A MYTH

A-floating, a-floating
Across the sleeping sea,
All night I heard a singing bird
Upon the topmost tree.

"Oh, come you from the Isles of Greece,
Or from the banks of Seine;
Or off some tree in forests free,
Which fringe the Western main?"

"I came not off the Old World,
Nor yet from off the New—
But I am one of the birds of God,
Which sing the whole night through."

"Oh, sing and wake the dawning—
Oh, whistle for the wind;
The night is long, the current strong
My boat it lags behind."

"The current sweeps the Old World,
The current sweeps the New,
The wind will blow, and the dawn will glow,
Ere thou has sailed them through."

Charles Kingsley.

A WOMAN'S LOVE.

A black cross had been set against Judge Hawkin's name. Why, it is not for me to say. We were not accustomed to explain our motives or give reasons for our deeds. The deeds were enough, and this black cross meant death, and when it had been shown us all that we needed to know further was at what hour we should meet for the contemplated raid. A word from the captain settled that, and when the next Friday came a dozen men met at the place of rendezvous ready for the ride which should bring them to the judge's solitary mansion across the mountains. I was among them, and in as satisfactory a mood as I had ever been in my life for the night was favorable and the men hearty and in first-rate condition.

The house toward which we were riding was built on a hillside, and the first thing we saw on emerging from the forest was a light burning in one of the distant windows. This was a surprise, for the hour was late, and in that part of the country people were accustomed to retire early, even such busy men as the judge. He must have a visitor, and a visitor meant a possible complication of affairs, so a halt was called, and I was singled out to reconnoitre the premises.

The house, which had now become plainly visible, was a solid one of stone, built as I have said, on the hillside. It faced the road, as shown by the large portico dimly to be discerned in that direction, but its rooms were mainly on the side, and it was from one of these that the light shone. As I came yet nearer I perceived that these rooms were guarded by a piazza, which, communicating with the portico in front, afforded an open road to that window and a clear sight of what lay behind it. I was instantly off my horse and upon the piazza, and before I had time to realize that my fears had returned to me with double force I had crept stealthily toward that uncurtained window and looked in.

What did I see? At first nothing but a calm, studious figure bending above a batch of closely written papers, upon which the light shone too brightly for me to perceive much of what lay behind them. But gradually an influence, of whose workings I was scarce conscious, drew my eyes away, and I began to discover on every side strange and beautiful objects which greatly interested me, until suddenly my eyes fell upon a vision of loveliness so enchanting that I forgot to look elsewhere, and became for the moment nothing but sight and feeling.

It was a picture, or so I thought in the first instant of awe and delight. But presently I saw that it was a woman, living and full of thoughts that had never been mine; and at the discovery, a sudden trembling seized me, for I had never seen anything like her beauty, while she saw nothing but the man who was bending over his papers. There was a door or something dark behind her, and against it her tall, strong figure, clad in close white gown, stood out with a distinctness that was not altogether earthly.

But it was her face that held me and made of me from moment to moment a new man. For in it I discerned what I had never believed in till now, devotion that had no limit and love which asked nothing in return. She seemed to be faltering on the threshold of that room, as one who would like to enter, but does not dare, and in another moment, with a smile that pierced me through, she turned as if to go. Instantly I forgot everything but my despair, and leaned forward with an impetuosity that betrayed my presence. She glanced quickly toward the window, and, seeing me, turned pale, even while she rose in height till I felt myself shrink and grow small before her.

Thrusting out her hand she caught from the table before her what looked like a small dagger, and holding it up, advanced upon me with blazing eyes and parted lips, not seeing that the judge had risen to his feet, not seeing anything but my face glued against the pane, and staring with an expression that must have struck to the heart, as surely as her look pierced mine. When she was almost upon me I turned and fled. Hell could not have frightened me, but heaven did; and for me that woman was heaven, whether she smiled or frowned, gazed upon another with love, or raised a dagger to strike me to the ground.

How soon I met my mates I can not say. In a few minutes, doubtless, for they had stolen after me and had detected me running away from the window. I was forced to tell my tale, and I told it unhesitatingly, for I knew I could not save him—if I wanted to—and I asked that she be spared not only from sharing his fate, but from the sight of his death, for she loved him.

This from me! No wonder the Captain stared, then laughed. But I did not laugh in return, and being the strongest man in the band and the surest with the rifle, he did not trifle long, but listened to my plans and in part consented to them, so that I retreated to my post at the gateway with something like confidence, while he, approaching the door, lifted the knocker and let it fall with a resounding clang that must have rung like a knell of death to the hearts within.

For the judge knew our errand. I saw it in his face when he rose to his feet, and he had no hope, for we had never failed in our attempts, and the house, though strongly built, was easily assailable.

While the Captain knocked three times and raised the portico and were ready to enter the open windows if the Judge refused to parley or offered any resistance to what was known as the Captain's will.

"Death to the judge!" was the cry, and it was echoed not only at the door, but around the house, where the rest of the men had drawn a cordon ready to waylay any one who sought to escape. Death to the judge? And the judge was loved by that woman, and would be loved by her till—

But a voice is speaking—a voice from out that great house—and it asks what is wanted, and what the meaning of these threats of death.

And the captain answers, short and sharp:

"The regulator commands, but he never explains. What he commands now is for Judge Hawkins to come forth. If he shrinks or delays his house will be entered and burned, but if he will come out and meet like a man what awaits him, his house shall go free and his family remain unmolested."

"And what is it that awaits him?" pursued the voice.

"Four bullets from four unerring rifles," returned the captain.

"It is well; he will come forth," cried the voice, and then in a huskier voice: "Let me kiss the woman I love. I will not keep you long."

And the captain answered nothing, only counted out clearly and steadily: "One—two—three," up to 100; then he paused, turned and lifted his hand, when instantly four rifles arose, and at the same moment the door, with a faint grating sound I shall never forget, slowly opened, and the firm, unshrinking figure of the judge appeared.

We did not delay. One simultaneous burst of fire, one loud, quick crack, and his figure fell before our eyes. A sound, a cry from within, then all was still, and the Captain, mounting his horse, gave one quick whistle and galloped away. We followed him, but I was the last to mount, and did not follow long, for at the flash of those guns I had seen a smile across our victim's lips, and my heart was on fire, and I could not rest till I found my way back to that open doorway and the figure lying within it.

There it was, and behind it a house empty as my heart has been since that day. A man's dress covering a woman's form—and over the motionless, perfect features that same smile which I had seen in the room beyond, and again in the quick glare of the rifles.

I had harbored no evil thought concerning her, but when I beheld that smile now sealed and fixed upon her lips, I found the soul I had never known that I possessed until that day.

WHEN WE GROW MOST.

Years in Which the Organs of the Head and Body Develop.

The brain of the child is proportionately much larger than an adult's, but of much softer consistency, and its convolutions are not complete until the seventh year. This is one of the reasons why early study is dangerous.

The child's heart beats much more rapidly than that of an adult, and the growth of the heart, instead of being regular, like the growth of the body as a whole, is accomplished by fits and starts. The more rapid action of the heart renders the child peculiarly liable to fever and the liability is further increased by his weaker vital resistance. Hence childhood is the special season for scarlet fever, measles, whooping cough and other similar complaints.

The irregularity of the heart's growth may give rise to disturbances of the organ of a seemingly dangerous character, but with proper care will pass away as the heart attains its full development. Such proper care includes ample nourishment, sufficient sleep and the avoidance of special strain.

The season of rapid growth and development, say between the ages of ten and twenty, needs particular attention. Nature is then at work, as it never will be again, in building up the tissues and developing the nervous sensibilities. This is the period which makes the largest demands for an outdoor life, for pure air, sunlight, active exercise, abundance of nutritious food, a vigorous digestive tract, a ready assimilation and an active elimination of waste.

It is the period of study and ambition, as well as a wisdom that thinks itself wiser than it is. The increasing mental activity needs to be regulated by experienced teachers and considerate mothers, lest the brain be worked at the expense of other organs and tissues.

Duller minds should not be forced to keep step with those which are naturally more active, and the influences of the home and the school-room should be tranquilizing and adapted to evoke the kindler feelings. Fretful parents and scolding teachers may do a lifelong injury during this susceptible period.

It is a period when neither study nor night excitements should interfere with sleep; when dime novels do their worst work; when mothers need to know what their children read, and to be their confidential counselor in all delicate matters; when the use of tobacco is specially perilous, almost surely giving rise to affections of the heart, and when spirituous liquors and all opiates are peculiarly pernicious.

A Story of Senator Hearst.

"The last time I saw Senator Hearst," says Captain Kennedy, a capitol guide at Washington, "I was explaining the frieze to a party of sightseers, and just as I reached that portion representing the discovery of gold the old senator passed with Congressman Clunie. A funny idea occurred to me at that moment and I said in a loud tone: 'Ladies and gentlemen, that picture represents Senator George Hearst in the act of discovering gold in California in 1849. The younger and more handsome gentleman who stands next him is Thomas Jackson Clunie, now in congress from his native state. By the way, there is the senator passing, and Congressman Clunie is now with him, as he was at the time of the gold discovery.' A few minutes later the old senator returned and slipped a $20 piece into my hand. 'It is all right this time, my boy,' he said good-naturedly, 'but don't give anyone else that story in future.'"

"If you really love me, prove it!" He—"With pleasure! Jump the river is particularly rapid and deep just here—jump in—I'll pull you out!"—Pittsburgh Bulletin.

COWS IN BLUE GOGGLES.

A SPECTACLE SEEN ON THE RUSSIAN STEPPES.

Over Four Thousand Milk Producers Wandering Round in Spectacles—False Teeth, Cork Legs and Wigs.

According to Dr. Verincourt, chief of the agricultural department in Russia, says a leading medical journal of London, the illimitable steppes of the czar's dominions are covered with a spotless carpet of snow for six or eight successive weeks in winter, and upon this the vertical and ardent sun shoots down its rays with such intensity of force that the reflected light is more than human or bovine eyes can long endure with impunity. At the suggestion of Dr. Verincourt, a considerable number of Russian farmers have supplied blue spectacles to their much-exposed herds, which wander hither and thither in pursuit of food, protected in this way against the all-prevailing snow-blindness which inflicts ophthalmia, and in some cases amaurosis, upon men and animals alike.

At the beginning and even about the middle of the present century humanity and compassion for dumb animals had not extended far enough to provide them with oculists and dentists, as well as with skilled veterinary surgeons, in case of need. How small were the scientific resources of "vets" when the century was young is sufficiently established by the remedies which were then applied to horses, cattle and all other animals. In March of 1836 a celebrated hunter of those days, Grimaldi by name, won the St. Albans steeplechase, ridden by Captain Becher and the best gentleman jockey of his time. Scarcely had the gallant old gray passed the winning post, in advance of his competing rivals, before he stopped short and reared high aloft, pawing the air with his feet and in evident pain. In a moment or two he fell on his side and expired. A veterinary surgeon was instantly called in, and his only resource was to drain the poor animal, who was already dead, of his last drop of blood. Grimaldi had broken a blood vessel on his lungs, and the remedy adopted served but to show the ignorance of the farrier who resorted to it and of the age in which it was practiced. But down to a much later date no horse that broke his leg on the race-course, in the hunting-field or in the streets of a great city ever escaped a violent death, which was instantaneously inflicted by the poleax, or, more frequently, "by the friendly bullet." Nothing is now more common in England than to hear of a hunter whose broken leg has been so successfully set that he is still alive to carry a heavy weight across country. Every habitue of Newmarket is aware that not long since a horse ran second for the Two Thousand Guineas who had broken his leg as a two-year-old, and the marvels now accomplished by Professor Loffler and other horse dentists in stopping and removing the teeth of suffering equine patients are well known.

It is of course, intelligible that skill and science should be brought into play when valuable horses or "golden calves" of the Bates breed are struck down by disease or disabled by accident, but to supply the wild cattle of the Russian wastes with blue spectacles as a prophylactic against snow-blindness and ophthalmia is a sign of the times which would have gladdened the humane heart of Dr. Johnson. One of his most eloquent outbursts of scorn was poured forth against the cruelties of men in great cities to dumb animals, and even the caustic and gangrened mind of Thomas Carlyle, who pronounced the author of "The Ancient Mariner to be "an unmitigated bore," could not withhold praise from the sympathetic lines, "He liveth best who loveth best all things both great and small."

Yet there has never been a time when human hearts were not occasionally warmed by eccentric affection for birds or beasts, and the last will of Colonel O'Kelly, the owner of Eclipse, provided that £50 per annum, more or less, should be spent upon his favorite parrot, although he left nothing to the great race horse who was the architect of his fortune. In the last century there were many who fell under the lash of Pope's satire when he wrote: "Die, and endow a college or a cat." In Miss Mitford's "Our Village" there is an amusing story of a couple of maiden ladies whose much cherished cow fell into a lime pit, from which she emerged bereft of all her hair. The amiable and compassionate spinsters immediately set to work and provided their hairless pet with a suit of flannels, which she wore in summer and in winter alike.

A Sunday Stone.

There is a large stone taken from a colliery drain, which is remarkable in that it constitutes a perfect calendar of Sundays and holidays. The stone is composed of carbonate of lime. When the miners were at work the water running through the drain left a deposit colored black by coal dust; but when they were not at work the water ran down clear and left a white deposit. In time these black and white layers made stone of considerable thickness, which constitutes quite a calendar. Each day of work has left a black streak, which is followed by a white streak during the night, while white streaks mark the Sundays and other holidays, and from this circumstance the stone is called "The Sunday Stone."—Commercial Advertiser.

Another Monstrosity.

Mrs. Wallace Fuller, of Edinboro, Pa., found a duck's egg one day recently that certainly deserves mention as a remarkable monstrosity. Mrs. Fuller noticed that it was a very large one and said to herself: "It is double yolked." But when she opened it only one yolk appeared. On further examination the mystery was explained. There was another perfectly formed egg inside the first. This second egg, when opened was found to contain five perfect yolks. Suppose the egg had been placed under a fowl and hatched what would have been the product?

Our Language.

When Shakespeare and Milton wrote, only five or six millions spoke their language. One hundred years ago forty millions of people spoke German, thirty millions French, and fifteen millions English. Prof. F. A. Marsh says that more than one-half of the world's postal service are now written and read by English speaking people. Jacob Grimm, one of the ablest historians of language says: "The English speech may with full right be called a world's language.—American Rural Home.

"STOOD BY THE VANE."

He Climbed the Spire of Salisbury's Great Cathedral.

During one of his vacations in his youthful days, Dr. James Freeman Clarke performed a feat that well deserves to be recorded. When he told his friends afterward it terrified them, and it is no commonplace thing to read about now. Here is the extraordinary tale as Dr. E. E. Hale, the editor of the Memoirs, sets it down:

"The spire of Salisbury Cathedral is a little more than four hundred feet high. With some friends Mr. Clarke ascended as far as the interior staircase goes, to what is called the weather door—about thirty feet from the extreme top of the spire. The others were then satisfied with what they had done, but he went out and climbed up the remaining part of the spire by iron handles fixed in the walls, these having been arranged for the convenience of workmen who have to attend to the vane.

"When he arrived at the highest of these handles he found a bar above him, running around the spire, which he could reach with his hands. By this he lifted himself to the level of the ball, and, as most versions of this anecdote say, stood on top of the ball, with such support as the lightning rod could give him, surveying the scene.

"He then returned to the supporting rod and dropped himself, expecting to find the friendly bolt by which he had ascended. But it was not there, and he reflected, too late, that he had not observed on which side of the spire it was. Then and there he had, so to speak, to work around the spire, hanging on by his hands; and having unfortunately chosen the least favorable direction, he nearly completed the circuit before he found under his foot the bolt, which was to be the first step in his retreat."

When Dr. Clarke told this story to his classmates more than a generation after the event occurred, "old friends of his found they could not sleep that night in the terror of what might have happened." In his letter to friends at home he merely said at the time of the thrilling incident: "I went to the very top and stood by the vane, 400 feet above the ground.—Buffalo Commercial Advertiser.

Vitality of Seeds.

Whether seeds can or can not preserve their vitality for lengthened periods depends as much or more on external than inherent conditions, and it is more and more a tendency of scientific belief that under some conditions a seed which would lose its vital power in a year or two, may under other conditions, continue vital for an indefinite period. It is still a mooted question whether the "mummy seeds" which people who travel in Egypt bring home with them, have really been in existence for a couple of thousand years, or are the skillful work of impostors which abound in the classic land as well as in our own. It is said that so skillfully is the imposition practiced that the mummy wheat can be made to roll out of mummy wrappings even before your eyes. But undoubted facts are accumulating, showing long life in unexpected instances. Under ice sheets plants as well as seeds will live for years. A remarkable instance occurs in connection with a species of cypress, a native of California. Coulter, a collector in California, had his herbarium in the Glasnevin gardens, near Dublin, and twenty-one years after a seed was taken from a dried specimen which produced the living plant.

A Lost Invention.

A Philadelphia shoe merchant says that two years ago a man came into his office in the last stages of alcoholic decline, apparently, and exhibited an invention which would revolutionize men's shoe fastenings and make a fortune for some one. It was some sort of an arrangement which closed all the buttons at once by the turn of an invisible lever, and was as much an improvement on the old method as the lever skate is upon the old-fashioned kind. That was the first and last the merchant ever saw of man or model, and he is wondering now if the inventor's secret went into a grave in potter's field. He cannot in the least recall the manner of working the fastening.

Babies Everywhere.

The building of the contagious disease branch of the health board, New York City, becomes like a great nursery during the afternoon. It is then that the mothers take their babies to be vaccinated, and there are babies everywhere—on the staircase, the steps in the hall, in the basement, on the sidewalk there babies, babies, babies, until one wonders where they hail from.

Married a Chinaman.

Sue Sho, a Chinese laundryman at Paducah, Ky., married his assistant, Miss Ida Rutledge, a pretty American girl. The ceremony was American, and the groom was disguised in a dress suit. The bride says it is not a matter of business convenience, but pure, unadulterated love.

Such a Dear Wifey.

Husband—You have done splendidly. This month's bill is only half the amount we usually spend. How in the world have you managed to cut down expenses so?

Wife—Why, I bargained on sixty days' time for lots of things.—Life.

Too Much for Him.

Porter—"That Kentucky gentleman refuses to occupy room 44."

Hotel clerk—"What's wrong?"

"There's a picture of some fruit hanging on the wall, and he says it makes his mouth water."

Pensioners Plentiful.

In the first four months' operation of Germany's old age and invalid insurance act 111,447 applications for pensions were made; 59,456 were granted, 8,515 refused and the rest are under consideration.

WHITE MEN ON THE CONGO.

They Have Increased Fourfold Within the Past Few Years.

The white population on the Congo is increasing rapidly, says the New York Sun. When Stanley left the river after having planted his twenty stations, there were only about 200 white men left to continue the various phases of his work. There are now over 800 white men on the Congo. Over one-third of them are in the service of the Congo State, while the others are engaged in trading and missionary enterprises. In 1889 Boma, the capital of the Free State, contained the greatest number of whites, but last year it was surpassed by Matadi, which is at the head of navigation on the lower Congo. Matadi has gone ahead because it is the starting point of the Congo railroad, and most of the whites at that place are engaged in building the road.

Matada now has a white population of 169 souls, while Boma has ten less. Boma is the seat of government, and also the place where a number of important European trading firms make their headquarters. It has a railroad leading from the wharf up to the sanitarium, the hotel, and the government buildings on the heights away from the river. With its considerable native population and the large variety of business transacted there, Boma is a very busy little place.

Leopoldville, the chief settlement on the upper river at Stanley Pool, has eighty-two whites. There are only fifteen Americans on the river, nearly all of whom are missionaries. Thirty-two Danes and Swedes are among the employes of the Congo state, and almost to a man they are engaged in the steamboat service, many of them being engineers. The sixty-three Italians on the river are at work on the railroad. They were taken from Southern Italy, because the climate there is warm and it was thought they would endure hard service in Africa better than workmen from North Europe. They are bosses or section hands, who teach the native track graders how to perform their labor and they superintend the work, often taking a hand to show the natives how the work should be done.

The forty-five Egyptians are soldiers imported from Egypt for the purpose of setting a good military example to the native soldiery organized by the state. Half of the Egyptians are in the garrison at Boma and the other half are at Leopoldville.

Banana, the settlement at the mouth of the Congo, has now a population of only eighty-three whites, and has been surpassed by Leopoldville, in the interior. There are now more white men at each of the half dozen posts on the upper Congo than there were at Leopoldville, the chief point on the river, five years ago.

White men on the Congo are finding that, with the introduction of more comforts from Europe, with a supply of better food on their tables, and with medical attendance at a number of the more important stations, they can live on the river in far better health than a few years ago. The mortality, now that the river has a white population of over 800 people, hardly greater than it was five years ago, when only 200 white men lived there.

HOW BARBARIANS SHAVE.

Tortures Almost as Keen as Those Endured by Civilized Brethren.

In my wanderings about the world, writes a veteran traveler, being of the Esau type, a hunter and a hairy man, I have tested the barbers of many nations and bought their facial implements, too.

The razor in India, though a clumsy looking semi-disk of steel on a straight handle, does its work in native hands on scalps (as a religious rite) and on rough faces very nearly as comfortably by merely moistening the epidermis with cold water, soap being prohibited. Many a time has that primitive instrument crossed my chin without making a scratch.

At the courts of oriental tyrants drawing a drop of blood during the operation of shaving was a capital offense—a precautionary edict, no doubt.

Mussel shells were till lately used by savages for the removal of hair till the important discovery that a fragment of broken bottle is far more effective. Such is the case of those fierce islanders of the Andamans, who operated in this fashion on two escaped Indian convicts, whose lives were spared, as they were considered desirable "young men," fit for a tribal alliance by marriage. When afterwards rescued these foolish truants described their sufferings under the ceremonial installation as terrific and of long duration.

Prehistoric man used a flake of flint to remove his locks and eyebrows, "disfiguring his countenance" on occasions of mourning.

The modern Hindoo shows his grief at the barber's hands in the same fashion as did his motherland, old Egypt.

I have nice specimens of Norwegian cutlery, but not until a few days ago did I know that the inventive Norseman had marched before us in razors.

A friend who has been traveling for two whole years came to stay with me, and exhibited the most beautiful pair of those toilet tools I ever saw, of very highly finished Bessemer steel, simple and scientific, being merely thin, flat blades of metal inserted on grooves of thicker stuff.

The agent warrants their edges to stand three months, when the razors must be sent to him, dismounted and sharpened, having to be removed from the groved back to do so. Chantrey, the sculptor, made one of hard bronze, with a keen and effective edge, and there are relics of Pompeii manufactured in that alloy.

Out of Debt.

There are eighteen counties in Pennsylvania that have no debt. They are Lehigh, Beaver, Cameron, Center, Columbia, Erie, Forest, Franklin, Green, Lawrence, Mercer, Montour, Perry, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wyoming and York. The combined debt of the other counties is $38,979,973.

Taking Down the Sign.

"And I am going to do all the cooking myself."

"I like your ideas of economy, Maud; but in that case don't you think we'd better take down that motto, 'Eat, Drink, and Be Merry?'"

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