A HOLE IN THE SEA.

Frank R. Stockton Reports a Submarine Wonder.

A Diver Hunted a Diamond and Was Hunted by a Shark —A Piscatorial Explosion and a Singular Outcome.

In the fall of 1888 the steamship Sunda, from Southampton, was running along the southern coast of Long Island, not many hours from port, when she passed by one of the great British liners, outward bound. The tide was high, and the course of both vessels was nearer the coast than is usual, that of the Sunda being inside of the other.

As the two steamers passed each other, there was a great waving of hats and handkerchiefs. Suddenly there was a scream from the Sunda. It came from Signora Rochita, the prima donna of an opera troupe which was coming to America in that ship.

"I have lost my bracelet," she cried in Italian, and then turning to the passengers she repeated the cry in very good English.

The situation was instantly comprehended by everyone. It was late in the afternoon; the captain had given a grand dinner to the passengers, at which the prima donna had appeared in all her glories of ornamentation, and the greatest of these glories, a magnificent diamond bracelet, was gone from the arm, with which she had been enthusiastically waving her lace handkerchief.

The second officer, who was standing near, dashed into the captain's office, and quickly reappeared with chart and instruments, and made a rapid calculation of the position of the vessel at the time of the accident, making an allowance for the few minutes that had passed since the first cry of the Signora. After consulting with the captain, and recalculations of the distance from land and some other points, he announced to the weeping Signora that her bracelet lay under a little black spot he made on the chart, and that if she chose to send a diver for it she might get it, for the depth of water at that place was not great.

By profession I am a diver, and the next day I was engaged to search for the diamond bracelet of Signora Rochita. I had a copy of the chart, and, having hired a schooner, with several men who had been my assistants before, and taking with me all the necessary accoutrements and appliances, I set out for the spot indicated, and by afternoon we were anchored, we believed, at it or very near it. I lost no time in descending. I wore, of course, the usual diver's suit, but I took with me no tools nor any of the implements used by divers when examining wrecks, but carried in my right hand a brilliant electric lamp, connected with a powerful battery on the schooner. I held this by an insulated handle, in which there were two little knobs, by which I could light or extinguish it.

The bottom was hard and smooth, and, lighting my lamp, I began to look about me. If I approached the bracelet I ought to be able to see it sparkle, but, after wandering over considerable space, I saw no sparkles nor anything like a bracelet. Suddenly I saw something which greatly interested me. It was a hole in the bottom of the ocean, almost circular, and at least ten feet in diameter. I was surprised that I had not noticed it before, for it lay not far from the stern of the vessel.

Standing near the rocky edge of the aperture, I held out my lamp and looked down. Not far below I saw the glimmering of what seemed to be the bottom of this subterranean well. I was seized with a desire to explore this great hole running down under the ordinary bottom of the sea. I signalled to be lowered, and although my comrades were much surprised at such an order, they obeyed, and down I went to the well. The sides of this seemed rocky and almost perpendicular, but after descending about fifteen feet they receded on every side, and I found myself going down into a wide cavern, the floor of which I touched in a very short time.

Holding up my lamp, and looking about me, I found myself in a sea cave of some thirty feet in diameter, with a dome-like roof, in which, a little to one side of the center, was the lower opening of the well. I became very much excited; this was just the sort of place into which a bracelet, or anything else of value might be expected to have the bad luck to drop. I walked about, and gazed everywhere, but I found nothing but rocks and water.

I was about to signal to be drawn up, when above me I saw what appeared to be a flash of darkness coming down through

the well. With a rush and a swirl it entered the cavern, and in a moment I recognized the fact that a great fish was swooping around and about me. Its movements were so rapid and irregular, now circling along the outer edge of the floor of the cavern, then mounting above me, until its back seemed to scrape the roof, that I could not form a correct idea of the size of the creature. It seemed to me to be at least twenty feet long. I stood almost stupefied, keeping my eyes, as far as possible, fixed upon the swiftly-moving monster.

Sometimes he came quite near me, when I shuddered in every fibre, and then he shot away, but ever gliding with powerful undulations of his body and tail, around, about and above me. I did not dare to signal to be drawn up, for fear that the terrible creature would enter the well-hole with me. Then he would probably touch me, perhaps crush me against the wall, but my mind was capable of forming no plans. I only hoped the fish would ascend and disappear by the way he came.

My mind was not in its strongest condition, being much upset by a great trouble, and I was so frightened that I really did not know what I ought to do, but I had sense enough left to feel sure that the fish had been attracted into the cavern by my lamp. Obviously, the right thing to do was to extinguish it, but the very thought of this nearly drove me into a frenzy. I could not endure to be left alone with the shark in darkness and water. It was an insane idea, but I felt that whatever happened, I must keep my eyes upon him.

Now the great fish begun to swoop nearer and nearer to me, and then suddenly changing its tactics, it receded to the most distant wall of the cavern, where, with its head towards me, it remained for the first time motionless. But this did not continue long. Gently turning over on its side, it opened its great mouth, and in an instant, with a rush it came directly at me. My light shone full into its vast mouth glistening with teeth, and there was a violent jerk which nearly threw me from my feet, and all was blackness. The shark had swallowed my lamp. By rare good fortune he did not take my hand also.

Now I frantically tugged at my signal rope. Without my lamp I had no thought but a desire to be pulled out of the water, no matter what happened. In a few

minutes I sat divested of my diving suit, and almost insensible upon the deck of the schooner. As soon as I was able to talk I told my astonished comrades what had happened, and while we were discussing this strange occurrence, one of them, looking over the side, saw, slowly rising to the surface, the body of a dead shark.

"By George," he cried, "here is the beast. He has been killed by the current from the battery."

We all crowded to the rail and looked down upon the monster. He was about ten feet long, and it was plain that he had died for making himself the connection between the poles of the battery.

"Well," said the captain, presently, "I suppose you are not going down again."

"Not I," I replied. "I give up this job."

Then suddenly I cried:

"Come, boys—all of you. Make fast to that shark and get him on board. I want him."

Some of the men laughed, but my manner was so earnest that in a moment they all set about to help me. A small boat was lowered, lines were made fast to the dead fish with block and tackle, and we hauled him on deck. I then got a butcher's knife from the cabin and began to cut him open.

"Look here, Tom!" exclaimed the captain, "that's nonsense. Your lamp's all smashed to pieces, and if you get it out it will never be any good to you."

"I don't care for the lamp," I answered, working away energetically, "but an idea has struck me. It's plain that this creature had a fancy for shining things. If he swallowed a lamp, there is no reason why he should not have swallowed anything else that glittered."

"Oho!" cried the Captain, "you think he swallowed the bracelet, do you?"

And instantly everybody crowded more closely about me.

I got out the lamp. Its wires were severed as smoothly as if they had been cut by shears. Then I worked on. Suddenly there was a cry from every man. Something glimmered in the dark interior of the fish. I grasped it and drew it out. It was not a bracelet, but a pint bottle, which glimmered like a glow-worm. With the bottle in my hand I sat upon the deck and gazed at it. I shook it. It shone brighter. A bit of oiled silk was tied tightly over the cork, and it was plain to see that it was partly filled with a light-colored oil, into which a bit of phosphorus had been dropped, which, on being agitated, filled the bottle with a dim light.

But there was something more in the bottle than phosphorus and oil. I could see a tin tube, corked at each end, the exposed parts of the corks spreading enough to prevent the tin from striking the glass. We all knew that this was one of those bottles containing a communication of some sort, which are often thrown into the sea and float about until they are picked up. The addition of the oil and phosphorus was intended to make it visible by night as well as by day, and this was plainly the reason why it had been swallowed by a light-loving shark.

I poured out the oil and extracted the tube. Wiping it carefully, I drew out the corks, and then from the little tin cylinder I pulled a half sheet of note-paper, rolled up tightly. I unrolled it and read these words:

Before I jump overboard I want to let people know that I killed John Polhemus. So I have fixed up this bottle. I hope it may be picked up in time to keep Jim Barker from being hung. I did think of leaving it on the steamer, but I might change my mind about jumping overboard, and I guess this is the best way. The clothes I wore, and the hatchet I did it with, are under the woodshed, back of Polhemus's house.

HENRY RAMSEY.

I sprang to my feet with a yell. Jim Barker was my brother, now lying in prison under sentence of death, for the murder of Polhemus. All the circumstantial evidence, and there was no other, had been against him. The note was dated eight months back. Oh, cruel fool of a murderer.

The shark was thrown overboard, and we made best speed to port, and before the end of the afternoon I had put Ramsey's note into the hands of the lawyer who had charge of my brother's case.

Fortunately he was able to identify the handwriting and signature of Ramsey, a man who had been suspected of the crime, but against whom no evidence could be found. The lawyer was almost as excited as I was by the contents of this note, and early the next morning we started together for the house of the Polhemus family. There, under the woodshed, we found carefully buried a blood-stained shirt and vest, and the hatchet.

My impulse was to fly to my brother, but this my lawyer forbade. He would take charge of the affair, and no false hopes must be excited, but he confidently assured me that my brother was as good as free.

Returning to the city, I thought I might as well make my report to Signora Rochita. The lady was at home and saw me. She showed the most intense interest in what I told her, and insisted upon every detail of my experiences. As I spoke of the shark and the subterranean cave she nearly fainted from excitement, and her maid had to bring her smelling salts. When I had finished she looked at me steadily for a moment, and then said:

"I have something to tell you, but I hardly know how to say it. I never lost my bracelet. I intended to wear it at the captain's dinner, but when I went to put it on I found the clasp was broken, and, as I was late, I hurried to the table without the bracelet, and thought of it no more until, when we were all waving and cheering, I glanced at my wrist and found it was not there. Then, utterly forgetting that I had not put it on, I thought it had gone into the sea. It was only this morning that, opening what I supposed was the empty box, I saw it. Here it is."

I never saw such gorgeous jewels.

"Madam," said I, "I am glad you thought you lost it, for I have gained something better than all these."

"You are a good man," said she, and then she paid me liberally for my services. When this business had been finished, she asked:

"Are you married?" I answered that I was not.

"Is there anyone you intend to marry?"

"Yes," said I.

"What is her name?" she asked.

"Sarah Jane McElroy."

"Wait a minute," said she, and she retired into another room. Presently she returned and handed me a little box.

"Give this to your lady-love," said she. "When she looks at it, she will never forget that you are a brave man."

When Sarah Jane opened the box, there was a little pin with a diamond head, and she gave a scream of delight. But I saw no reason for jumping or crying out, for, after having seen the Signora's bracelet, this stone seemed like a pea in a bushel of potatoes.

"I don't need anything," she said, "to remind me that you are a brave man. I am going to buy furniture with it."

I laughed and remarked that "every little helps."

When I sit with my wife by my side before the fire in our comfortable home and consider that the parlor carpet, and the furniture and the pictures, and the hall and stair carpet, and all the dining-room furniture, with the china and the glass and the linen, and all the kitchen utensils, and two bedroom suits on the second story, both hard-wood, and all the furniture and fittings of a very pleasant room for a single man, the third-story front, were bought with the pin that the Signora gave to Sarah Jane, I am filled with profound respect for things that glitter. And when I look on the other side of the fire and see Jim smoking his pipe just as happy as anybody, then I say to myself, that if there are people who think that this story is too much out of the common I wish they would step in here and talk to Jim about it. There is a fire in his eye when he tells you how glad he is that it was the shark instead of him that is very convincing.

FRANK R. STOCKTON.

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Written for the Sunday Journal.

Nature's Queen.

Hail, fairest creature of the year!
With violet eyes, cheeks soft and clear,
Tinged with the rose's hue.
Thy brow, bright skies encircling round,
With white-cap clouds, queenlike, is crowned,
Afar in depths of blue.
Thy silken, wavy, sun-lit hair,
Set with a gem of gold,
Fills, gossamer-like, the balmy air
With threads of finest mold.
Above, bright, with love light,
We gaze in depths of blue.
Golden tresses, fond caresses
We shall bestow on you.

See on thy green and matted breast
How we delight to lie and rest
Among the fragrant flowers;
And when at eve the sun bends low
Still linger in the parting glow
Nor heed the creeping hours.
Thus often are we lulled to sleep
By sweet, seducing charms
When waking would but be to weep
Or start at vague alarms.
Our caring, despairing,
Are hushed in love divine;
We fear not, we hear not
Nor any voice but thine.

O Queen of Queens! Thy open heart
We seek to pierce when we part
From out the common strife
And wend our melancholy way
Into the deep wood's sombre gray—
The silent shades of life.
Thy secrets to disclose the wiles
Thou fain wouldst lead the way
We lose our being in thy smiles—
See not, though bright the day.
Desiring, admiring
Thy colors, bright and green,
We love all, above all
Fond Nature's joyous Queen.

—Salem P. Welman.

Written for the Sunday Journal.

Old Europe.

(From the Spanish of Espronceda.)

Thine eyes are fixed on mortuary glooms,
Unmindful that they shelter but decay;
They feet are stumbling in a land of tombs,
The monuments of glory passed away.
With haggard face, grown greedy though so old,
Thou sellest the memory of thy dead for gold.

There is no prophet's glory in thy night,
No high-souled poet singing to the dawn;
In sordid misery, or dark, or light,
Thine eyes still downward to the earth are drawn,
Dragging in dust life's heavy, iron chain,
Deaf—aye! and dead—to all save wretched gain.

Shall I, then, dwell amid this wreck of fame,
These silent ruins, altars overthrown,
And hear the night-wind call upon thy name,
And answer it with like lament and moan!
No; I will flee the barren solitude,
And stir the cities to a nobler mood.

For they shall hear me, as the ocean hears
The passion of the coming hurricane;
And we will shake those deadly shining spheres,
Where kings, the blight of nations, idly reign;
So out of tears, and blood, and love, and might,
Poor Europe, thou mayst come to life and light.

—Minetta Taylor.

Ever True.

Joyous at heart as a summer day
A lassie stands by the meadowy way
And looks at a face that is very dear,
And wonders in words that know nothing of fear—
"Will you be true, love; will you be true?
Will you love me as I love you?
Will love grow stronger as years roll on?
And be truest when youth and beauty have gone?
Will you be true, love; will you be true?"

Joyous at heart on their wedding morn
Husband and wife walk home through the corn,
And each seems to hear the old-time song,
As, hand in hand, they wander along;
"Will you be true, love; will you be true?
Will you love me as I love you?
Will love grow stronger as years roll on?
And be truest when youth and beauty are gone?
Will you be true, love; will you be true?"

Joyous at heart when their hair is gray,
Husband and wife together stray,
And hand clasps hand as they pass along,
And the heart of each is glad with song;
"You have been true, love: you have been true!
Loving me well as I have loved you,
And time and change, and good and ill
Have linked us close and closer still—
Hearts ever true, love; hearts ever true."

—George Weatherly.

Which?

Oh, which were best, and who would dare to choose
Between the friend who holds you as his life,
Counting all effort worthless if his strife
Win from you no fond word, content to lose
All else but you; or him you know no ruse
Of time can part your soul from, and no knife
Of fate disever, though all tongues be rife
With tales of slander his fair fame to bruise!

Oh, which were best—to give or to receive?
To love or to be loved? To take alway
Or stand with gifts of love before the gate
Of one beloved? Ah, curious heart, believe
All love wins love, and choice were foolish play
In this. These two are one or soon or late!

—Oscar Fay Adams, in Harper's Weekly.

Progress of the Negro.

The Independent.

The negro in the South is slowly securing that recognition which belongs to him as a man; slowly overcoming the strong prejudices which separates him from the rest of the population; slowly securing that attention from the State in educational matters which his numbers and condition demand. He seems to be making no progress at all in the direction of his political rights. The figures of the census applied to the returns of recent elections are most eloquent on this subject. But these rights cannot be forever withheld. If the government may not, through the recreancy of certain Republican Senators, extend the strong arm of the law toward him, he is slowly but surely preparing himself to fight his own battle. That we hope and believe will be a bloodless one. God forbid a war of the races. But conscious of the manhood that is in him, and aware of the constitutional rights which belong to him, the intelligent, industrious, self-reliant negro will conquer his rights at the polls as he has conquered them in the schools.

Mysterious Lamont.

Frank Leslie's Weekly.

The always interesting personality in Dan Lamont is growing to be of more interest to Wall-street men every day. Mr. Lamont's pervading idea in life is to keep as much out of sight as possible. Nobody ever sees him, and yet he is a power that is felt down town. Early in the morning he slides into the big Mills building quietly, tiptoes into his office, closes a door or two, and remains in seclusion until half past 5 or 6 o'clock. Then he tiptoes lightly out, descends to the street, enters a cab, pulls the blind half way down, and is driven home. Nobody can get him out to dinner, and he does not see reporters. Wall street is apt to forget that he exists, for a time, and then something is developed that rather shakes the sensibilities of the brokers, and attention is again called to the fact that Mr. Lamont is apparently in practical command of the great fortunes of William C. Whitney, Oliver Payne and the rich Philadelphians who make up the syndicates which the ex-private secretary to Mr. Cleveland directs.

PETER AND MELINDA ANN.

I had a real hard time out, for the last few weeks, and I feel beat out. But it all seemed providential, and could not be helped, and it worked out unexpected good in the end, that paid us for it. But I wouldn't go through it again for a one-dollar bill.

You see the way on't is. I sot out in married life determined to do as well, or better, by the relations on his side, then I did by them on my own side. I wuz bound to do well by all on em, just bound to—

But I made up my mind like iron, that I would stand more, take more sass, be more obleegin', and suffer and be calm more from hisen, than from mine—and I would do awful, awful well by both sides.

And it wuz these beliefs carried out, and spread out into practice, that caused my agonies and sufferin's that I have went through the last few weeks.

You see the way on't was—I had a letter from the city from my great aunt Melinda Lyons, that her oldest girl Melinda Ann (a old maiden) wuz all run down with nervous prostration, nervous fits, and things, and asked me if I would be willin' to have her come down into the country and stay a few weeks with me.

Wall, aunt Melinda had done a good many good turns by me when I wuz a girl, and then I sot quite a good deal of store by Melinda Ann—she and I was just about of a age—and I talked it over with Josiah, and we give our consents, and writ the letter, and the next week Melinda Ann come on bag and baggage. A leather bag, and a trunk for baggage.

Wall we found Melinda Ann wuz very good dispositioned and a Christian, but hard to get along with.

The least thing that we could do or say that was not just so, would throw her into a fit, a nervous fit, you know. She would have spazzums, and straighten right out straight and act.

And then I would have to soothe her down, and soften her up with catnip and mustard poultices, and rub her in different places, and apply a soap stuff to her.

Why, one night Josiah happened to throw the boot-jack down kinder hard (he had a corn, and hit it, bein' the cause).

Wall, I stood over Melinda over two hours after that, three poultices bein' applied in vain for relief, till arneky softened the blow to her.

And one night the slats come out of the hired man's bed, jist acrost the hall from hern, and it took mor'n a quart of catnip to make her hull again.

And the cat fell through the sullar winder, we have got a blind cat that acts like fury, always a fallin' round, and a prowlin'—

Wall, I thought Melinda Ann would never come to—

She thought it was injuns, and the cat did scream awful, I'll admit, it fell on to some tinware piled up on to a table under the winder and it skairt even the cat most to death. So that you can imagine the state it throwed Melinda into. I thought it was ghosts and so did Josiah, and felt riz up in my mind, and full of or.

But I am a eppisodin' and to resume.

Wall, I guess Melinda Ann had been there about a week, and as well as I liked Aunt Melinda, and as well as I loved Duty, I wuz a beginnin' to feel perfectly beat out, and fearfully run down in my mind, and depressted', for fits is depresstin', no matter how much duty and nobility of soul you may bring to bear onto 'em, or catnip.

Wall, I wuz a beginnin' to look beat out, and so wuz Josiah, although Josiah, though I am far from approvin' of his course, yet it is the truth that he seemed to find some relief in givin' vent to his feelin's, out on one side, and blowin' round and groanin', out by the barn and in the wood-house—more than I did, who took it calm, and considered it a dispensation from the first, and took it as such.

Wall, if you'll believe it; right on top of these sufferin's, come a letter from a relation of Josiah, a widower man by the name of Peter Tweedle—

He was a distant relation of Josiah Allen's, and lived about forty-three miles away.

But he writ that he wuz lonesome, he had lost his companion for the third time, and it wore on him. He felt that the country air would do him good. (We found out afterwards that he had rented his house since his bereavement, and had lived in a boarding-house and had been warned out by the crazed landlady and the infuriated boarders, owing to reasons which will appear hereafter, and had to move on).

Wall, he wanted to come and visit round to our house first, and then to the other relations.

And I sez to myself—it is one of 'em on his side, and not one word will I say against the idee, not a word, not if I fall down in my tracts.

And Josiah wuz so kinder beat out with Melinda, and depressted, and kinder wore out by hevin' to go round in his stockin' feet so much, and whisperin', that he said that "any change would be a agreeable one, and he would write fer Peter to come."

And I, boyed up by my principle, never said a word against the idee, only just this:

"Think of it well, Josiah Allen, before you make the move."

And says Josiah, "it will be a comfort to make a move of any kind."

He had been kep awful still, I'll admit, and kinder bound down. But I could't see how it was goin' to make it any better to have another relation let in on whomsoever's side they wuz.

Howsumever, I see that Josiah wuz determined and I felt a delicacy about interferin', knowing well that I had one of the relations on my own side in the house—who wuz I, I sez to myself—who be I, to set up against hisen. No, I never will, I never will, so the letter of acceptance wuz writ, and in less than a week's time Peter Tweedle came.

We sopozed he would bring a satchel bag with him, mebby a big one, but good land! Josiah had to go after the baggage with the Democrat wagon. We see he had come to stay, it wusn't a evanescent visit, but a long campane.

We didn't know at the time that they wuz most all musical instruments, we thought they wuz clothes.

I see a black shadder came over my companion's face as he shouldered the fifth trunk and started up two flights of stairs into the attick.

He had filled his bed-room and the hall.

Wall, I guess he hadn't been in the house over three quarters of a hour, before he walked up to the organ and asked me if it was in good repair. I sez, "I guess so."

Sez he, "How many banks of reeds is in it?"

Sez I "I don't know."

Sez he, "Have you any objections to my tryin' it?"

I sez "No."

Sez he "Since my last affliction I have turned my mind agin towards music; I find it soothes," sez he—"After my first bereavement I took up the pickelo—I still play on it at intervals. I learned that, and the snare drum during these dark hours," sez he. "And I still play on 'em in lonesome moments. I have 'em both with me," sez he.

"During my next affliction I learned the clarionette, the fife and the base violin. Now," sez he, "I am turnin' my mind on to the brass horn in different keys. But I have brought all my instruments with me," sez he, in an encouragin' axent. "I frequently turn from one to another. When I get lonesome in the night," sez he, "I frequently run from one to another till I have exhausted the capabilities of each, so to speak."

I sithed, and couldn't help it, but I held firm on the outside—and he turned to the organ.

"I love the organ," sez he—and with that he set onto the musick-stool, opened up all the loud bases, the double octave coupler, blowed hard and bust out in song.

Wall, it all come jest as sudden onto Melinda as a thunder-clap out of a parlor ceilin', or a tornado out of a teacup—it was perfectly unexpected, and unlooked for as they would be—and just as skairful—

For this wuz one of her bad days, and bein' a old maid, we thought mebby it would excite her to know a widower wuz in the house—so we had kep it from her.

And the first intimation she had of Peter'ses presence wuz this awful loud blast of sound.

His voice wuz loud in the extreme, and heavy, and it wuz "Cornation" he bust out in.

He's pious, there haint a doubt on't but still Cornation is the loudest him in the him-book.

Wall, the very first line he blasted forth, I knew just as well as I knew afterwards, what the result would be.

I hastened up stairs, and there she wuz, there Melinda Ann sot in a fit. She hadn't had time to git onto the bed, and there she sat bolt upright in her rockin' chair in a historical fit; straightened right out over the rockers.

We had better let her know he wuz there.

Wall, I histed her onto the bed as quick as I could, and hollowed down the back stairs for catnip.

And as soon as I had limbered her up a little, she would clench right into me and groan and choke, and sort o' froth to the mouth.

And I'll be hanged if I didn't feel like it myself, for right down under our feet I heard that loud thundern' organ—for his legs wuz strong, and he blowed hard.

But yet, so curious is human nater, especially women human nater, right there in my agony, I couldn't help being proud of that instrument. I had no idee, I said to myself—not a idee—that it held such a volume of sound.

But loud as that wuz, Peter'ses clarion voice rung out louder, and high above it.

It was a fearful time—very. But even at that moment I says to myself again—

"He is a relation on his side—be calm!" and I wuz calm.

Wall I rubbed Melinda, and explained it to her, and poulticed her, and got her kinder settled down.

And I see it kinder took up her mind some. She didn't seem to dislike it now after the first wuz over.

And I left her propped up on her piller a listenin', and went down and got supper.

Wall, it was all I could do to get that man away from the instrument long enough to eat.

He seems to be kinder absent-minded, and lost like, till he got back to it again.

Wall, it had been kinder still for some time, you couldn't hear a thing from the dinin' room, up in Melinda's room. And when he bust out again immegitly after supper it was too much! too much! for I spoze she had been in a drowse—

It wuz "Hold the Fort," he bust out in then with all the steam on. He had a way, Peter did, of bustin' out loudest when he begun, and then would kinder dwindle down towards the last of the piece. (But it wuz one of 'em, on his side and I didn't murmur, not out loud, I didn't—)

Wall, I knew what wuz before me at the first volley of sound I sez to myself—

"Melinda Ann! Melinda Ann!" and hurried upstairs—

And there she wuz layin' back on her pillers, with her eyes rolled up in her head, and fixed, and her knuckles clinched.

Wall, I mellowed her up again after a long and tegis process—and then again I see that she sorter o' enjoyed it; and I left her propped up, and went down and helped do up the work.

Wall Peter never stopped playin' till a late bedtime.

And then I might have slept some at first, only Josiah Allen began when he left off, a scoldin' and a jawin'.

And oh! my sufferin's that I suffered with that man. I reminded him that he wuz a relation on his side—no avail.

I brung up his lonesome state.

He said "He'd ort to be lonesome! He'd ort to be far away in the middle of the desert or on a island in the depths of the seas. Alone! Alone!"

He raved, he swore, he said "Dumb him!" repeatedly.

You see Josiah hated music any way, only the very softest, lowest kind, and Peter wuz powerful, powerful and continuous.

But I reminded Josiah Allen in the course of duty that he had complained, "that the house wuz too still, since Melinda Ann had come, and he wanted a noise."

"I never wanted to be in a Lunatick Asylum," sez he. "I didn't hanker for Bedlam," he yelled.

Wall, suffice it to say, that I never got a wink of sleep till past midnight. And mebby it was about 1 o'clock—

When all of a sudden—we all wuz waked up by a low rumblin' noise, strange and weird.

My first thought wuz a earthquake, and then a cyclone.

But Josiah Allen had waked up first, and he had got his senses quicker, and sez he—

"It is that dumb fool a playin' on a base viol."

And that wuz what it proved to be. He had got lonesome in the night and got up and unpacked the base viol and wuz playin' a low mournful piece on it, so's not to wake us up.

He said in the mornin' that he held it in for that purpose.

He wuz a good-natured creater, and a mourner, there haint no doubt on it, and so I told Josiah.

And then he snapped out enough to take my head off.

"He'd ort to mourn! I mourn," sez he, "Heaven knows I do! But I shan't mourn after the first ray of daylight, for I'll take his trunks and throw 'em out doors, and him on top of 'em. And I'll cast Melinda Ann out like a viper," sez he. "I'll empty the house of the hull crew of fools and lunaticks!" I'll do it," sez he, "if I have a breath left in my body."

When he says this I thought of Melinda Ann. Had she got a breath left? Was she alive? Or wuz she not?

I just sprung over Josiah Allen. I trampled on him, I won't deny it, in my haste to get up—and I left him groanin' and a sayin' in a low, mournful axent:

"That foot could never be stepped on again, by him."

But I didn't stop to comfort him—no, my mind wuz too much took up with the relation on my side.

I hastened up stairs, and there wuz my worst fears realized.

Melinda Ann was wild as a hen hawk.

She had got the window up and wuz just a springin' out. I ketched her by her limb, and hollered for Josiah. Before he got there she got her hands clinched into my hair, and wuz a trying to choke me.

But good land, she didn't know what she wuz a doin'.

Wall, Josiah Allen by main force got her into the house again, and after a tussle we got her onto the bed. And I began to doctor her up.

Wall, I never tried to go to bed agin that night, for it wuz daylight before I got her quieted down.

Wall, Josiah had to go off that mornin' early, on business, to be gone all day. And I was glad on't, for I wuz afraid, in spite of all I could do, he would do something to disgrace himself in the eyes of both sides. His last words to me wuz:

"If I find either of them cussed fools in the house when I get back, I'll burn the house down over their heads."

But I knew he wouldn't. I knew he would quiet down while he wuz gone, and he did.

But my sufferin's through that day can't never be told or sung. And the martyrs that I called on, and the groans and sithes that I smothered in my breast waist couldn't be told.

For, just as I expected when he first blasted out on the clarionette—loud and strong, not bein' afraid of wakin' anybody up, I had to drop everything and go right up to Melinda Ann. But the attact wuz light, and as usual, after she got over the first shock, she enjoyed it.

And I happened to mention, havin' that pride I have mentioned, on wantin' his relations to stand on their best foot before them on my side—

I happened to mention that Peter got up and played in the night because he wuz lonesome, and that he said he would give half his property (he wuz well off) if he had somebody to play the organ while he played the clarionette.

I see she grew more meller lookin', and brightened up, and she says:

"I used to be a good player."

And if you'll believe it; I don't spoze you will, for Josiah wouldn't, when I first told him that night—

But when Josiah Allen came home that night they wuz a playin' together like a pair of turkle doves; she a playin' the organ and he a settin' by her a tootin', both as happy as kings. And from that time out she never got skairt again when he bust out sudden or begun gradual. Her fits grew lighter and lighter.

And though our sufferin's wuz heavy and severe, to hear that organ and clarettee, or base viol, or pickelo a-goin' day and night—yet I seemed to see what wuz comin' out, and I held Josiah by main force to stand still, and let providential circumstances have a straight path to move on in.

Wall, after two weeks of sufferin' on our part, almost unexampled in history, ancient or modern, the end come!

Peter took Josiah out one side and told him, as bein' the only male relation Melinda Ann had, handy to get at—"that he had it in his mind to marry her quietly and take her to once to his house in the city," and asked Josiah if he had any objections.

And Josiah told me that he spoke out fervently and earnestly, and says:

"No! Heaven knows I haint."

And he encouraged Peter warm, to have the weddin' sudden, and to once—that very day, and hour, and offered to get the minister there inside of twenty minutes.

But I wuz bound to have things carried on decent. So I set the day most a week off, and sent for Aunt Melinda, and for his children that wuz married, and the single ones—and we had a quiet little weddin'. But the last thing that they done in the house before they left was to get the hull crew on 'em to bust out in a weddin' long, loud enough almost to raise the ruff.

Wall, Peter writ to Josiah that he hadn't been lonesome sence it took place, not a minute.

And Melinda Ann writ to me that she haint had a fit since, not one, nor a spazzum.

So as I told Josiah Allen, "Our sufferin's brung about good to two lonesome, and onhappy and fitty creatures—and we ort to be thankful when we look back on our troubles and afflicsions with 'em.

And he looked at me enough to take my head off, if looks could gulentine, and sez he:

"Thankful! Oh, my gracious heavens! hear her! Thankful!"

And his tone was such that I hain't dasted to bring up the subject since—No, I don't dast to, but I do inside of me feel paid for all I went through.

—Josiah Allen's Wife, in Home Magazine.

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

Denver is a mile higher than the Mississippi valley.

It has been discovered that almanacs date back to the year 100 A. D.

Statistics prove that only one man in a million lives to be 108 years old.

A funeral took place the other day at Hannibal, Mo., at which six young women officiated as pall-bearers.

The astonishing statement is made that the public library of Plymouth, Mass., does not contain a copy of the Bible.

It is affirmed that in Gunnison county, Colorado, there are three hills of solid iron and manganese ores 800, 1,000 and 1,100 feet high.

The City Council of Santa Barbara, Cal., has ordered every eucalyptus tree that stands within one hundred feet of a water main to be cut down.

A New York man claims to be able to eat a full meal every hour of the day for forty consecutive days. He wants $10,000 for making the attempt.

A brush fire in the Lismore district, Victoria, Australia, swept over a tract forty-five miles long by five to fifteen miles wide. About thirty-six thousand sheep were burnt.

May 13, 1865, at about 6 P. M., the Sixty-second United States Colored Infantry fired the last volley of the civil war. It was between Boca Chico strait and White's ranche, Texas.

Bayonets were invented at Bayonne, in 1670. First used in England in 1693. At first these had wooden handles fitting into the gun, but in 1699 the socket bayonet was introduced.

"As blind as a mole" must henceforth take its place in the waste-heap of shattered similes. A German naturalist has demonstrated that moles have eyes and that they can see as well as other animals.

An ex-confederate veteran visited a cyclorama of the battle of Missionary Ridge, at Chattanooga, Tenn., the other day, and became so excited that he drew his revolver and put six bullets into the figure of a federal officer.

A man in Newark, N. J., bought a clock. The family upstairs refused to buy one, as they could hear his strike. He set his clock half an hour ahead of time, and they now sue him for so doing and causing them to arise too early.

One of the latest exhibits at the quarters of the California State Board of Trade is a set of peach, almond and prune trees selected from nursery rows. Although only eight months old the trees are already thirteen feet in height.

A sow belonging to Joseph Cloud, of Westtown, Chester county, Pennsylvania, died a few days ago, leaving six orphans. Upon the death of their parent Mr. Cloud filled her place by a big milk bottle with six little hose attachments.

The smallest of all the States, Rhode Island, has the largest population per square mile, or 318.44 persons. The figures of the last census show that if the whole Union were as densely populated it would contain 945,766,800 inhabitants.

Owing to the fact that the price of butter went up to 40 cents a pound in Boston during the present month, the applications for federal licenses to sell oleomargarine were three times as heavy as during the corresponding time last year.

A resident of Arlington, Ga., has a curiosity that he discovered while breaking up rock to make pillars for his house. He broke a large rock open, and in the center of it was found embedded a turtle. Not a live turtle, but a petrified one.

American manufacturers of leather belting have a trade that extends all over the world. A St. Louis concern is now filling an order for two belts, thirty inches wide and 104 feet long, for a firm in London, and similar belts are also being made for shipment to Yokohama.

A California inventor has built a boat made entirely out of soap, and will sail it about the bay during the reception of President Harrison. The craft will contain several members of the company and the inventor. This will be the first soap boat ever launched.

Only one letter out of every 750,000 properly stamped and posted fails to reach its destination by the first regular mail, and east of the Rockey Mountains only one letter in 1,550,000 is lost in transit and never heard of. These figures do not include stolen letters, of course.

Some of the striking curiosities at the citric exhibition at Los Angeles are horse cars apparently made of oranges, a clock tower, twenty-four feet high, composed of oranges, lemons, limes and raisins, a model of the San Gabriel mission, made of small, fragrant Tangerine oranges.

A Swiss law is said to constitute every man his own assessor. After his death, if, on investigation, fraud is proved, the government swoops down on his estate and confiscates sufficient to liquidate the back taxes and interest. Such a go-as-you-please method would hardly work in this country.

The Hawaiian race has been steadily dwindling in numbers during the present century, and the latest census gives it a population of but 40,000, or a decrease of one-half within a half century, so that its extinction must soon be complete. The Japanese, who number 40,000,000, are increasing, and it is thought they may soon replace the vanishing race and re-people the island.

A flute that was discovered lately in an Egyptian tomb was in so good a state of preservation that it could be played upon as well as if it had been made this century, instead of three thousand years ago. What is equally interesting is that, while the sound differs from the flutes of this day, its notes are said to be based upon the rules of the modern scale. If this should be verified it would, to some extent, revolutionize existing notions about Egyptian music.

Probably the smallest salary paid in the world is that paid to the village watchman of Springstille, in Hessen. The amount of his daily income is four pfennings, or less than one cent in our money. This is the same amount that was paid to the village watchman in the last century. However, the "fortunate" man receives an additional allowance of 30 cents a month for clothing, etc., and is entitled to free board and lodging from the inhabitants of the village. The present watchman is seventy years of age.

LEARNING TO WALK.

Its Method Held to Have a Moral Effect on the Child.

Prof. Henri Marion, in Popular Science Monthly.

People sometimes ask, At what age can we seat a child in a chair; when put him on his legs; how old must he be before we teach him to walk? The answers are easy. He must not be made to sit till he has spontaneously sat up in his bed and has been able to hold his seat. This sometimes happens in the sixth or seventh month, sometimes later. The sitting position is not without danger, even when he takes it himself; imposed prematurely upon him, it tires the backbone and may interfere with the growth, so the child should never be taught to stand or to walk. This is his affair, not ours. Place him on a carpet in a healthy room or in the open air, and let him play in freedom, roll, try to go ahead on his hands and feet, or go backward, which he will do more successfully at first; it all gradually strengthens and hardens him. Some day he will manage to get upon his knees, another day to go forward upon them, and then to raise himself up against the chairs. He thus learns to do all he can, as fast as he can, and no more.

But, they say, he will be longer in learning to walk if he is left to go on his knees or his hands and feet indefinitely. What difference does it make if, exploring the world in this way, he becomes acquainted with things, learns to estimate distances, strengthens his legs and back, prepares himself, in short, to walk better when he gets to walking? The important thing is, not whether he walks now or then; but that he learn to guide himself, to help himself, and to have confidence in himself. I hold, without exaggeration, that education of the character is going on at the same time with training in locomotion, and that the way one learns to walk is not without moral importance.

READING FOR SUNDAY.

The Watches of the Night.

ONE leads us through the watches of the night!—
By the endless intercession of our loved ones lost to sight,
HE is with us through all trials in His mercy and His might;
With our mothers there about Him, all our sorrow disappears,
Till the silence of our sobbing is the prayer the Master hears,
And His hand is laid upon us with the tenderness of tears
In the