

AN OPTIMIST.

"O aged man, pray, if you know,
Now answer me the truth!—
Which of the gifts that the gods bestow
Is the greatest gift of youth?"

"O aged man, I have far to fare
By the divers paths of earth,
Say which of the gifts that with me I bear
Is the gift of the greatest worth?"

"Is it the might of the good right arm,
Wherewith I shall make my way,
Where dangers threaten and evils harm
Holding them still at bay?"

The old man smiled; the listening breeze
Grew whist on the sun-lit slope;
The old man sighed: "Ah, none of these!
Youth's greatest gift is his hope."
—Florence Earle Coates, in Lippincott's.

THE BETTER WAY.

By Alice C. McKeever.

LOUISE? "Yes, auntie."
"Where is Bob Hunter?"
"He has gone home."
"So early. Why did he go?"

"He had letters to write, he said."
The old woman glanced at the girl anxiously. Her eyes were dim, but she fancied that Louise looked as if she had been crying.

"My dear," she said, softly, "Bob is only a man—and you wouldn't let any sense of duty stand between you?"

The girl flushed deeply, and turned her lovely face toward her questioner.

"No, auntie, don't worry; it isn't a question of duty."
"I thought, perhaps—Bob is so close, he would object to me, and I wouldn't, not for the world, keep you apart. The poorhouse has no terrors for me—not if it makes you happy."
"You have a queer notion of what would make me happy. No, you are all I have left, and we'll hide a wee together."
And the girl pressed her soft cheek against the one so old and wrinkled.

"It's hard," murmured the old aunt. "First there was the old father and mother you nursed so long, and now there's me—and he's a likely lad as ever was. He'll be rich some day."
"Yes," said the girl, quietly. "I know it. He's made of the stuff that produces rich men. Let's forget him, for he is not of our world."
"But I hoped," persisted the old woman sadly, "that he might lift you, at least, up to his world. You work so hard, you are only a girl. Your life ought to have been so different."
"His world is not above mine," exclaimed Louise earnestly, "it is far below. I do not care to step down. Never mention this again, auntie, please."
But when the winter of snow and rain set in, and Louise had to plod back and forth a mile through the storm to the little millinery store, where she was hired at seventy-five cents a day, the old woman more than once brought up the name of her old-time lover.

"He's gone to the city," she said one day, "getting a salary that would make us rich, one year of it."
Louise, pale and weary, answered nothing, but the old woman continued plaintively.

"Now, if it hadn't been for me you'd be a living like a queen. Seems like instead of helping you, as I want to, I only take all your hopes away. Dear, dear, how long I do live!"

"Hush!" said the girl, sternly. "How unkind you are! You are all I have in the world. You are all I have ever had since—since they went away!"

"You're twenty-five," said the old woman, softly; "you're the prettiest girl for miles around. I always thought—"
"I'd marry. Well, I won't," answered Louise, brightly, "for I'm determined to be an old maid."
Bob Hunter had been in the city twenty years. He was no longer known as Bob, but as Robert Hunter, millionaire.

He had friends, such as they were, astute business financiers like himself; servants who ran at his bidding; but not one person in the whole world who loved him.

Even the little errand boys knew him for what he was, hard, cold and uncharitable. They were paid their stipulated pence, never a cent more. This world and this life was only a place to live long in, in order to grow rich and richer.

He seldom recalled his old country home; there were no ties there to hold him. Only, sometimes, there came a feeling memory of a fair young face, the one face in the world he had truly loved.

"She was a little fool," he would mutter; "she's been a martyr long enough. I didn't propose to saddle myself with that old maid. Well, she chose her way, I hope she's enjoyed it."
Accident brought back his old home vividly at last. There was a railroad running through that part of the country that he desired to buy.

"I'll run out there a few days," he said; "it will be prudent to do so, and I wonder how the old place looks by this time, anyway. Nobody will recognize me, I dare say."
But they did; the newspapers that heralded his name, and the old neighbors who remembered him as a boy wanted to see the great man he had become.

A number of old friends, as they were pleased to call themselves, undertook to show him around and to point out the improvements that twenty years had brought about.

There was a new court house, a new jail, and, lastly, a fine, large building, lately erected for the county poor.

Bob did not care a copper cent to be shown any of the affairs, but he had

"Oh, it isn't that—but my hand—"
He knew, when he took it almost by force; the pretty, white hand that had been now drawn and toll-marked.

He held it between both his own, his head bent over it, while a hot tear fell upon it.

Louise felt her breath coming and going at a most surprising rate, while she could not speak.

"I've thought it all over, Louise, ever since I found you here, this afternoon. I never knew what a cold-hearted villain I was before, but I know it well enough now."
Still Louise was silent.

"I loved you. I have never loved any one else, but money was my God, and—and it conquered me. But to-day, when I saw you so frail and helpless and so poor, and thought of all your life had been, and contrasted it with what it might have been, I felt I had not been so cruel in the past, I felt that I wanted to go out and shoot myself."
"But you didn't," said Louise, smiling with something of her old brightness.

"No, because back of it all was a little hope, a faint ray indeed, but I thought, perhaps, even if you hated me, you might let me see that—that you never wanted for anything. If you don't, I won't answer for the consequences."
"Fie, Bob?"

"Of course, there's a better way—that is, if you don't hate me after all, which do you choose?"

The cold and cheerless room seemed to change to one of radiant splendor, when he bent over to hear her low reply:

"I have always tried to choose 'the better way.'"—Household Companion.

Last Days of Clifford's Inn.
Clifford's Inn, London, which in the course of a few months will have gone the way of some other inns, and have been knocked down in the course of modern improvement by the hammer of the auctioneer, had retained as became an institution which is the premier of its kind, and dates from the days of Edward III. More than one quality manner and custom. The society, for instance, was governed by a principal and rules, and the rules were just as much incarnate as was the principal—more so, indeed, some of them. Lately, to obviate any invidious distinction, all the members were made rules. There was also a "Kendish mess" at which you might consider it rather a privilege to be asked to dine. Dinner ended, the napery of an extremely long and highly polished black mahogany table would be whisked off by a swift dexterity unexampled elsewhere. And then there would be brought to the President what looked like a hammer and was a little hard-baked loaf, and, anon, send it skimming to the other end, there to be as dexterously caught in a basket, in token that the fragments that remained of the banquet were panniered for the poor.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Earth's Most Gorgeous Palace.
Seventy-four years after St. Peter's at Rome was finished, Shah Jehan was building the most magnificent palace in the East—perhaps in the world—the beautiful Palace of the Moguls at Delhi. It is made of red sandstone and white marble; some of its walls and arches are still inlaid with malachite, lapis-lazuli, bloodstone, agate, carnelian and jasper. There were once silver ceilings, silk carpets and hangings embroidered with gems; the pillars were hung with brocades; the recesses were filled with china and vases of flowers, treasures of the goldsmiths' craft, also, no doubt from France, and Italy—the Italy of the Renaissance and the France of Mary of Medici. Beyond doubt there was the famous Peacock Throne—"a sort of large four-posted bed all made of gold, with two peacocks standing behind it, their tails expanded and set with sapphires, rubies, emeralds, pearls and diamonds, while a parrot cut out of a single emerald perched upon the tester." On the front side of the canopy was a diamond—the Koh-i-noor, now among the crown jewels of England. Tavernier, the jeweler, who was at Delhi in 1665, beheld these wonders and thought they represented, all told, "200,000,000 of livres."—Collier's.

Woman's Ready Wit.
South Wales proudly tells this story as proof woman's superior wit:

An inland revenue officer called to inquire if a lady had a license for her dog. She politely asked him to come in and sit down while she looked for it. In a few minutes she smilingly entered the room, bearing the license. Then it appeared she had in the meantime paid a visit to the postoffice at the corner.

From Yorkshire, says the London Express, comes a story that surpasses this one from South Wales.

A bailiff had to seize the furniture in a cottage. He knocked at the door. A relative of the woman who rented the house presented herself. She wore a woebegone countenance, and whispered with her forefinger before her mouth: "Hush! She is going. Call again, if you kindly will, sir!"

The officer of the law was compassionate. He postponed his visit for a week. The relative again appeared upon the scene, and, with tears in her voice, said: "She's gone! She's gone! And she's taken all the furniture with her!"

A School For Bakers.
There is hardly a phase of modern industrial life but which can be learned at some school specially devoted to its teaching to better or equal advantage than the old-time apprenticeship system. If there was one branch that had been overlooked it was that of the baker and confectioner, but this industry is no longer so neglected, as the London National School of Bakery and Confectionery offers a course of the most advanced instruction in this work.

Pluck and Adventure.
HORSE CLIMBED A STEEPLE.

SOME of the feats of horsemanship on record are so marvelous as to be almost incredible were they not supported by the unimpeachable evidence of so many who actually witnessed them.

It is not many years since a reckless Dane made a wager that he would ride his horse to the summit of the spire of St. Saviour's Church, in Copenhagen; and, impossible as the feat may appear, he actually won his wager and descended to the earth in safety. The contemporary accounts of this mad performance are in the highest degree thrilling, with their picture of the blanched, breathless crowd looking up with straining eyes at the horseman, growing smaller and smaller as he wound his way round and round the dizzy, narrowing steeple, expecting every moment to see horse and rider dashed to pieces at their feet, until at last he stood silhouetted against the sky on the topmost pinnacle, and waved his hand triumphantly to the crowd so far beneath him.

To understand this feat at all it is necessary to say that the spire was climbed by a steep and narrow staircase, which winds around it; but think of the daring, the courage and coolness necessary to accomplish such a climb, when the most trifling slip or loss of balance would have meant a swift and terrible death.

A similar feat was performed by that adventurous monarch Ferdinand VII, when he rode his favorite horse to the top of the tower of Seville cathedral. This, however, was a less hazardous performance than that of the Dane, for there is a fairly wide inclined pathway which climbs the tower; and, although to the spectators it seemed impossible that the King could ever emerge from the venture alive.

There is an account of a feat of horsemanship which seems more wonderful than either of those described. It is stated in the records of the year 1600 a man rode to the top of St. Paul's on his horse Morocco, to the amazement of thousands of onlookers. If this feat ever had any existence outside of the imagination of its chronicler, it is probable that the ascent was made by a staircase which may have been a feature of old St. Paul's.

Almost equally wonderful are the feats recorded of a pair of thoroughbred Arabian horses, the property of Professor Holloway, of Wyoming. These horses have been trained by their owner to make dives of seventy feet and more into a lake. "At a signal one of them starts up an incline at a quick walk until he reaches a platform seventy feet above the lake below. The professor is standing on the shore, and as the horse looks down from the platform he calls, 'All right!' At the sound of his voice the horse, without a second's hesitation, leaps from his pinnacle and, flashing through the air, disappears in a cloud of spray, from which he quickly emerges and swims briskly ashore."

It is doubtful whether any horseman, however daring and expert, can excel the skill of some Cossacks. When riding at full gallop they can pick up a child from the ground and toss it high in the air and catch it repeatedly like a ball. They will, also at a gallop, leap off their horses, pick up any small object, and without checking the horse's speed leap in a standing position on his back.

They will ride their horses down precipitous cliffs, on which there scarcely seems footing for an agile mountaineer, or leap them thirty feet down into a river; while a common feat is for a Cossack galloping at full speed to snatch a needle and thread from one of his fellow and thread the needle in less time than would seem possible in an armchair.

Few of these performances, however, are more astonishing than that credited to John Leech Manning, who rode his horse into an upstairs dining-room at the White Hart Hotel, Aylesbury, and jumped him over the dining-table. In describing the feat he says: "Nothing was removed from the table; in fact, the dinner was actually going on. I jumped the horse barebacked without a bridle. The horse performed before more than forty gentlemen, who were dining after the steppelashes." Some of the records of long-distance rides are well worthy of note, as when Mr. Osbaldeston, the famous squire sportsman of seventy years ago, rode 200 miles at Newmarket in eight hours and forty-two minutes, in November, 1831, using twenty-eight horses for the journey. In October, 1791, Wilde covered 127 miles on horseback at the Curragh in six hours and twenty-one minutes; and twenty-six years ago Leon, the Mexican rider, rode 100 miles at Alexandra Park in three minutes under five hours, an average speed of more than twenty miles an hour. In the following year Leon covered 505 miles in less than fifty hours, a wonderful feat of endurance.

IN AN EARTHQUAKE.
I shall long remember my first experience with an earthquake. Early in October of 1900, I was at Homer Spit, that lies between Chugachik and Kachemak Bays. I was very anxious to get some men to go with me into the mountains, and, hearing there were four living in a cabin at Anchor Point, twenty-five miles north of Homer Spit, whose services I might secure, I started out at foot to find the place. I did not leave Homer until 1 p. m., and night then came very early in these latitudes. I felt sure, however, that I should reach the place before it became very dark, and I might have done so, but the only route was along the beach, and in many places it was extremely rocky, affording very uncertain footing; then, at short intervals, small streams poured over the high sea-walls, and spread over the sands of the beach, where I was compelled to wade them, and my footwear was soon full of water. I had not gone far when a cold rain commenced to pour down upon me in torrents, and I was soon thoroughly soaked, and my clothing, much increased in weight, clung to me, and greatly retarded my progress. After many trying adventures, I arrived at the cabin late at night, so tired that I lost no time in stretching myself in a pair of blankets, on the floor, and was soon asleep. I had slept several hours, when I was awakened by a very peculiar and unusual sensation. The cabin was rocking and creaking and performing all sorts of strange evolutions, and everything loose on the floor and walls was playing hide-and-seek, in and out of its dark corners. My first impression was that our hillside was sliding into Kachemak Bay. I hurriedly staggered to the door, very much after the style of walking in a rapidly moving express train while running over a rough road-bed. When I opened the door I could see by the coming light of day that our hillside was yet intact, and then I realized what was taking place. I was really delighted, for I had often wished for the experience, and, unlike almost all other experiences in the north, it came to me without any effort on my part.—"An Explorer-Naturalist in the Arctic," by Andrew J. Stone, in Scribner's.

The Kaiser in Plain Clothes.
Few Germans have seen the Kaiser in plain clothes, says the London Express. Yet he does wear them sometimes, but only when it is absolutely necessary, for he prefers uniform, even at home.

The time he is in mufti in Berlin is when he goes to his tennis court. He then wears a white flannel suit, but out-of-doors covers it with a military cloak.

When he is in England, however, mufti is the rule. This is also the only time that anybody has ever seen the Kaiser in a dinner jacket or a black dress coat.

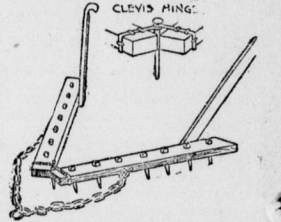
Formerly the Kaiser ordered all his plain clothes from England, browns and light grays being his favorite colors; but now he orders everything in Berlin and Potsdam, mostly in the latter place.

Farm Topics

TO BREAK A HALTER PULLER.
Several horsemen have given their methods of breaking horses from pulling at the halter. The best method, and most effective I ever saw tried is to buckle a strap around the ankle of one of the forward feet, and then run the halter through the hole in the manger or hitching post and tie the end to the strap around the ankle. One month's application is sure to cure.—H. W. Hardy, in New York Tribune Farmer.

EARLY POTATOES.
Early potatoes should be of a variety that will come early. While the yield of the crop is important, yet the crop that gets into the market a week sooner than usual will bring 100 per cent. more in price. Seedmen offer new varieties every year, but so many of them are claimed to be "the earliest" that it is impossible to make a selection. There are, however, well-known early varieties that have been tested, and they should be given the preference until something better has been tried in a limited way.

SELF-ADJUSTING HARROW.
The tool herewith illustrated you will observe is hinged at the front end to prevent leaving a strip in the middle. Make a strong hinge similar to the clevis for each side, the coupling



pin acting as a tooth; thus you can adjust the harrow to any uneven width of row, cleaning the entire space at one trip. Take a trace chain four feet long, staple the ends to side pieces, one-third way back; this not only prevents the horse from raising the front end from the ground, but spreads the harrow, thus counteracting its natural tendency to close. As an orchard tool they are unsurpassed, as they can be closed up while passing a tree, thus avoiding injury.—The Epitomist.

SYSTEM ON THE FARM.
System and order are laws of nature. Too many of our farmers disobey these laws, by doing their work in a confused, unsystematic manner, having everything and about the farmyard kept in a disorderly way, allowing buildings to become ragged and tottering, and carrying on the general management carelessly and recklessly. System and order are necessary in every trade or profession, and not least in farming. They are essential as economizers of labor and expenditure, as well as promoters of happiness and comfort. The man or woman who does not plan may toil incessantly from early morning till late at night without accomplishing as much as he or she who has worked systematically for a much shorter period. Have a definite plan of work. If there are several to do the work, let each one be assigned a certain part of it, thus avoiding confusion and delay. Have a place for tools and implements, that they may easily be found when needed. See that all machinery is in running order by the time the season for its use has come. It is well to have machines looked after before putting away after having been used. Keep buildings and yard in order and neatness, and farm life will be more pleasurable and profitable.—Gustav M. Bruce, in The Epitomist.

CARE OF THE BROODER.
Use dry sand, sawdust or even paper on the floor of the brooder, changing frequently. An occasional scrubbing with soap and water will aid in keeping the floor sweet and clean. Polish up the glass and allow the chickens the benefit of the sunshine whenever possible.

A hydro-safety lamp is much better than a common oil lamp. Trim the wick and fill the lamp as often as there is the least danger of the oil becoming exhausted. It does not pay to run the risk of having the light go out and the chicks become chilled. If lime is used in the brooder, sprinkle plentifully with some non-irritating substance to prevent injury to the feet of the little chicks. As the brooder is the home of the chicks and they are confined exclusively to it for the first few days, during that time it requires extra care.

Small trays for feeding are useful, both for keeping the feed from becoming filthy and for preventing it from becoming mixed with the litter on the floor. A small fountain should be used for watering the chicks. I usually take a small tea plate, pour it about two-thirds full of water and invert a saucer in the centre, or a bowl inverted will do as well. Sometimes I use a flat dish and cover with a stone, leaving only sufficient room for the chicks to insert their heads and drink. This keeps the floor comparatively dry, which is a great help toward keeping the brooder clean.

An occasional airing and sunning will sweeten the brooder wonderfully. Take an old scrub brush and some boiling soapuds, scour out the brooder and leave in the sun until thoroughly dry. Turn so that every part will come in direct contact with the rays.—Mrs. C. B. Barrett, in New England Homestead.