

DROUTH.

The hot sunflowers by the glaring pike Lift shields of sultry brass; the teasel-tops, Pink-throated, advance with bristling spike on spike Against the furious sunlight. Field and copse Are sick with summer; now, with breathless stops, The locusts cymbal; now grasshoppers beat Their castanets; and rolled in dust, a team,— Like some mean life lost in its sorry dream,— An empty wagon rattles through the heat.

Dead! dead! all dead beside the drouth-burnt brook, Shrouded in moss or in the shriveled grass; Where waved their bells,—from which the wild-bee shook The dew-drop once,—gaunt, in a night-mare mass, The rank weeds crowd; through which the cattle pass, Thirsty and lean, seeking some meagre spring, Closed in with thorns on which stray bits of wool The panting sheep have left, that sought the cool, From morn to evening dearly wandering. No bird is heard; no throat to whistle awake The sleepy hush; to let its music leak, Fresh, bubble-like, through bloom-roofs of the brake; Only the gray-blue heron, famine-weak, Searching the stale pools of the minnowless creek,— Utter its call; and then the rain-crow, too, False prophet now, croaks to the stagnant air; While overhead,—still as if painted there,— A buzzard hangs, black on the burning blue. —Madison Cawein, in Harper's Magazine.

MISCONCEPTIONS.



THEODORE VELLAN had been out of England for more than thirty years ago. Thirty odd years ago the set he lived in had been startled and mystified by his sudden flight and disappearance. At that time his position here had seemed a singularly pleasant one. He was young—he was seven or eight and twenty; he was fairly well off—he had something like three thousand a year, indeed; he belonged to an excellent family, the Shropshire Vellans of whom the titled head, Lord Vellan of Northingfield, was his uncle; he was good-looking, amiable, amusing, popular, and he had just won a seat in the House of Commons, (as junior member for Sheffieldham), where, since he was believed to be ambitious as well as clever, it was generally expected that he would go far.

that had passed in this same drawing room more than thirty years ago. It was tea time, and on the tea table lay a dish of pearl biscuits, and she and her husband and Vellan were alone. Her husband took a handful of pearl biscuits and tossed them one by one in the air, while Vellan threw back his head and caught them in his mouth as they came down—this was one of his accomplishments. She smiled as she remembered it, but at the same time she put her handkerchief to her eyes. "Why did he go away? What could it have been?" she wondered. Her old bewilderment at his conduct, her whole being longing to comprehend it, reviving with something of the old, old force. Could it have been—? Could it have been—? And an old guess, an old theory, one she had never spoken to anybody, but had pondered much in silence, again presented itself interrogatively to her mind.

Then, quite suddenly, he had resigned and left England. His motive for this unlikely course he explained to no one. To a few intimate friends he wrote brief letters of farewell. "I am off for a journey round the world. I shall be gone an indefinite time." The indefinite time ended by defining it as upwards of thirty years, for the first twenty of which only his solicitor and his bankers could have given you his address and they wouldn't. For the last ten he was understood to be living in the Island of Porto Rico, and planting sugar. Meanwhile his uncle had died, and his cousin (his uncle's only son) had succeeded to the peerage. But the other day his cousin, too, had died, and childless, so that the estates and dignities had devolved upon himself. With that a return to England became an obligation; there were a score of minor beneficiaries under his cousin's will whose legacies could not without delay be paid unless the new lord was at hand.

The door opened; the butler mumbled a name, and she saw a tall, white-haired, pale old man smiling at her and holding out his hands. It took her a little while to realize who it was. With an unthinking disallowance for the action of time, she had been expecting a young fellow of eight and twenty, brown-haired and ruddy. Perhaps he, on his side, was surprised a little by meeting a middle-aged lady in a cap.

"I shall be in town to-morrow—at Bowden's Hotel, in Cork street," and asking when he might come to her. She had answered by telegraph: "Come and dine at eight to-night," to which he had wired back an acceptance. Thereupon she had told her son that he must dine at his club; and now she was seated before her fire, waiting for Theodore Vellan to arrive, and thinking of thirty years ago.

After dinner he would not let her leave him, but returned with her to the drawing room, and she said that he might smoke. He smoked odd little Cuban cigarettes, whereof the odor was delicate and aromatic. They had talked of everything, then had laughed and sighed over their ancient joys and sorrows. We know melancholy wanders hand in hand. She had cried a little when her husband and her brother were first spoken of, but at some comic reminiscence of them a moment afterwards she was smiling through her tears.

Her memories were sweet and bitter; they made her heart glow and ache. Vellan, as she recalled him, had been before all things, gentle—with the gentlest manners. His gentleness, she told herself, was the chief element of his charm—his gentleness which was really a phase of his modesty. "He was very gentle, he was very modest, he was very graceful and kind," she said, and she remembered a hundred instances of his gentleness, his modesty, his kindness. Oh, but he was no milkop. He had plenty of spirit, plenty of fun. He was boyish, he could romp. And at that time a scene repeated itself to her mind, a scene

that had passed in this same drawing room more than thirty years ago. It was tea time, and on the tea table lay a dish of pearl biscuits, and she and her husband and Vellan were alone. Her husband took a handful of pearl biscuits and tossed them one by one in the air, while Vellan threw back his head and caught them in his mouth as they came down—this was one of his accomplishments. She smiled as she remembered it, but at the same time she put her handkerchief to her eyes. "Why did he go away? What could it have been?" she wondered. Her old bewilderment at his conduct, her whole being longing to comprehend it, reviving with something of the old, old force. Could it have been—? Could it have been—? And an old guess, an old theory, one she had never spoken to anybody, but had pondered much in silence, again presented itself interrogatively to her mind.

"Yes, yes, yes," Mrs. Kempton said slowly. "She was a rare woman. I knew her intimately—better than any one else, I think. I knew all the unhappy circumstances of her life: her horrid, vulgar mother; her poor, dreamy, inefficient father; their poverty; how hard she had to work. You were in love with her. Why didn't you marry her?" "She wouldn't have had me." "Did you ask her?" "No. It was needless. It went without saying." "You can never tell. You ought to have asked her." "It was on the tip of my tongue, of course, to do so a hundred times. My life was passed in torturing myself with the question whether I had any chance, in hoping and fearing. But as often as I found myself alone with her I knew it was hopeless. Her manner to me is one of frank friendliness. There was no mistaking it. She never thought of loving me."

"You were wrong not to ask her. One never can be sure. Oh, why didn't you ask her?" His old friend spoke with great feeling. He looked at her surprised and eager. "Do you really think she might have cared for me?" "Oh, you ought to have told her, ought to have asked her," she repeated. "Well—now you know why I went away." "Yes." "When I heard of her—her death—he could not bring himself to say her suicide—there was nothing else for me to do. It was so hideous, so unutterable. To go on with my old life, in the old place, among the old people, was quite impossible. I wanted to follow her, to do what she had done. The only alternative was to fly as far from England, as far from myself, as I could."

"Sometimes," Mrs. Kempton confessed by-and-by, "sometimes I wondered whether, possibly, your disappearance could have had any such connection with Mary's death—it followed it so immediately. I wondered sometimes whether, perhaps, you had cared for her. But I couldn't believe it—it was only because the two things happened one upon the other. Oh, why didn't you tell her? It is dreadful, dreadful!" When he left her she still sat for a little while before the fire. "Life is a chance to make mistakes—a chance to make mistakes. Life is a chance to make mistakes." It was a phrase she had met in a book she was reading the other day. Then she had smiled at it; now it rang in her ears like the voice of a mocking-demon.

"Yes, a chance to make mistakes," she said, half aloud. She rose and went to her desk, unlocked a drawer, and turned over its contents, and took out a letter—an old letter, for the paper was yellow and the ink was faded. She came back to the fireside, unfolded the letter, and read it. It covered six pages of note paper, in a small feminine hand. It was a letter Mary Isona had written to her, Margaret Kempton, the night before she died, more than thirty years ago. The writer recounted the many harsh circumstances of her life, but they would all have been bearable, she said, save for one great and terrible secret. She had fallen in love with a man who was scarcely conscious of her existence; she, a little obscure Italian music teacher, had fallen in love with Theodore Vellan. It was as if she had fallen in love with an inhabitant of another planet; the worlds they respectively belonged to were far apart. She loved him—she loved him—and she knew her love was hopeless and she could not bear it. Oh, yes! she met him sometimes here and there, at homes where she went to play, and to give lessons. He was civil to her, he was more than civil—he was kind; he talked to her about literature and music.

He is so gentle, so strong, so wise; but he never thought of me as a woman—a woman who could love, who could be loved. Why should he? If the moth falls in love with the star, the moth must suffer. . . . I am cowardly; I am weak; I am what you will; but I have more than I can bear. Life is too hard—too hard. To-morrow I shall be dead. You will be the only person to know why I died, and you will keep my secret."

England has many religious denominations and sects, probably more than 300 altogether, and the names of some are amusing. Out of a list of 219 I have collected these: Glassties, Glazebrook Army, Glory Band, King Jesus's Army, Open Baptists, Open Brethren, Particular Baptists, Peculiar People, Ranters, Recreative Religionists, Rational Christians, Sundenantists, Worshipers of God, Benevolent Methodists, Bunyan Baptists, Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, Ecclesia of the Meshah, Followers of the L. J. C., Free Grace Gospel Christians.—New York Press.

The young King of Spain does not play golf. This, by the way, is the only news of consequence that has come from Spain in a long time. Cotton may no longer be king, but it is still a princely product. Our exports of unmanufactured cotton last year amounted to more than \$240,000,000.

The late census proves that the United States contains a greater number of cities with a population of over 1,000,000 inhabitants than any other country except China.

A Colorado man employed in the public service blew out his brains when recently promoted because he feared he was not equal to the duties of the position. Modesty is always fatal to office-holding.

The battleship Alabama is fully up to the standard of the contract for her construction, and so far beyond it as to have earned the title of "Queen of the Navy" from those who are fond of bestowing titles on temporary favorites.

One of the curious philanthropic organizations of London is known as the spectacles mission. It was founded over ten years ago. Its object is to provide poor working people suffering from defective sight with eyeglasses. Last year more than a thousand spectacles were given away by the mission.

Good for Spain! The old kingdom is taking a step ahead of all the other Powers. She announces that beginning with January 1, 1901, the hours will be counted from one to twenty-four, instead of in two divisions of twelve hours. It is the simple and sensible plan and ought to be adopted by all sensible nations.

Recent inquiries among circulating libraries in England show that Dickens continues in as great demand as ever. Thackeray's fame, it is said, is extending more broadly among the literary classes, but Dickens retains the heart of the general public. The writers of the day come and go, but year in and year out Dickens is the stand-by.

Olive Schreiner says that the children of the Boers carry away all the intellectual honors in South Africa. They fill the schools and bear off the prizes. They are the lawgivers, the magistrates, the successful barristers, the able doctors, and she attributes it to the fact that these Dutch Africans come of an exceptionally able stock, which for several generations lay fallow, drawing strength from the soil, and not exposed to the devitalizing influence of cities.

Three hundred plans were submitted in an architects' competition in New York City for model tenement houses, and the first prize plan is to be practically used at once. The new buildings will be fire-proof throughout and will occupy seventy per cent. of the ground space, leaving thirty per cent. for light and air. In each room a window will open into the outer air, and each apartment will be connected with private hall and baths, play-grounds, clothes-drying chambers and storage rooms. It is calculated that a rental of \$1 a week per room will give satisfactory profit.

Recent statistics show that the machinery in the mills and factories of Great Britain is capable of doing the work of 700,000,000 men—more than all the adult population of the world. The machinery in the United States does the work of a billion hands. The single State of Massachusetts has machinery enough to do the work of 50,000,000 men. On an average 500,000 men, with the aid of machinery, now do the work which required 10,000,000 men under the old system of universal hand work. The increased output has been absorbed by the vastly increased consumption of all kinds of manufactured products consequent on the great reduction in cost.

When you come to think of it the shirt waist—that supposedly newest of new things—is not essentially novel, states the Dry Goods Economist, Garibaldi, the Italian liberator, won fame as much by discarding the coat as by his military achievements. In the 60's, when swallow-tail coats and high stocks still formed part of the universal garb of a gentleman, no man in civic life dreamed of following the example set, but the famous red shirt, modified into a garment closely resembling the flannel shirt waist of to-day, was taken up by the women with avidity. Indeed, the "Garibaldi" became the rage, and thousands learned the name from the garment who knew nothing of the man.

CIVILIZING ALASKA. What Our Bureau of Education is Doing For the Natives. Dr. W. T. Harris writes as follows in Inslce's Magazine: "In Alaska the entire work of education is under the direction of the United States Bureau of Education."

"Alaska is a big rock, covering 400,000 square miles, that is covered with moss in the most barren places. It is the kind of moss that the reindeer eat. The human being can live on moss, also, but it is better to have the reindeer eat the moss and provide man with meat and milk."

"In the work of education in Alaska the object has been to prepare the natives to take up the industries and modes of life of the States, and to induce them to discontinue their ancient tribal customs. It had been obvious from the beginning of the Government subsidies in 1885-86 that there should be not only education in the elementary English branches, but also a training in the employments of civilized life. From the first at all the missions established by different religious denominations there was instruction in cooking, housekeeping and clothes-making. Then followed more careful education in the trades of carpentering, blacksmithing and shoemaking, under the direction of the Bureau of Education, which subsidized for this purpose the Presbyterian Industrial School at Sitka. It was believed that if the natives of Alaska could be taught to use the English language, he brought under Christian influence by the missionaries and be trained in suitable forms of industry, the increasing white population of Alaska, composed of immigrants from the States, would be able to employ them in mining, transportation and the production of food. It was found, however, that in order to reach the thousands of primitive inhabitants of Alaska, something entirely out of the ordinary in educational methods must serve as a beginning. The idea of introducing herds of reindeer and of persuading the natives to care for them was first considered in 1891. This plan was suggested by Dr. Sheldon Jackson and Captain Healy, of the United States revenue cutter Bear. Forty thousand natives engaged in reindeer herding and transportation would not only be brought a step further toward civilization, but would furnish the contingent needed to make possible the mining industry. After four years of experiments it became certain that this project would prove a success."

How He Wakes Up the Tramps. The policeman who makes the round of Madison Square Park early in the morning has a duty he rather enjoys. It is to wake up the tramps and loiterers who sleep on the benches "between rounds." He has employed several methods of arousing the sleepers. One of the favorite ways was to walk close to the benches and tread on their toes. Another was to rap on their hats with his club. The latest and most approved plan, affording more amusement to the sturdy cop than to the unhappy tramp, is to hold a small bottle of ammonia under their noses as he passes by in the early dawn. This wakes them up quickly, and most effectively, and the bewildered expression on the face of the suddenly aroused sleeper is a real ray of sunshine to lighten the way of the policeman through a day of hard work, such as conversing with nursemaids, eating apples and peanuts from the Italians' push carts and telling small boys to "swan."—New York Mail and Express.

A Skillful Road Builder. "There lives near my home," said a resident of Rockland, Me., "a man named Edwin McIntyre, who leads a hermit life and has a queer hobby. One of the prettiest and best kept pieces of road in Maine passes in front of his lonely retreat. It has been built by Mr. McIntyre, who for the last twenty-five years has, when not otherwise engaged, employed his time picking up rocks and stones near his home and pounding them into pebbles, which he has put in the highway. In twenty-five years' time he estimates that he has pounded 950,000 stones and made them ready for road use. The town authorities, recognizing the value of the work, have for several years compensated the man by giving him his road tax. He claims that he has already placed on the road twenty cords of these manufactured stones. Other towns in Maine envy Rockland such a faithful and skillful road builder."—Washington Star.

A Cat Worth Having. J. C. Packard possesses a large mongrel cat that has an excellent prospect of becoming famous. The cat is developing into an excellent watchdog, if the expression may be permitted. Several times recently strangers have been prevented from going to the house by Tommy's hostile demonstrations. The cat has a particularly bitter dislike for peddlers, and when any one of the description appears there is an immediate attack. The cat doesn't stop for preliminaries, but spits and snarls and growls and defies the world to come on. From a commanding position on the highest top of the porch he is master of the situation, and the unwelcome visitor is glad to retreat. Just what the cat would do under contrary circumstances is unknown; no one has been brave enough to find out.—Santa Barbara Press.

Mighty Tips. When a waiter in a San Francisco hotel was offered \$40 a month, with board and lodgings to go into household service in Honolulu, his answer was that he could not afford the change, because his tips far exceeded the proposed wages.—Chicago Times-Herald.

LOVE'S PLATFORM. What's the party? Call it Fate; Cupid is the candidate; Hymen is his running mate; Love the balance of the slate. This our platform—we deplore Any useless lover's war; Annexationists are we, Hearts united, our decree.

As for syndicates we must say monopolies are just. For each lover will declare That exclusive love is fair. Yet in summer—see shore plan—Sixteen maids to every man, But we change the ratio, At the falling of the snow.

Open door and open gate, Friendly Pa, we advocate; Monroe Doctrine? Yes, we mean, Parents should not intervene, Cast your votes without delay, Polls are open every day, Open early, open late, Come elect our candidate. —Carl F. V. Hegert, in the Book World.

PITH AND POINT. Mrs. Muggins—"My husband is getting closer every day." Mrs. Buggins—"Yes; I've noticed you never let him get out of your sight." She—"He stole a kiss." He—"Did he? I suppose you weren't looking?" She—"Oh, yes I was, and I made him put it back right away."

Father (sternly)—"I hear you were kept in after school." Son—"It was a mistake." "It was, eh?" "Yes; I made a mistake in my lessons." "I suppose," said the poet's friend, "you seek the plaudits of posterity?" "No," replied the practical poet; "I'm simply after contemporary cash."

Judge—"How old are you?" Fair Witness—"Well, er, I'm—er, I'm—" Judge—"Better hurry, man. Every minute's delay makes it worse." "Did you knock when you came to-night?" asked she. "With a blash, the sly little thing." "I did; but why do you ask?" said he. "Oh, I thought you came with a ring." —Pick Me Up.

Teacher (of English history)—"So King John had the young princes confined in the tower? What became of them?" Willie—"Why, er—I guess they're dead by this time." A man and his bride by the parson were tied. And when the performance was done He examined his fee then "Alas!" exclaimed he, "I add one to one and make one!" —Philadelphia Press.

"It begins to look as though Jones were on the verge of financial embarrassment." "Why, he and his wife appear more and more prosperous every day." "Exactly; that's always the first sign." "Say," remarked the pug, "that bulldog's awful savage, ain't he?" "You bet," replied the comical fox terrier; "why he chased a tramp yesterday, and he got so mad because he couldn't catch him that he bit a piece out of his own pants."

Honx—"He believes in an eye for an eye." Joax—"I didn't think he was so vindictive." Honx—"He isn't. It's merely a matter of vanity. He lost one of those he was born with, so he bought a glass one." Father—"I think you'd better send that young man about his business. He doesn't seem to me to be very steady." Daughter—"Why, father, he calls every night but Saturday. He couldn't be more staidier than that."

On the Edge of an Abyss. In the second concluding chapter of his notes on the Harriman expedition—A Summer Holiday in Bering Sea"—John Burroughs describes in the Century a more or less thrilling experience on the island of St. Matthew. The highest point of the island was enveloped most of the time in fog and cloud. While groping his way upon one of these level summits, probably fifteen hundred feet above the sea which flowed at its base, I came suddenly upon a deep cleft, or chasm, which opened in the moss and flowers at my feet and led down between crumbling rocky walls at a fearful incline to the beach. It gave one a sense of peril that made him pause quickly. The wriths of fog and mist whirling through and over it enhanced its dreadful mystery and depth. Yet I hovered about it, retreating and returning, quite fascinated by the contrast between the smooth, flowery carpet upon which I stood and the terrible yawning chasm. When the fog lifted a little and the sun gleamed out, I looked down this groove into the ocean, and Tennyson's line in "The Eagle" came to mind as accurately descriptive of the scene: The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls. Another curious effect was the bottom of the sea visible a long way out from shore. The water seemed suddenly to become shallow; or else to take on a strange transparency; the color and conformation of the rocky floor were surprisingly distinct.

Thackeray and the Sugar Maples. Apropos of the lapses of writers there is one by Thackeray, to which I have never seen any allusion. In the fifty-second chapter of the "Virginians," George Warrington, in telling of his escape from Fort Duquesne, says: "Now, the leaves were beginning to be tinted with the magnificent hues of our autumn. . . . At this time of year the hunters who live in the mountains get their sugar from the maples. We came upon more than one such family camping near their trees by the mountain streams." I was born in Vermont, and when, in my early youth, I struck the passage, my head reeled for a good long time. —Boston Transcript.

The Most Magnificent Tomb. The most magnificent tomb in the world is deemed to be the Palace-Temple of Karnak, occupying an area of nine acres, or twice that of St. Peter's at Rome. The temple space is a poet's dream of gigantic columns, beautiful courts, and wondrous tiers of sphinxes.