley College and recognized in it the grander development of what American women were attempting to do for the women of China. To speak quite frankly and to the fact, for many years more unfriendly criticism and complaint of the presence of missionaries and their work in China has been heard from foreigners, either, like them, alien residents in the Far East, or at home than from Chinese officials or people.—Atlantic Monthly.

Too Many Destructive Laws

By Professor Jeremiah W. Jenks, of Cornell University.



WE have had many laws merely destructive in their nature. Experience shows, first, that these laws have not been generally and impartially enforced. Had they been so enforced in some instances practically every trade unionist, every member of a grocers' association, even every clerk or salesman who agreed to devote his business energies solely to the interests of his employer during the period of contract, would now be occupying a felon's cell. Usually such laws have been ignored in small places, and in reference to smaller combinations, and have been enforced only against some of the larger, although quite possibly in some instances, at least against some of the more grasping and unscrupulous of the combinations. But even when these laws have been enforced they have at times led to higher prices for the consumers, and in other instances, although effective in form, they have been non-effective in fact. Though the corporations have nominally been dissolved, practically their members have worked together as efficiently as before. It may indeed be said that this exaggerated attack upon agreements of all kinds, reasonable and unreasonable, has been one factor, perhaps the most prominent factor, in driving together into a rigid, single organization establishments that without this pressure of an unwise law would have remained in great part competitive, although acting under agreements in certain particulars. People who complain most loudly against the concentration of our railways and the growth of our giant corporations have largely to thank the baleful influence of destructive legislation.

Stability, Calmness, Reason Versus Passion

By Gov. Chas. E. Hughes.



CONFIDENCE depends upon the assurance of stability. By stability is not meant fixity of things or relations, but steadiness. It may be steadiness in motion. Paradoxical as it may seem, human society cannot be stable unless it is progressive. That is because growth and progress are the law of our nature. Reason demands the facts. By the requirement of publicity is not meant sensationalism or distorted emphasis. Reason in its rule of governmental activities demands even, impartial and consistent enforcement of the law. Stability and confidence can never be assured save by strength and firmness. It is an egregious blunder to suppose that to make the administration of government and the enforcement of law a matter of caprice involves danger only as to the subject directly concerned. The evil cannot be so confined, but poisons the whole governmental system.