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TWOULD BE A BETTER WORLD

If men cared less for wealth and fame, And less for battlefields and glory; If men in human hearts a name Seemed better than in song or story; If men instead of swaying pride Would learn to hate it and abhor it; If more relied On Love to guide, The world would be the better for it.

THE SPELLING MATCH.

The first spelling match of the season was to be held in the Pickett school-house on the evening of the 10th of November and all the young people on the farms for twenty miles around were greatly excited over it. At Rose Addison's apple-paring frolic the week previous to the coming contest was the principal subject of conversation and everyone present had something to say about it. There was no reasonable doubt as to the two who would be elected to "head sides," for George Channing and Henry Lisbon had never failed to receive the greatest number of votes and took their honors as a matter of course. But nothing was known as to their probable choice of followers, and some anxiety was felt on the subject, particularly among the girls, with whom George, by reason of his handsome person and pleasing manners, was a great favorite. Henry Lisbon was a tall, shy, rather awkward looking young man, who was elected a leader principally because he was an excellent speller and inspired his followers with courage and confidence. It was flattering, of course, to be chosen as his first assistant; but it was considered a far greater honor to be thus favored by George, and there were several girls who would have felt very glad had they been sure of standing next to the latter during the match, the sharer of his hopes and fears as to its probable result, and the recipient of his smiles and whispered confidences. George was greatly amused at the unusual attention he received from the girls at the paring frolic. He knew very well what it meant, but he kept his own counsel and gave no one any satisfaction as to his intentions. "I haven't made up my mind," he said to Lidy Wheeler, who, made bold by anxiety, at last asked him to relieve the general suspense. "It is a grave matter, and requires careful consideration." The evening of the 10th was clear and cold, the wheeling was excellent, and as carriage after carriage emptied its load of merry young people at the door of the old school-house, it became evident to everyone that the spelling-match would be one of unusual interest and competition. At 8 o'clock the voting began. Every one present was required to write on a slip of paper the name of the one he or she wished to lead, these slips were dropped into a hat. When counted, the two gentlemen receiving the greatest number of votes were declared elected. In view of the popularity of George Channing and Henry Lisbon, this voting was a mere form, and George, sure of the result, paid no attention to it after depositing his vote, which, of course, was for Henry. He was mechanically counting the number of people crowded on one side of the forms near him when it suddenly occurred to him that it would be well for him to decide whom he would favor for the "first call." With

this purpose he looked about him, meeting, as he did so, half a dozen earnest, almost penetrating glances from a many pair of bright eyes. His inclination pointed to Rose Addison, but he knew such a choice would arouse a great deal of ill will and jealousy, for he had chosen Rose on several occasions the previous winter. "Bother the girls!" he thought, "there's sure to be a fuss no matter how I choose." As the words formed themselves in his mind his eyes fell on the tall, gaunt form of Debby Rawley, a girl about 16 years of age, who had never appeared in a spelling match, but whom he knew quite well, nevertheless, having had occasion to call several times on her grandmother, with whom she lived. Debby was called "odd" by her neighbors, and perhaps they had some cause to think her so, for her poverty obliged her to dress in all sorts of outlandish garments which had belonged to various dead relatives, and her consciousness of her grotesque appearance caused her to assume a cold and reserve manner, which, while it protected her from open ridicule, was calculated to give the impression that she was both rude and sullen. She was attired to-night in a faded, shrunken, green worsted dress, trimmed with shabby ball fringe. About her shoulders was a rusty black shawl and her head was covered with a red woolen hood of her own manufacture. She sat in a corner of the room, her bare, red hands wrapped in one end of her shawl, and her feet tucked out of sight under her dress to conceal her worn and patched shoes. She looked as she felt, very lonely and ill at ease. No one present had recognized her by so much as a look, and her heart was filled with bitterness and pain. She wished most earnestly that she had not come, had not exposed herself to such coldness and neglect. But she was too proud to go home. That, she thought, would be too open a confession of her pain and chagrin. George's eyes sparkled with mischief as he looked at her. "I'll do it," he thought. "It will be a capital joke, and will give the girls something to talk about for the next six weeks." At this moment the counting of the votes was concluded, and the schoolmaster announced that George Channing and Henry Lisbon had been elected by a tremendous majority. Amid the loud applause the two successful candidates took their places in the two first forms, on each side of the room. There was a breathless hush. The room was so still that the big clock over the blackboard could be distinctly heard. George had received a few more votes than Henry, and, therefore, had the privilege of the first choice; but, for a moment, both men were silent. Then "Debby Rawley," cried George, in a clear, ringing voice. Poor Debby! She could scarcely believe her ears. Her face flushed, then grew deadly pale. It did not seem possible to her that she had been honored with the first call by this handsome young fellow with the laughing brown eyes. She made a motion to rise, then sank back in her seat again, trembling all over. George saw her confusion and was touched by it. "Come, Debby," he said kindly; "I'm waiting." She rose and then took her place by his side, too much dazed and bewildered to see the contemptuous glances which were directed toward her. There was a subdued whispering among the girls for a moment, but it ceased as Henry Lisbon called for Rose Addison, and the rest of the choosing proceeded rapidly until all were enrolled upon one side or the other. The schoolmasters took up the spelling-book and the battle began, those who misspelled a word being obliged to sit down at once. One by one they were vanquished, until at the close of the hour and a half Henry Lisbon, George Channing, and Debby

Rawley were the only ones left standing. The excitement ran high, and all eyes were riveted on the remaining contestants. Debby's cheeks were flushed, her eyes shone like stars and she had forgotten her shabby clothes and the neglect with which she had been treated in the beginning of the evening. "We mustn't be beaten, Debby," whispered George as the schoolmaster paused to turn over a leaf. "I depend on you, remember." "I'll do my best," whispered Debby in return, smiling up at him. The spelling continued and opinion was about equally divided as to which would win; but at last Henry Lisbon failed on a common word of only two syllables, and a deafening cheer resounded through the old school-house, as with a forced smile he took his seat. All was confusion at once; every one crowded around George to congratulate and shake hands with him; but he was not too much engaged to notice that Debby had left his side and was trying to force her way through the crowd to the door. He hastened after her and stopped her just as she was going to the door. "Surely you are not going yet!" he said. "Yes, I must," she answered. "Grandma will be anxious about me." "But you ought not to leave me to bear the burden of our honors alone," he said laughing. "You ought to stay and take your share. It hadn't been for you our side would not have won. You surprised me, Debby. I didn't think there was anyone in Grundy County except the schoolmaster who could spell down Henry Lisbon." "I study at home at night," said Debby, in a low unsteady voice; and with a little nod she walked away from him and went out into the night. At 10 o'clock the school-house was empty, and the first spelling match of the season—which was to have a result of which George little dreamed—was over. The next day George had occasion to go to town. His way led him by the small farm of Debby's grandmother, which, badly managed for many years, yielded but a meager living for the two women. Debby was at the window of a front room as George drove by; but the next moment she had thrown open the door, and, without hat or shawl, was flying down the path which led to the gate. "Stop!" she cried. "I want to speak to you." George shouted "Whoa," pulled up his horses and jumped out of his wagon. "Anything wanted in town?" he asked. "No, no," said Debby, "I—I only wanted to thank you for choosing me last night," the quick tears sprang into her earnest eyes. "It—it was so kind of you," and the other tears falling fast by this time, she rushed back into the house before he had time to say a word in reply. He stood still a moment, staring after her, then climbed into his wagon again and drove on. He didn't resume the whistling of "The Last Rose of Summer," which Debby's appearance had interrupted. His face was grave and thoughtful. For nearly a mile he let Dobbin and Whitefoot choose their own gait. Then just as the wagon was entering town, he aroused himself with a start. "Confound it all," he muttered, "I wish now I had asked her out of kindness." There were several other spelling matches held in the Pickett school-house during the winter, but Debby did not attend them, and George, who entered college in the spring, saw her only at long intervals during the next five years. At the end of that time Debby's old grandmother died, and Debby, after selling the farm to a Norwegian who had recently come into the neighborhood, left her old home forever, telling no one whether she was bound. Seven years later, George Channing,

who had become a lawyer, and was enjoying an excellent practice in Detroit, was disturbed one morning while engaged in his office on a brief by the entrance of a tall, good-looking, well-dressed lady, who, instead of returning the business-like bow with which he greeted her, advanced toward him with both her hands outstretched. "You don't know me?" she cried. "You don't recognize Deborah Rawley?" "De! little Deb, of Grundy County!" exclaimed George. "It can't be possible." "Be a little more respectful, sir, in addressing me," laughed Deb. "Dr. Rawley, if you please," dropping him a little courtesy. "Dr. Rawley!" repeated George. "Oh, nonsense!" "It's true," said Deb, still laughing. "Sit down, and I'll tell you all about it." And then, in a few words, she gave him the history of her life since she had left her old home. With the proceeds of the sale of her farm she had gone to college in Michigan and taken the medical course, graduating at the end of three years with high honors. Her money was exhausted by that time, but an old professor who had taken a warm interest in her from the beginning paid her expenses to New York, where she spent a year in a hospital, learning much that she could never have learned anywhere else. Then she began the practice of her profession at Chicago, had soon been able to pay off her debts, and now, after three years of hard work, was taking a much-needed vacation of a few weeks among the lakes and rivers of Michigan. "Look at me," she said. "I am not yet 30, and I am in the possession of a good practice, and I am on the road to fame and fortune. Don't you think I have cause to be thankful to you, Mr. Channing?" "To me?" said George. "What do you mean? I've had nothing to do with your success. It is due entirely to your talent and perseverance." "No," said Debby, "it is due to the kind words you spoke to me at that spelling-match, nearly twelve years ago. I had never had any attention or tenderness shown me in all my life before, and when you, in the kindness of your heart, honored me—poor, despised, and shabbily-dressed as I was—with 'first call,' I knew how to appreciate it. And when you told me afterward that I had surprised you, I made up my mind to surprise you still more some day. I lived on those words for five years, studying harder than I had ever done before, and then the chance came to me to have the instruction I so ardently desired. I seized it at once, and behold me a flourishing physician!" She ended with a laugh, but there were tears in her bright, dark eyes. "I refuse to take a particle of credit to myself," said George, with great earnestness. "Please don't accord it to me even in your thoughts." "Honor to whom honor is due," always, she said, rising to go. "If it hadn't been for you I should probably have vegetated on that little Illinois farm all my life." George went to the window and watched her as she walked away. There was a look of pain and chagrin on his handsome face. "I would give a thousand dollars this minute," he said, speaking aloud, "if I could only feel that I had asked her out of kindness. I couldn't look her in the face when she was telling me about it, and I felt as if I deserved a ducking under the nearest pump. My conscience will never be easy until I tell her the truth, though of course she will despise me forever after." But though he made it a point to see Debby whenever business took him to Chicago, he never had the courage to make his confession. And perhaps it was just as well that she never heard of it.—[Illustrated Christian Weekly.

MAKING RAIN.

Methods Which Other Nations Use to Invoke the Clouds. In view of the recent experiments in producing artificial showers that have been conducted by Dr. Dyrenforth in Texas and elsewhere the methods by which other nations strive to attain the same end have a special interest. The form of supplication for rain in vogue in Kumaon, in Northern India, is not the least curious of them. Last winter the season was a very dry one in Kumaon, and consequently there was a failure of the crops, with great scarcity in the district. With the exception of a few showers there were no winter rains, and that in a country where the population is almost wholly dependent upon grain as a means of subsistence meant a famine and starvation. In consequence of the drought a Hindoo fakir imposed a penance upon himself, and was suspended by his feet from a wooden beam. In this position he was swung backwards and forwards for a considerable time by means of a rope attached to his body and pulled



HINDOO FAKIR INVOKING THE GODS.

by a fellow saint. Both men were plentifully bedaubed with cow-dung and ashes, and, save for a small cloth round the waist, were minus all clothing. In such a case, should rain fall within a reasonable time after the penance, the fakir takes the entire credit for the relief to himself, and rises immensely in the estimation of the simple and credulous cultivator of the soil. The Ancient Rhinoceros. It is very interesting to look at the pictures of the world in the long past ages that geology presents to our imagination. We see that there was a time when even the polar regions must have bloomed with many of the splendid and varied forms of life that now adorn the tropics. The fossil remains of these ancient forms preserved in the bosom of the rocks carry us back perhaps millions of years in the earth's history, and show clearly what wonderful revolutions the surface of the globe has undergone since the first plants and the first animals appeared upon it. Who would think of meeting a rhinoceros nowadays on the prairies of northwestern Canada, unless, perchance, a traveling menagerie should pass that way? Yet at one time, as recent discoveries prove, a creature closely resembling the rhinoceros of India and Africa dwelt in that now comparatively cold, snowy and barren region. Remains of these extinct ancestors of an animal that in our day thrives only in the tangled tropical forests and under the hot equatorial sun have been found buried in the Canadian rocks, where now the cold blasts of winter blow over treeless plains and sweep the flanks of ice-incrusted mountains. The rhinoceros of that remote age was no less formidable a beast than his descendants, for the skull of one of the skeletons discovered is three feet long, while some of its teeth are four inches across. The fossil remains of many other forms of animals have lately been found there, including extinct species of the horse, the deer and the turtle. In some far-away time perpetual

summer must have reigned in regions where ice and snow now prevail for a large part of the year, or else animals that to-day love only the sun must have been inured to a more rigorous climate. Geology has evidently only just begun to unfold the wonderful story of the world's history. How He Traveled. There is a man in Nashville, says the American, who has traveled the length and breadth of the United States, from Maine to Mexico, from New York to San Francisco, and did not pay a dime for his passage, and he rode half the way in a first-class passenger coach, the other half in box-cars and as "blind baggage." "I made \$50 once," said he, "and it was the easiest money that ever came into my hands. Major Clarfee was the passenger agent of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Road, and I went to him in Fort Worth, told him I was an unfortunate, and I wanted to get out of town. He gave me a pass to some point about thirty miles up the road, and I left that night. When I went into the coach, who should I meet but Major Clarfee. He motioned me to have a seat by him, and commenced asking about me, and how I managed to get about. 'Why, Major,' I said, 'I have traveled over your road a thousand times and never paid a cent or had a pass nor beat my way.' At this the old man pricked up his ears, for he thought he would catch some one of his conductors at some underhand trick. 'How do you do it?' the Major asked me. 'That's a secret,' said I. 'I'll give you \$20 to put me on to it.' 'Make it \$50,' said I. 'Done,' and he passed over the money. 'Well, Major, I walk.' The Reaching Voice. When people speak of a "good voice" they very often mean mean a loud voice, but a loud voice is not a good voice at all, either in music or anything else. For instance, a loud voice is seldom a distant voice. You often hear critics speak of "a low musical voice." That kind of voice is usually very clear and distinct. Anything that is genuinely musical always has volume. Stand across the street and listen to two voices, one powerful and harsh, the other low and musical. Then turn the corner and listen again, and you will observe that you can hear plainly each articulation of the musical voice, whereas the powerful, harsh voice will give a confused buzz or murmur. But when you are near, the musical voice may have been drowned by the harsh, roaring voice. At sea the long, rhythmical song-like cry of the lookout will reach ever so much farther than the hoarse, abrupt roar of the man who gives orders to the deck. But on the deck itself the hoarse shout may completely swallow up the musical cry. So among hucksters—the voice that has the music in it will be plain and will sound blocks farther than the mere roar of the ragged-throat vender. The Star Jokers. A BUTTON on your shirt is worth two down the back of your neck.—Richmond Recorder. THE poet says "The stars are peeping." They are probably sizing up the audience through a slit in the curtain.—Binghamton Leader. A DOG out in Idaho turned into bone and died. He died hard.—Yonkers Statesman. THE author who is seriously depressed by unfavorable notices of his work may be said to be critically ill.—Lowell Courier. AN "intemperate home" is probably one that is always full.—Boston Transcript. BANKS of clouds are often broken by heavy drafts of wind.—Baltimore American. THERE are compensations for the want of riches. When a man is obliged to be his own valet it is his own fault if he hasn't the services of a gentleman.—Cape Cod Item. A "ROUGH" tender: The offer of a sluggard's hand in marriage.—Boston Courier.