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THE OLD GRINDSTONE.

Had the old thing's broken,
And its bench is torn apart,
When I was but a sapling
Of a boy, it broke my heart.
There it lies, dismantled, ruined,
And 'tis joy to see it prone,
That instrument of torture,
The old grindstone.

I stand upon its segments—
Nearly buried where they lie—
And memory of that anguish
Brings a tear into my eye.
I am glad the days of sorrow,
That it brought to me, have flown,
And I can stand and stamp upon
The old grindstone.

So many days in summer,
When the fish were biting fine,
I've yearned to tantalize them
With my brand-new hook and line,
But had to work the handle
Until wearied to the bone,
And turn, till I was dizzy,
The old grindstone.

At noontime, in the haying,
When the dark and grassy shade
Was cooling and inviting,
I have felt my color fade
When father, or big brother,
Would call, in gruffest tone:
"Come here, you scamp, and turn awhile
The old grindstone!"

I've made it whizz and wobble
Till the blade it ground would ring;
And when it needed water,
I must bring that from the spring;
But when I thought of resting,
I was "Just a lazy drone."
For it seemed I was the slaving
Of the old grindstone.

The years are very many
Since the trials of my youth,
And, though I've wished them back again,
To tell the honest truth
I think I'd rather bear the ills
Along my pathway strewn,
Then be a boy and turn again
The old grindstone.

—William L. Visscher, in Chicago Times-Herald.

HER SILVER WEDDING.

BY HELEN M. PALMER.



"I've been thinkin', Elviry," said Aunt Hannah, in the calm and placid voice which had smoothed so many rough places in the course of a 50 years' pilgrimage, "I've been thinkin' that it'll be 25 years come next Wednesday since me and your Uncle Jed was married, and if he'd a' been spared, we'd a' had a silver weddin'. I ain't never had any weddin' only the first one." Here Aunt Hannah dropped her knitting needles, which had been clicking cheerfully, as she sat on the front doorstep in the summer twilight, pleasantly conscious of the neat little front yard with its straight paths bordered with June roses and tree honeysuckles, and lifting her eyes to the blue hills which shut in the far horizon, she saw again youth and love and hope. But the touch of old Rover's nose suddenly pressed close upon her knee, seeking a friendly hand, brought her back to earth again; and with a sigh, in which regret was tempered by contentment, Aunt Hannah turned again to Elvira, and, sure of sympathy from her favorite niece, proceeded to unfold her plan.

"You know, Elviry," she said, "that your Uncle Jed didn't live but three years after we was married, so we couldn't have kep' an anniversary, even if it had been the fashion then. Not but I've thought of him, I guess, just as often as if we'd had a wooden weddin', and a tin one, and all the rest of 'em."

Here Aunt Hannah's needles clicked a little faster. She was thinking of some remarks that had been made when, five years after Jed's untimely death, she went to meeting one Sunday with some pink roses in her bonnet—roses which matched her cheeks very well at that time, and still matched her disposition.

"I guess they can't say much about that," said Elvira, "seeing that everyone knows you might have had Deacon White or Minister Stebbins any day if you'd say the word."

"Well, well, child," said Aunt Hannah, with a conscious smile, "that's neither here nor there; but seeing's I didn't have 'em, seems to me it's rather hard that, jest because Jed died so untimely, we shouldn't have any anniversaries like the rest of folks. He'd liked 'em—he always liked company; we was of one mind about that, as we was about most things; an' I know, if he was here to-day, he'd say: 'Hannah, you jest go ahead an' have it.' And so, Elviry, I'm a-goin' to." This was said with some decision, and then, as if to forestall any possible objections, Aunt Hannah hurried on: "I haven't had any company for most four years—not since your sister Lidy was married, and I give her a send-off. Of course, I've had sewin' society, and done my share in church and temperance doin's, but, somehow, it didn't seem jest the right thing for me, a widow woman, to start up and ask the neighbors, men and women folks both, to jest a party. But this is different; it seems as if Jed was sort of givin' it with me, an' if

they's presents, why, I don't know of any man that ever deserved better of his neighbors than he did."

Aunt Hannah's voice faltered a little, but she had taken the first step on what she felt to be dangerous ground, and was not going to recede.

"What if they is presents, Elviry? I don't ask 'em to bring none, no more'n a bride does when she asks you to the weddin'; but I guess the bride don't live these days that wouldn't be dreadful disappointed if she didn't get none; and I own I'd be some disappointed, too. I like pretty things"—Aunt Hannah's voice took a wistful tone—"an' I've never had none—only what I aint. Jed would 'a got me all I wanted if he'd only lived; but, you see, when we was married 'twan't the fashion to give weddin' presents. Why, all I had was half a dozen teaspoons your grandma gave me, and a pair of claw sugar-tongs your Grand-Aunt Peck left me in her will. An' look at Lidy! Why, she had more things to start with than me an' your mother 've had in all our lives. Then, if I say it, as I shouldn't, I've always done my share; there ain't a bride married in Saranac Corners these 20 years that I haven't took her somethin', if 'twan't more'n a set of mats or a crocheted tidy, and lots of times 'twas store things. An' it does seem, though I wouldn't say it to everyone, that it ain't hardly fair that, jest because I was left alone this way, I shouldn't have none of the pleasant things I might have had if I'd had all the rest. An' so, Elviry, I've made up my mind that there ain't any earthly reason why I shouldn't have a silver weddin', an' I'm a-goin' to have one."

Whatever misgivings Elvira might have felt when the project was first disclosed had melted away in the warmth of her aunt's feeling; and, knowing that the slowly matured resolves of a placid nature are hard to shake, and trusting to the real regard of the neighborhood for the kindly, helpful widow, whose social and pleasure-loving temperament had before now exposed her to the criticism of her friends without really affecting their liking, she offered no objection, and, yielding a ready assent to the plan, was soon in the midst of a delightful discussion of details, in which Aunt Hannah's too often repressed love of social functions found full expression.

Early on the following afternoon Aunt Hannah started out to give her invitations with a faint flush on her cheeks, by way of tribute to the conventional usage she might be transgressing, but with a little formula prepared, which included no explanation and permitted no comment. The invitation to be present at the 25th anniversary of her marriage with Mr. Jedidiah Rounds was as carefully worded as if she had studied it in the pages of the "Home Manual," as she probably had; and only waiting to add that she should be "dreadful disappointed if they didn't all come," she hurried from house to house. This unwonted haste on the part of leisurely Mrs. Rounds might have made her neighbors suspect that she was a little uneasy herself as to the impression her invitations might produce, but she gave no other grounds for such a suspicion; and, indeed, when she reached home, after having made the circuit of the neighborhood, the pleasant stir of action had taken possession of her, and she set about her preparations for the great event with as untroubled a mind as if she were planning for a church "sugar party." The momentous question now was whether the "entertainment" should be confined to the elegant but unsatisfying ice-cream and sweet cake, or should boldly cater to the tastes of the stronger sex by admitting the golden doughnut and the flaky pie.

The next day was Saturday, the day when the "Corners" went to the village

well set up to have a silver—I mean a wooden weddin' myself." "Well, why not? Ain't you expectin' to, some time?" asked Mrs. Bascom, the minister's wife, in her most conciliatory tones. At this Miss Prindle preened her ruffled feathers, smoothed her black alpaca apron, and ceased from further troubling for the moment, in view of future possibilities. "What do you s'pose Deacon White'll say to it?" asked Widow Jenkins, giving a careless air to her question by stopping in the midst of it to shake out the garment she had just completed. "Es Hannah Rounds ain't troubled herself about what Deacon White's said all these years he's been a-runnin' after her, 'tain't likely she'll begin now!" responded Mrs. Abijah Rounds, who, though she was severe enough in private, on Hannah's easy-going ways, pink roses and pink cheeks, yet in public never forgot that she had been Abijah's brother's wife. Mrs. Jenkins pursed her lips and was about to make a retort, when Mrs. Bascom bethought herself of asking who was Mrs. Rounds' grandmother on her mother's side, and in less than five minutes the company, led by two or three of the older women, was launched



"WHAT IF THEY IS PRESENTS, ELVIRY?"

to do its "trading." It was well that Mrs. Round's invitation had been already given—that is, it was well for those who did not wish to go empty-handed to a silver wedding. Who shall say that she had foreseen this difficulty, and provided for it?

It was also the day on which the sewing society met; and to-day, for the first time in many years, Mrs. Rounds was absent.

"Gittin' baked up for the silver weddin', I suppose?" said thin little Miss Prindle, the village dressmaker, with a snort of disapproval. "Most ridiculous thing I ever heerd of; why, I might as

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on a sea of reminiscence and genealogical discussion, in which Aunt Hannah and her party were soon lost sight of. The men at "the store" had their say, too, but they were accustomed to let their "women folks" settle matters of etiquette; so the question passed with a joke or two, mostly leveled at Deacon White, who, balanced on a bench on the little stoop that ran across the front of the store, his shoulders propped against the wall and his hat pulled well down over his eyes, received them in silence, as one who could afford to let others laugh. Wednesday morning Aunt Hannah was up with the dawn, and by five o'clock, when Elvira came hurrying from school, every room in the little house was not only spotless, but had received every decoration which Aunt Hannah's fertile brain could devise. "I don't know but it looks sort of foolish," she said, as she led Elvira from the summer kitchen to the parlor chamber. "What do you think?" "I think it's just lovely," said Elvira, and Aunt Hannah beamed.



SHE HURRIED FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE.

If Aunt Hannah couldn't "bank" her mantles with chrysanthemums, she had filled every fireplace, and even the kitchen sink, with asparagus boughs. Long sprays of asparagus hung from every ceiling to attract any fly that dared to venture in, and the white-and-gilt china and red Bohemian glass vases had all been carefully filled with tight bunches of many-colored flowers. But the decorations were not confined to natural flowers. Crepe paper lampshades had not yet reached the "Corners," or were considered too striking an innovation to be adopted by staid people like Aunt Hannah; but life-size parasols cunningly fashioned of pink-and-white tissue paper were suspended beneath the looking-glass in the parlor; and an elaborate pagoda framed of perforated cardboard and decorated with glass beads, which had once taken a prize at the county agricultural fair, occupied a conspicuous position on a small round black walnut table. Tidies of every size and description were pinned on every available spot; braided cloth mats, or hit-or-miss rag rugs, made islands on the painted floors, except in the parlor, where a "three-ply" laid over a liberal sprinkling of straw gave one the sensation of treading on waves; the photographs of the different members of the family in their oval, black-varnished frames, with a line of gilt-beading, were draped in yellow tulle; and so was the ancient painting on velvet, done by Aunt Hannah's mother in her youth, and representing an elegant classic female weeping over a tomb. In short, everything that was possible had been done to bring the little house to the highest pitch of perfection.

Aunt Hannah herself was radiant in a steel-gray poplin, with some white lace around her neck and crossed on her ample bosom. "It was mother's lace," she told Elvira. "Mother and I favored each other, and we always picked the same patterns. I'd have liked," she continued, with a gentle sigh, "to have wore one of the dresses I had when I was married; 'twouldn't have seemed no more'n right, considering Jed; but, goodness knows, I

couldn't any more have got into it than I could a' flew."

Just then came a knock at the front door, which stood open to the summer air, and Elvira hastened to take from a little boy a box which came "with Mr. and Mrs. Bascom's compliments."

"Now, ain't that just like Miss 'Bascom'?" said Aunt Hannah, when the parcel was at last undone. "She does beat all; some folks might have known I wanted a parlor clock till doomsday an' they'd a-got me a album instid; but she never makes a mistake."

Indeed, in Aunt Hannah's present mood not much could come amiss; and as guests and presents arrived, each was more welcome than the other. To be sure, when Mrs. Jenkins, ostentatiously mourning in bombazine and rusty crape, arrived, bringing with her a framed worsted-work tablet bearing the legend: "To the memory of the dear Departed," worked in black, on a purple ground, Mrs. Bascom hastened to intercept it. But Aunt Hannah was floating on a sea of feeling, flowing from the blessedness of receiving, mingled with tender recollections of her youth, which bore her buoyantly over any such attempt to point the finger of scorn, and, gratefully accepting the tablet, she found room for it in the very middle of the mantle shelf, and placed a big bunch of sweet-williams beside it, remarking in an undertone to the friend nearest her that "she didn't know that his middle name was William, but so it was. Jedidiah William it stood in the Bible; but they'd always called him Jed."

Her good humor was proof against the insinuation contained in Miss Prindle's present of a black lace cap; it overflowed into delight to welcome the "elegant silver butter dish," the pickle dish and spoonholder, fashioned intricately, with a maximum of glass and a minimum of silver; it accepted gayly the gallant speeches of Deacon White, whose lagging intentions were visibly quickened by this scene of pleasant comfort and good will, though he himself had only thought fit to bring a britania teapot with a black knob on the handle.

"Out of his store," so Mrs. Abijah commented to Elvira, "and old stock he couldn't sell off at that; for there's a dent down close to the handle, an' I expect it leaks Your Aunt Hannah better look out; it's pretty hard to marny for money and work for love!"

But the evening was without a flaw for Aunt Hannah; and when, at last, the guests were gone, the dishes washed and put away, the house "red up," the presents inspected for the last time, and she and Elvira had dropped into their old places upon the doorstep for a moment's rest before going to bed, she breathed a gentle sigh as she said: "Well, Elvira, it's all over, an' I've had a real good time, too; if only your Uncle Jed could a' been here to enjoy it with me!"—Peterson's Magazine.

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The sea gull is a benefactor. The sea gull is doubly the benefactor of man. It not only follows plow (on farms near the sea coast), order to eat the freshly-turned grubs, but it scours the surface of the sea near the shore and frequents harbors to seize on floating garbage, dead fish, or other putrefying morsels. The service of these birds have saved many a seaport town and village, round which they hover, from plague and pestilence. Yet every year they are massacred by the thousands for idle and cowardly sport or for the sake of their wings to be used in millinery. Their eggs are plundered wholesale for museums and to fill the shop windows of naturalists. One man boasted a year ago that he had killed 4,000 kittiwake gulls in a single season with his own gun, and an order was given and executed from one London house for 10,000 pairs of wings. At this rate gulls must soon disappear altogether. The carrion crow, the raven and others which follow their example, more or less, confer an immense boon on mankind. Sparrows clear the gutters and places which they inhabit from a vast quantity of scattered fragments. Though too small to be seen, these unsavory morsels would soon become dangerous to human life and health.—Spare Moments.

Dreams as Warnings. If science has dispelled such old wives' fables as that to dream of a marriage signifies death, or to dream of a cat means an enemy she has added to the subject mysteries of her own. One scientist systematized these subtle premonitions to make them available for use and guidance. To quote his opinion. Lively dreams are a sign of the excitement of nervous action. Frightful dreams are a sign of determination of blood to the head. Dreams in which one imagines pain or injury to any part of the body indicate disease of the part. Dreams of distorted forms are a sign of obstruction or disease of the liver. To dream of fainting indicates a weak action of the heart. Gentle, pleasant dreams are a sign of a slight irritation of the head, but in nervous fevers often indicate the approach of a favorable crisis. Dreaming is an experience common to humanity, though it varies widely in different individuals, and in a few exceptional cases is absolutely unknown.—N. Y. Journal.

Capacity of St. Peter's. It needs 50,000 persons to make a crowd in St. Peter's. It is believed that at least that number have been present in the church several times within modern memory; but it is thought that the building will hold 80,000—as many as could be seated on the tiers in the Colosseum. Such a concourse was there at the opening of the Ecumenical Council in December, 1869, and at the two jubilees celebrated by Leo XIII.; and on all three occasions there was plenty of room in the aisles, besides the broad spaces which were required for the functions themselves.—Marion Crawford, in Century.

Peel and Wellington. Dean Boyle in his "Reminiscences" tells a striking anecdote of the mutual appreciation of the same quality of high sincerity in public life of the famous statesman, Sir Robert Peel and the "Iron Duke" of Wellington.

Mr. Wood, a friend of Dean Boyle's, had at one time, when the duke of Wellington was very ill in London, come from the city to a country house at which Peel was visiting. As soon as he arrived Sir Robert called him aside and asked with intense anxiety what was the latest news of the duke's condition. It was considered hopeless and Mr. Wood told him so. The great minister broke down utterly, crying out with a burst of tears: "He is the truest man I have ever known!"

The duke, however, recovered, despite the predictions of his doctors, and survived Peel. The same gentleman—Mr. Wood—by a curious coincidence, was present when Peel was thrown from his horse and received the injuries which resulted in his death. He hastened to his assistance, procured a carriage and accompanied him home, remaining for some time in the house to render the family what services he might in their time of confusion and distress. He was yet there when the duke of Wellington arrived to make inquiries and was deputed by Lady Peel to receive him. He hastened to the door and found the duke on the step about to enter the house and informed him that the physician pronounced Sir Robert's hurt to be desperate and his chance of life almost nothing.

"He was the soul of truth," said the old soldier, huskily, and, turning abruptly from the threshold, he mounted his horse and rode sorrowfully away.—Chicago News.

To Clean Wall Paper. During house cleaning if an old wall paper is to be removed before going to work close the doors and windows tightly, place an old boiler or tub in the room and fill it with boiling water. The steam will moisten the paper and the work may be done quickly and more easily.—Chicago Tribune.

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