

CRADLE SONG.

See the moon begins to rise  
As a star to shine,  
All the twinkling stars that  
Are close to mine.  
Hush, hush, hush!

Birds are sleeping in the nest  
On the swaying bough,  
Toss, toss, the mother breast  
No sleep there.  
Sleep, sleep, sleep!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich in the Independent.

PEG.

Peg was a cripple. He couldn't remember what his real name was, because he was a very little fellow when he first came out of the hospital and began to stump about on his wooden leg. Peg was a name the boys gave him.

Three years ago there was a terrible scourge of yellow fever down in Florida—the smallest child who reads the Times will remember about it. Hundreds of people died, and hundreds of little children were left fatherless, and motherless, and homeless. It was a sad Christmas time in Florida three years ago.

Peg's father and mother lived in Jacksonville, right in that part of the city where the fever was the worst, and, seeing their neighbors one by one carried out and buried, they grew frightened, for they thought their turn might come next. So one night they crept out of the city, and got on a train bound for the north—Chicago. Peg's father was a music-teacher, and he had an idea that in the great city he had read so much about, where there were so many rich people, he would find plenty of work. Anyway there was no yellow fever in Chicago and that was something. But they had stayed in the South too long. Before the train was half way to its destination they were both taken sick, and when it was whispered about that they had come from Jacksonville there was a panic; and the train was stopped in order that the sick ones might be carried out.

The instinct of self-preservation leads people to do selfish and cruel things sometimes. Surely it did in this instance, for these poor people were left alone by the side of the railroad to die.

It happened in the night, and Peg, who was fast asleep in the corner of the seat with his father's coat around him was overlooked by the people who were so anxious to get his sick parents out of their way that they never thought of the child.

The train rattled on and on until it was morning and then Peg woke up. Poor little Peg, he was all alone. His father and mother were gone. "They got off the train in the night," some one told him. Nobody had the heart to tell him the truth and he wouldn't have understood it if they had, for he was only five years old. But he did understand that he was alone and that he was hungry. So he began to cry, just as any little boy would have done under the same circumstances. Of course the people were sorry for Peg, but their fear was stronger than their compassion and they dared not go near him.

The conductor got him something to eat and told him that when they got to Chicago he would send him to a big house where there were a lot of children, and Peg began to be comfortable, for he was only a baby, you see, and couldn't be expected to understand what a sad plight he was in.

On the seat opposite to Peg lay his father's violin, carefully done up in its case. This violin had always been his special pride, and the little boy wondered how his father could have forgotten it. Anyway, it must not be left in the car, he thought, so when the train stopped and the conductor came to take him to his new home, Peg carried with him the violin, and that was all he had in the world. It wasn't much capital to begin life with in a great city, was it? But then, you see, he didn't understand.

On his way from the train Peg lost sight of the conductor, and while running about to find him he slipped and fell. A truck was passing with a big iron safe upon it, and one of the wheels rolled right over a poor little leg that lay in its way. Peg didn't remember any more until he found himself in a big room lying on a little white cot. Around him were a lot of other cots, each with a child upon it. It was the children's ward in a charity hospital. Peg wondered if this was the place the conductor had told him about, and then he wondered what made all the children so pale, and why they were all in bed in the daytime. Suddenly he became conscious that his leg was hurting dreadfully. He put his hand down to see what was the matter and found only a stump with a bandage about it. The leg was gone. A white-capped nurse was standing by who told him he must be quiet.

"Where's my leg?" he asked.

"The doctor had to cut it off, because you fell and a wagon crushed it."

"Won't they put it back on again?" asked Peg.

The nurse did not smile—she was too sorry for her poor little patient to do that, but she had to tell him, "No."

"But how can I walk?" asked the little fellow, pitifully.

"You will have a nice wooden leg," said the nurse. "Of course, it won't be quite like a real one but you can walk, and now you mustn't talk any more. Here is a nice bowl of broth for you, and then you must take your medicine and go to sleep."

There were many long days in the hospital, but at last the little boy was allowed to get up. A wooden peg was fastened to the stump where his leg had been, and he learned in a few days to walk upon it.

he had it tight in his armpit when they took him out from under the wheel that crushed his leg, and that they had saved it for him. Peg was glad. He was more fond of the violin than any toy he ever had owned. He could play a little.

After Peg left the hospital he went to the place the conductor had told him of. A big house full of boys, and now Peg realized for the first time what it was like not to have any father or mother. The place was called an "orphans' home," but it wasn't a bit like the home he remembered. Some of the big boys teased him, and hurt him, and then called him "baby" because he cried.

Peg had only been in the home a few weeks when Christmas time came. The boys had turkey for dinner that day, and they seemed to think it a great treat, but Peg couldn't eat. There was something in his throat that choked him. All day long he thought of the little home away down in Jacksonville. It wasn't a splendid home at all, for Peg's parents were poor, but there was a mother in it, and the poor little boy was just beginning to learn that a home without a mother is a very forlorn place indeed.

Peg's mother used to tell him stories on Christmas night when they sat in front of the fire. In the southern houses there are big fire-places where they burn pine logs, and the best place in the world to hear a Christmas story is in front of a crackling pine fire.

Peg tried to remember on this Christmas eve, as he lay all alone in his little hard bed, what it was that mother told him on the night before Christmas last year. What a long time ago it seemed. By and by it came back to him—the old sweet story that mothers have told their children on all the Christmas eves that ever have been or ever will be. The story of the little child that lay in the manger away over in Bethlehem, with the glory of heaven about his head and in his heart a love great enough to redeem the whole world from its sin. The prettiest part of the story as Peg remembered it was that over the hills among the stars a host of angels sang to the shepherds a song of peace and good will and blessing, and that one of the stars, so much brighter than the others that it seemed to light the whole world, came down out of the sky and guided the wise men to the place where they might find the precious gift that God had given the world. This was the first Christmas day, and the gold and silver and jewels which the wise men brought to lay at the feet of Jesus was the first Christmas gifts that ever were given.

Peg lay and thought it all over; he could not go to sleep. A terrible feeling of loneliness came over him. It wasn't a bit like Christmas. All the other boys were sound asleep. Peg crept out of his little bed and hobbled over to the window. He looked away over the city with its thousands of lights. A faint sound of chiming bells came to him. A clock in a far-away steeple struck ten times.

"There must be music over there," thought Peg. "I wish I could hear it." And almost unconsciously he began to put on his clothes. Then he took his violin and stole down the stairs.

His wooden leg made a noise, so he had an old stocking around it.

Peg didn't really know that he was running away; he only knew that he wanted to get where the music was. One of the windows downstairs was unfastened and he crawled out; then he hobbled away as fast as he could toward the sound of the bells—he could hear them quite plainly now.

It was a cold night, the wind blew in from the lake with a breath like ice. Peg's thin jacket did not keep him very warm, but he didn't mind it much, for somehow he felt that over there where the bells were ringing something very pleasant awaited him.

It was a long way and the sidewalks were slippery, but Peg, holding tight to his violin, kept on. At last he reached the bells. He stood under the very shadow of the cathedral. The big windows were one blaze of light, and from one of them looked down upon the little shivering boy that face full of divine compassion that has so comforted all heart-broken and lonely ones who ever saw it.

It was a picture of Christ, the shepherd, and in his arms he bore a poor helpless lamb. Peg looked at the picture wistfully. Just then the great organ played and a beautiful voice said: "He shall gather the lambs in his bosom." Peg stretched out his arm to the picture.

The big tears were running down his cheeks, freezing as they fell. It seemed to him that there came a smile upon the tender face of the shepherd and then, in spite of the cold, in spite of the fact that he was all alone, there came into his heart a feeling of peace. He felt warmed and comforted—he did not know why. With his little numbed hands he undid the violin, seated himself against the stone front of the church, and began to play. It was a simple little melody, but somehow there seemed a strain of heart-break in it, and the people who were coming out of the church stopped to listen.

They never forgot the picture of the little pale-faced cripple standing there, the snow falling on his bare head, and the face of the Divine Shepherd shining above him.

Suddenly a man stepped out of the crowd and ran up to the child.

"Where did you get that music?" he asked, in such an eager voice that Peg was frightened, but he lowered his violin and answered: "My father wrote it and this is my father's violin."

"Your father?" gasped the man, and then he seized hold of the little cripple, lifted him up to the light, pushed back his hair and looked into his face. "It is, it is!" he cried. "O God, my father, I thank thee!" and, folding the little boy close to his heart, just as the Shepherd above was holding the lamb, he leaned against the stone pillar and sobbed out his joy. For it was Peg's own father. He had not died that night when they left him by the side of the track, though the mother had. Some people who had lived near

had been kinder than the railroad folks and taken care of him until he got well. His ticket for Chicago was still in his pocket, and so he had gone on. He supposed his little boy must be dead—anyway he did not know where to look for him—and now here he was. He found him. The little wooden leg dangled pitifully as Peg's father held him, and the people who gathered around to listen to the story as it was brokenly told by the glad father suddenly were reminded of the contrast between the lot of their happy rosy children and poor little crippled Peg. A man took off his hat and passed it around and the people filled it to the brim.

"Now I'll go home," said Peg's father, and they went. Peg wasn't long gone any more. The world had suddenly grown a beautiful place, full of love and happiness, and as they passed down the street there came to them from another church a jubilant chorus, singing: "Peace on earth, good will toward men." —Chicago Times.

THE ELEVATOR MAN'S PROBLEM.

Why Do Men All Whistle In His Conveyance.

Mike, be it known to you, is the elevator man!

Mike is more than this. He is a philosopher—a sort of sage in his way, and, what is more, is an acute student of human nature who reads men as well as books and daily newspapers.

Just now he is hard at work trying to solve a problem that occurred to him the other day.

"I've been pulling this elevator rope so long," said Mike the other day, "that I've got most things about this business down pretty fine. But there's one thing that gets me and that I can't make out."

"What I can't understand is why every man who gets into an elevator wants to whistle. Of course, it's the regular thing for boys to whistle in any place they happen to be, but with men it's different. There's a good many men that don't whistle and don't want to. I know 'em as soon as I see them. There's a bank president. Bank presidents can't afford to. Then there's editors; they don't whistle much either. No one ever saw a policeman whistle when any one was about."

"Now, you take any one of these three when they get into an elevator, and before they have gone up ten feet their mouths are puckered up and they are trying to whistle. It never fails. Men who would never think of whistling no sooner get into this box than they try to make mocking birds of themselves. And such whistling as it is, too. Most of it is like the squeak of a cart axle that wants greasing. I've looked this here thing over and over, and I can't make it out. I'd like some smart person to tell me what there is in an elevator that sets men to whistling!"

Here is a chance for psychologists to come to the front.—Mail and Express.

Remarkable Stone-Throwing.

The old saying that "Practice makes perfect" must be taken with a grain of allowance. Perfection is a rare commodity; but one meets here and there, even in the most unexpected places, men who have attained to the most astonishing proficiency in some one thing to which they have devoted themselves. The Rural New Yorker reports a striking instance of this kind:

A man died recently in Pennsylvania who was mentally deficient, but a giant physically, and who could throw stones with an aim as unerring as that of the most skillful hand of the rifle. He had a large leather pouch attached to one side of his coat, in which he always carried a good supply of these carefully selected missiles. With these he bagged every year no small quantity of game—grouse, quail, rabbits and squirrels.

He could kill a bird on the wing or a rabbit at full speed almost as easily as at rest. A favorite method of displaying his skill was to set up a scythe-blade, edge toward him, and at a distance of one hundred feet cut apples in halves by throwing them against the edge of the blade. He could almost exactly halve two out of every three apples he threw.

No Economy, No Means.

Stinginess is a curse to the individual ruled by it; but thoughtless prodigality is no virtue. The individual who does not and will not practice economy, is pretty liable to find, at length, that he has nothing either to prodigal with, or to practice economy upon. That eccentric but wise-headed old philosopher, Diogenes, once taught this lesson to another in a way peculiarly his own.

Diogenes, begging, as was the custom among many philosophers of ancient times, asked a prodigal man for more than any one else. A bystander, seeing this, said to him,

"I see your business, that when you find a liberal mind, you make the most of him."

"No," said the philosopher, "but I mean to beg of the rest again,"—meaning that the prodigal man would soon have nothing to give.

Facts That Sound Like Fiction.

Where is the novelist daring enough to match this? Mrs. Caroline Brayley, of Brighton, Mass., eloped with her husband's brother. Brayley got a divorce and subsequently married again. The eloped first wife repented, reformed, became the leader of a society for the aid of fallen women, and also remarried. Mrs. Brayley No. 2 also eloped with the same brother, and among those who called to offer consolation to Mr. Brayley was wife No. 1. She made a special journey over from Lynn, for this purpose, saying: "I am interested in this sort of work now, and I will do all I can for Charles." Somebody ought to do something for the brother-in-law.—Waterbury American.

SOME WITTY FLASHES.

LATEST ATTEMPTS AT FUN BY ALLEGED HUMORISTS.

How the Constable Rejuvenated a Hat of Teeth—The Sacrifices Too Great—A Little Boy's Fun—Various Squibs.

Rejuvenating Teeth. Then constables get together they pass the hours telling stories of remarkable attachments and replevins they have made, says the St. Louis Chronicle.

Constables Coghlan, Murphy, Hand, Dolan, Sheehan and a dozen others were thus engaged when Constable Matt Sheehan told one that capped the climax.

"Two years ago," said he, "I had very sore fingers, and I never till now told the boys how they were hurt."

"There was a dentist on Olive street that had sold a woman a set of false teeth on time payments. She didn't keep up the payments and the dentist came to us to get out a writ of replevin. I went to execute it. I knocked at the door."

"Are you Mrs. Smith?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have a writ of replevin here from Dr. Jones for a set of teeth you bought from him and haven't paid for."

"You just try to get them then!" said the tall woman, as she pinched her lips together in defiance.

"Well, madam, I pleaded, 'I hope you'll make me no trouble. I'll have to get those teeth.'"

"Your fingers will be bit if you do," she flashed.

"After I saw all argument was futile I called in a witness in the shape of a policeman, and we proceeded to open that woman's mouth."

"Finally she seemed very docile and opened her mouth. I put in my hand, when suddenly those chops closed, and my hand was caught between them."

"The policeman got out the teeth finally, but I carried my right hand in a sling for two weeks after."

The Sacrifice Too Great.

The momentous question had been propounded. Large pearls were slung to her drooping eyelashes and her bosom heaved with emotion, just as tears have clung and bosoms have heaved under similar circumstances since the days of the cave dwellers. He held her hand clasped to his vest.

"I know I am poor," the youthful suppliant faltered.

A glorious courage invested her being. She raised her eyes.

"Mr.—Mr.—Alfred."

It was her answer, a single word, eloquent with unutterable love and trust.

"Alfred."

"My life."

"I—I am not afraid of poverty."

He folded her to his bosom, fairly intoxicated with joy.

"With you I would live in a log cabin," she declared.

A look of pain flitted across his face and he was fain to bow his head to hide his emotion.

"I ask of you a greater sacrifice than that," he sighed.

The girl of a moment ago was transformed into a woman now.

"Do you want me," she eagerly cried, "to go West and live in a turf bog?"

He wept and the tears fell like rain. "Worse than that," he moaned.

The brave lady blanched and a pitiful expression of terror took possession of her face.

"Alfred."

He could only sob.

"Do you ask me—"

She had to stop and shudder awhile.

"Do you ask me to live—to live in a flat with modern conveniences?"

His silence was his acquiescence and his doom. Pale, but dignified, she bowed him.

"I must bid you goodnight," she icily remarked.

Mechanically he moved toward the door.

"You need not call again, sir."

And so they were not married.—Chicago Tribune.

A Little Boy's Fun.

American Mother—"Where in the world have you been all this time? I've been worried to death."

Little Son—"Only down the street a little ways, down to the docks."

"Horrors! I told you not to go on that dock."

"Oh, I didn't go on the dock. I went down alongside of it to throw stones on the ice. It was great fun."

"Oh!"

"Yes, and the stones didn't go through, the ice was so thick."

"It has been melting for some days."

"Oh, there's plenty of ice there yet. It was so thick I walked out a way, and it didn't crack hardly at all."

"Humph!"

"And when I walked it didn't wave up and down scarcely any. So I put on my skates to see if it was further—"

"Skates! You told me that your skates were at the shopingeharpened."

"Yes'm. I just got 'em. They're awfully nice and sharp. I skated all over the river with them."

"That's what they said. And the doctor did something I don't know what for two hours, they said. I was asleep. I guess I got sleepy 'cause I set up so late last night studying." Then the nurse dried my clothes, and when I woke up they sent me home in a queer wagon full of cushions. It was awful nice.—Good News.

She Sued Him.

A farmer entered a telegraph office in Central New York, and sent this message to a woman in Canada:

"Will you be my wife? Please answer at once by telegraph."

Then sat down and waited. No answer came. He waited till late in the evening still no answer.

Early the next morning he came in again and was handed a dispatch—an affirmative reply.

The operator expressed his sympathy.

"Twas a little rough to keep you so long in suspense."

"Look here, young feller," said the farmer, "I'll stand all the suspense. A woman that'll hold back her answer to a proposal of marriage all day so as to send it by night rates is just the economical woman that I've been a-waitin' for."—Chicago Journal.

Very Good.

Sojourners in barbarous countries find the natives illustrating their talk with comparisons which sound rather grim to civilized ears. An employee of the Kongo Free State writes that he had in his service a black man who was almost always accompanied by an ape, of whom he seemed very fond.

One day the native appeared without the animal. "What have you done with your monkey?" asked the white man.

"Monkey? Me eat him up!"

"You ate him? Are monkey's good to eat, then?"

"Um—taste same like white man!" said the negro, with an air of keen appreciation.

Down She Goes.

"One would suppose," observed the Telegraph Editor, as the news of the wreck of the Eider came over the wires, "that the Eider would be the last ship on the ocean to sink."

"Why so?" asked the Sporting Editor.

"Well, an Eider ought to swim like a duck, hadn't it?"

"Yes, there is that view of it; but there is also another one, with an opposite course of logic."

"Name it."

"Isn't it commonly supposed that eider and 'down' are closely related?" —Pittsburg Chronicle.

Taking Toti.

An American lady, visiting Paris, was continually interested in the smart little boys, in white caps and aprons, who deliver the wares of the pastry-cooks. One day she said to one of these boys who had brought her some cakes:

"Ah, I suppose you get the benefit of one of these cakes yourself sometimes?"

"What do you mean, madame?"

"You eat a cake now and then?"

"Eat them? Oh no, madame, that wouldn't do. I only lick 'em as I come along."

Where the Muses are Tabooed.

"Why," said the Chicago poet to the sparrow who had perched near his casement, "do you dare such familiarities? Do you consider yourself my equal in importance?"

"Your superior," replied the sparrow, with confidence.

"Why?"

"Because anyone who kills me gets two cents in addition to the thanks of the community. 'In your case,' the audacious bird continued, 'he would only get the thanks.'—Washington Post.

A Sure Sign.

"I see the editor of the Bugle take in five dollars to-day," said one burglar to another.

"S'pose we go round an' git it to-night."

"All right."

"That night at the stroke of twelve they stood under the Bugle editor's window."

"It's no go," said one, after peeping through the blind. "He's broke again. I see him on his knees sayin' his prayers."—Indianapolis Journal.

Small Expectations.

The Princeton Tiger prints what purports to be a conversation between an undergraduate and his cousin, a young lady.

She—Will you write to me on your return to college?

He—Why—er—you know I can't write.

She—Oh, I don't expect you to write brilliantly or amusingly; just write as you talk.

Good Evidence.

Now then," said Judge Sweetzer in a loud voice, "Mr. Baumgartner, you were present at this fray. Did Murphy the plaintiff seem carried away with excitement?"

"Nein; he vos carriedt away on two piece poundts mit his beadt split oben all down his pack."

"That will do. You may stand down."—Judge.

Feminine Gratitude.

Overheard in the railway station. First Young Woman—Oh, don't go into that car, Mag; that's all full. Plenty of seats in the next car.

Second Young Woman—Oh, come alone! Some fools will get up and give us their seats.—Boston Transcript.

NEW THING IN "POPPING."

A Wearer Practices a Proposal Upon His Girl's Sister.

He—Would you object to my proposing to you?

She (with humorous composure)—Not the slightest.

He—You would be perfectly willing that I should state in a few well-chosen words the length of time I have worshipped you and loved you, and the terrible despair which has been mine as I saw you universally adored and perceived how little chance there was of my hopes being realized while you remained queen over the hearts of suitors far more worthy?

She (as before)—Perfectly willing.

He—Would you prefer me to make the proposal standing or kneeling?

She (correctly lowering her eyes)—I think the latter way would be far better form.

He—Would you prefer the declaration in language fervent, fierce and outspoken, or intense, passionate and contained?

She (with considerable promptness)—Fervid, fierce and outspoken.

He—And would you deem it indiscreet if the proposer, during the declaration, should print some kisses on the hand of the proposee?

She (with artless candor)—Yes, if there were anything better and more satisfying reasonably contiguous.

He—If he encountered a feeble opposition merely, would you consider it unwise on the part of the proposer should he pass his arm around the proposee's waist?

She (gently but firmly)—It would be, I think, a matter of extreme regret if he failed to comprehend the possibilities the situation presented.

He—And in case the proposee should, after slight resistance, realize these possibilities would you consider such slight resistance sufficient encouragement to justify him in fondly folding the proposee to his heart?

She (as before)—Undoubtedly.

He—Taking it for granted, then, that the last situation has been consummated, can you see any reason why the proposer should not rightly regard himself in the light of a magnificent success as a wooer?

She (promptly)—I can not.

He—Or why he should not be joyful in the thought that for the nonce, at least, she is his and he hers?

She (with some impatience)—No.