

A Bachelor's Apology.

Her eyes were bright, her figure slight,
And light as any fairy;
Her nose was heavenward inclined;
Her manners sweet an airy.

Her mouth was like a rosebud;
Her voice like any linnets;
Her head was little, and I fear
Had very little in it.

But then so artless was her art,
My heart could not resist her;
And added to her other charms,
She had a pretty sister.

They bloomed like any double rose,
They blushed a double pink;
One glowed the name of Laura;
The other, Kate, I think.

When left alone with Laura,
Love urged his soft dictate,
And in sweet Laura's absence,
I doted more on Kate.

And thus to choose between them,
I were treason to decide,
Because I had been happiest
With either for my bride.

To rich one flower, and leave her
Companion all alone,
To pine in a heart's sadness
Would need a heart of stone.

And that's the reason, Ladies,
I'm still your partisan,
For being single-hearted,
I lost a single man.

—Chamber's Journal.

Humorous Items.

A share-holder—A plow.
The first tanner—The sun.
Evening prayers—Burglars.
A soft's nap—A noodle asleep.
An ice king—A polar expedition.

In writing, millers use floury language.
A "clear" case—Jumping a bail-bond.
The early swimmer catches the cramp.
What is a home without a moth there?
Bootless attempt—Trying to go bare-foot.

To make a man feel sheepish—"Lam"
him.

War is inevitable. Marriages still continue.

A fool and his father's money is soon parted.

Wigs, in the language of flowers, are hellocks.

The path of duty—Through the custom house.

Railroad depose—Turning out the superintendent.

The forerunners of a plague—A mosquito's legs.

Motto for hot nights—Learn to lay bare and to wait.

A case of suspended animation—A man with braces on.

If a man "means business" he should have business means.

The man isn't very hungry who avers that he is above board.

Sitting Bull has evidently taken to Indianing.—*Lowell Courier.*

Why didn't "Japhet in Search of a Father" go to Bagdad?

The soda fountain's motto should be, "Business sizz business."

Motto for new hotels—Charity covereth a multitude of boarders.

In very warm weather the schoolmaster is the only man who keeps his collars straight.

When married men complain of being in hot water at home, it turns out half the time it's scold.

A West Hill man calls his horse "Time," because when he is "untied" he "waits for no man."

The discrepancy between pepper and good soil is: One is ground fine, and the other is line ground.

Take at least one good look at a cocoanut, young man, before you have your head mowed and sandpapered.

The difference between a goose and some men is that a goose never gets into hot water until it's dead.

It's no wonder, as a critic recently remarked, that "The Raven" savors of ancient Greece. It's Poe-made.

Aggravating: To think of a good joke after getting to bed, and not able to recall a word of it next morning.

A minion of the law seized Fanny Davenport's rights at Scranston the other day. There was nothing in them at the time, however.

There are beautiful warm soda springs in Colorado, and people who go bathing in them at once exclaim: "O! but this is soda-licious."

Birds are entitled to justice. When a man is indulging in a frolic, to say he is "out on a limb," is a libel on that bird. He is really out on a swallow.

Who bath woe—who hath sorrow? Well, that Nevada man who traded a mule for a wife feels about as red around the eyes as any of 'em.

An independence (Kan.) woman wants a divorce because she was chloroformed and carried off and married to her husband two or three days before she knew it.

The *Detroit Free Press* presents the question, "Are watermelons healthy?" Much depends, we should say, on the tect and enterprise of the old gentleman's dog.

The *Troy Times* asks: "Should the President pass out would Samuel J. Popin?" The chances are that he would not; he has proved himself too much of a pop-in-jay.

"Is this airtight?" inquired a man in a hardware store, as he examined a stove. "No, sir," replied the clerk; "air never gets tight." He lost a customer.

A Chicago chap advertises for several steady girls to help on pantaloons. And an anxious scribe says that a fellow who can't help on his own pantaloons ought to be ashamed to want girls to do it.

A man was killed by a circular saw and in his obituary notice it was stated that he "was a good citizen, an upright Christian, and an ardent patriot, but of limited knowledge in regard to circular saws."

A Florida negro mistook a mule for a ghost and poked it with a stick. The verdict recites that he came to his death by using too short a stick in probing the unknowable for evidence of a future existence.

At 1 o'clock a. m. Tuesday the moon passed close enough to Jupiter to enable the man in the former to hail the latter,

get correct latitude and longitude, exchange newspapers, beg a chew of fine cut, and pass on.

"The funeral was elegant," wrote the waiting maid of a lady, whose husband had just been buried, to her sweetheart, "I was dressed in black silk, the flowers were lovely, and mistress wept just like a born angel."

A Sunday-school teacher was telling her scholars the other Sunday, about a bad boy who stole \$100, when she was interrupted by one of her audience, with the query: "And how did he get such a bully chance?"

A little girl was reproved for playing out doors with boys, and informed that, being seven years old, she was "too big for that now." But, with all imaginable innocence, she replied, "Why, the bigger we grow the better we like 'em."

A prisoner was arranged to plead an indictment for burglary. He said he wasn't ready to plead, and didn't care to plead either way, adding, "I'll tell you, judge just how the matter hangs; if I don't get bail to-morrow morning I'm going to plead guilty, and if I do I ain't. See?"

A subscriber asks "How to scald a goose." There are several methods. Perhaps the best way would be to wait until some evening when the goose comes round to serenade your daughter, and while he is in the middle of "Sweet by and by," pour a kettle of boiling water on his head from a second-story window.—*Norristown Herald.*

If Adam could for ten minutes come to life, would he recognize the old place, the same old city lots, the same old lemons, oranges, figs, elephants, snakes, dandelions, pie plant, peanuts, sassafras and persimmons that he used to name up and chalk down? All would be gone. He would recognize naught. But if he happened to wander into the negro minstrels he could hear the same old jokes.—*Oshkosh Christian Advocate.*

Josh Billings on Beer.

I have finally come to the conclusion that lager beer as a beverage is not intoxicating.

I have been told by a German who said he had drunk it all night long, just to try the experiment, and was obliged to go home entirely sober in the morning. I have seen this same man drink eighteen glasses, and if was drunk it was in German, as nobody could understand it. It is proper enough to state that this man kept a lager beer saloon; could have no object in stating what was not strictly true.

I believe him to the full extent of my ability. I never drank but three glasses of lager in my life, and that made my head outwitted as the it was hung on the end of a string, but I was told that it was owing to my bile being out of place; but I guess that it was so, for I never bled over was than I did when I got home that night. My wife thought I was going to die, and I was afraid that I shouldn't, for it seemed as tho' everything I had ever eaten in my life was coming to the surface; and I believe that if my wife hadn't pulled off my boots just as she did, they would have cum thundering up too.

I never had so much experience in so short a time.

O, how sick I wuz! 14 years ago, and I can taste it now.

If any man should tell me that lager beer is not intoxicating, I should believe him, but if he should tell me I wasn't drunk that night, but that my stomachick was out of order, I should ask him to state over a few words just how a man felt and acted when he was set up.

If I wasn't drunk that night, I had some of the most natural simtums that a man ever had and kept sober.

In the first place it was about 30 rods from where I drank the lager beer to my house, and I was just over two hours on the road, and a hole busted through each one of my pantaloons neez, and I didn't have any hat, and tried to open the door by the bell-pull and hiccupped awfully and saw everything in the room trying to get round on the back side of me, and sitting down on a chair, I did not wait long enough for it to get exactly under me when it was going round, and I set down a little too soon and missed the chair about twelve inches and couldn't get up soon enough to take the next one that came along; and that ain't law; my wife said I wuz as drunk as a bear, and, az I said before, I began to spin up things freely.

If lager beer is not intoxicating it used me most mighty mean, that I know.

Still I hardly think that lager beer is intoxicating, for I have been told so; and I am probably the only man living who ever drunk any when his liver was not plumb-b.

I don't want to say anything against a harmless temperance beverage, but if even I drink any more, it will be with my hands tied behind me and my mouth pried open.

I don't think lager beer is intoxicating, but if I remember rite, I think it tasted to me like a glass of soap suds that a pickle had been tew soaked in.

What Is A "Team?"

The court of the queen's bench was recently called upon to give a legal definition of the word "team." A tenant of an English duke had agreed as a part of his rent payment, to furnish at sundry times "one day's team work with two horses and one proper person."

On one occasion the duke's manager desired the farmer to send a cart to fetch coals from a railway station to the ducal mansion. The farmer offered to furnish two horses and a man, but insisted that the duke should supply the cart. "There can't be a 'team' without a cart or wagon," said the manager. "Oh, yes, there can!" replied the farmer; "the horses are the team."

Both parties were honest, and both were obstinate, and so the law was asked to decide which definition of a "team" was correct, the duke's or the farmer's. A jury said the duke's, but the farmer asked the court of queen's bench if the jury were not quite as incorrect as was the duke.

The court heard learned lawyers argue, and also discussed among themselves. What is a team? Poetry and lexicons were appealed to. One judge quoted these lines to show that the team is separate from the cart:

"Giles Jelt was sleeping, in his cart he lay,
Some wagging pillow stole his team away.
Giles wakes and cries, 'Ods bodkins, what is here?'"

Why, how now, am I Giles or not?
If the, I've lost my geldings to my smart;
If not 'Ods bodkins, I've found a cart!"

Another Judge quoted a line from Wordsworth:

"My jolly team will work alone for me."
Horses, said the learned judge, might be "jolly," but a cart cannot. Whereupon the counsel for the duke gave the judge "a Rowland" for his "Oliver" by citing Gray's lines:

"Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe hath broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield,
How bow'd the wood beneath their sturdy stroke!"

But the farmer's lawyer "capped" that quotation with several citations from the poets. From Spenser:

"Thee a ploughman all unmeeting found,
As he his tollsome team that way did guide,
And brought thee up a ploughman's state,
Following darkness like a dream."

From Shakespeare:

"We fakes that do run,
By the triple Hecat's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream."

From Dryden:

"Any number, and passing in a line,
Like a long team of snowy swans on high,
Which clap their wings and cleave the liquid sky."

The Judges decided two to one that the farmer's definition of "team" was correct; and then, as if to add another to the many illustrations of the "glorious uncertainty of the law," said they would hear the case over again.

THE MARKED ARM.

Click! In the dead of the night a sharp sound wakened Mrs. Halfont. The room was dark. Not even the gleam of the moon or starlight fell through the curtains of the windows. It was a very strange sound indeed but she saw nothing, heard nothing more.

She sat up, leaning on her dimpled left elbow, and put out her right hand and touched her husband's shoulder. He lay upon his pillow sound asleep, and he did not waken at her touch.

"It must have been a dream," said Mrs. Halfont; and her young head—she was only the bride of a year—nestled down again closer to her husband's arm, and she slept again.

Click!

This time the sound did not arouse Mrs. Halfont. It was her husband who awakened. He did not stop to listen, but grasped the revolver beneath his pillow and jumped out of bed at once. In an alcove in the next room stood a safe which contained money and valuables. It was one of the wonderful new safes which defy fire and burglars, but an old one that had been in the family a long while. Mr. Halfont knew on the instant that some one was opening this safe.

A man of courage, a man who never hesitated in the face of danger—one, too, who had a warm regard for his worldly possessions, Mr. Halfont strode at once into the room where he knew housebreakers were at work, and running in the dark against a powerful man, tackled him at once.

The light of a lantern flashed across the room. There were two more men. Three against one.

The sound of blows, struggling, and the report of a pistol aroused the young wife once more. Amid her terror, she had the good sense to light the gas. It shone upon a spectacle of horror. Her husband weltering in his blood, wrestling with a gigantic man, whose features were concealed by a mask of black crape; the upper part of whose person was clothed only in a knitted woolen shirt, of some dark color, with sleeves that left his great arms bare. On the right one, the one which clutched Mr. Halfont's throat, was a red mark or brand, a scar, a birth-mark. It would have been impossible for Mrs. Halfont, even in calmer moments, to tell what it was; but it indelibly impressed itself upon her mind, as she bravely cast herself into the struggle, and fought with all her might to drag the horrible man from her husband's throat, screaming all the while for aid.

A blow, a kick would have silenced her. The burglar must have known that, but there are very bad men who could not use violence toward a woman to save their own lives. This man could not.

His companions had flown with their booty, help might have arrived at any moment. With a great effort he wrenched himself from the clutch of his victim, and let go his throat, and sped away. It was not too soon; assistance arrived, now that it was too late, but Mr. Halfont did not live to tell the story. He was mortally wounded. His young wife watched by his bed-side until he breathed his last, and then dropped beside it senseless.

For weeks she raved in wild delirium of the murderous hand, of the great muscular arm with the scar upon it, and called upon them to save her husband's life; but she was young and had a fine constitution. After a while her health returned, and, at last, her mind regained its equipoise.

She removed from the city and took up her abode in a lonely country place, with a favorite sister for a companion. She had resolved, as all widows who have loved their husbands do at first, to remain a widow forever. And indeed, though many men would gladly have tempted one so young, beautiful and wealthy to change her mind on this point she seemed to care less for any one of them than for the kitten which purred upon her knee, or the little black-and-tan terrier which ran by her side along her garden paths. She was nineteen when her husband was murdered; at thirty-two she was still true to his memory.

Is any one forever utterly true to another's memory out of romance—any one who does not die young? I fear not. In this lapsing summer of the woman's life, when she pretended to believe that Autumn had actually come, temptation to inconstancy assailed her. For many years a fine house upon the neighboring estate had been empty, but now there came to take possession of it a gentleman not yet forty. A widower with plenty of money and no children, a handsome man, well built and stalwart, with magnificent

black hair and eyes that were like black diamonds. Spanish eyes—indeed he called himself a Spaniard, and his speech betrayed a foreign accent.

The dark eyes and the blue eyes met, a few neighborly words exchanged, a call followed soon. Mrs. Halfont felt a new emotion creeping into her heart. She felt pleased and flattered by this stranger's admiration. Then she knew she was loved, and rejoiced—and so discovered that she herself loved again.

At first she was angry with herself, then she wept over her inconstancy, but at last she yielded utterly. After all, it was the love that made her untrue—since she had loved she could never pride herself on being faithful again, and so she listened to the sweet words, that, despite herself, made her happy, and promised to marry Colonel Humphries.

When a widow does marry a second time she generally contrives to make a fool of herself.

Mrs. Halfont had certainly not done so foolishly as some widows do. She had neither chosen a little boy, or a titled Italian without money enough to keep himself in macaroni. Her future husband was older than herself, and too rich to be suspected of being a fortune hunter, but, after all, no one knew him. He came into the neighborhood without letters of introduction to any one, and whether he won his fortune by trade, or came to it by inheritance, remained a mystery.

There were those who shrugged their shoulders and declared that Mrs. Halfont would regret not having chosen some one of whom more was known—some retired merchant, some gentleman of fortune, whose father had been known to her friends. Nothing, to be sure, could be said against this Spaniard or Cuban with the English name; but who knew anything in his favor?

However, no one said this to Mrs. Halfont, and if any one had, words never changed a woman's fancy yet. Mrs. Halfont believed in Colonel Humphries, meant to marry him.

Indeed the trousseau was prepared, the wedding day fixed, all was ready, and Mrs. Halfont believed herself to be a very happy woman. She once more built castles in the air. Her old sorrow seemed to fade away in the distance. She was a girl again.

At last only twenty-four hours lay between her and her wedding day. She was busy in her sewing room on this last day, finishing some ruffles in lace and ribbon, and singing softly to herself, when suddenly the house was filled with cries.

An old man servant, while cutting the grass upon the lawn, had wounded himself seriously. The doctor was sent for at once, but was not at home, and meanwhile poor Zebedee was bleeding to death.

Suddenly Mrs. Halfont remembered that Mr. Humphries had said that he understood wounds as well as though he had been a surgeon. Without this it would have been natural for her to call on one who was so soon to be her protector in a moment of anxiety. She would call him herself, that there might be no delay; and, seizing her garden hat, she ran along a little path that led from her ground to that of Mr. Humphries, climbed a low fence, to save time which would have been lost in reaching a gate, and so gained the rear of the dwelling, of which to-morrow she would be mistress.

She thought herself terrified and distressed. She felt rather injured in that such an unpleasant thing as the wounding of poor Zebedee should have happened on the eve of her wedding day. Ten minutes after she thought of herself at that moment as utterly at ease—wonderfully happy—for as she reached those windows and peeped half timidly through the curtains, a thing happened that made all she had ever suffered appear as nothing.

The room, the window of which she had approached, was one that opened out of a conservatory. She saw Colonel Humphries busy with some rare plants he had just set out to the warm sunshine that fell through the glass. He had taken off his coat and rolled up his sleeves. Now he left the conservatory, and coming forward proceeded to wash his hands in a basin of water that had been set ready for him. He was close to Mrs. Halfont. He did not see her, but she could have reached out her hand and touched him. Why did she not speak and call him by name? Why did she sink down upon her hands and tremble like an aspen leaf? Alas! the awful reason was this: Upon that arm to which she was about to give the right to clasp her in tenderest embrace she saw a terrible mark—a mark she had seen once before. She knew its size and shape and color. Her eyes had been riveted upon it as the snowy hand, at the wrist of which it ended, grasped her dying husband's throat. She had learnt it off by heart; she could not be deceived. Though years had rolled away, that horrible marked arm was not to be forgotten or mistaken for any other.

Suddenly Colonel Humphries felt himself grasped by a hand that small as it was, had the fierce clutch of a tiger's jaw. The fingers closed over that red mark—a white face came close to his.

"You are my husband's murderer!" hissed a voice in his ear.

Then the two stood staring at each other. He made no denial. He only looked down at the red mark upon his arm and cursed it aloud.

"How dared you make love to me?" she gasped. "You—"

"Because I loved you," he said. "Woman, if I had not fallen in love with you that night I would have killed you also. It was risking my life to spare you, with your screams calling men to hunt me down—"

"Oh, if you had but killed me then!" he moaned.

"Well, I am at your mercy now," he said.

She answered:

"You can kill! I wished you would pray you do it. I killed my husband. The murderer of my husband must be brought to justice, and I—yesterday, nay an hour ago I loved you! Oh, God pity me! I have loved this man, this thief who came in the night to rob my husband, and who murdered him!"

She remembered saying this. Afterwards a strange drowsiness overcame her. She seemed to let go her hold upon the world. She faintly recognized the fact that Colonel Humphries knelt at her feet and kissed her hands. Then there were blank hours, and strange wild dreams,

and she awakened in the twilight, found herself bound fast to a great armchair long and about her arms tying her hands and confining her feet.

So her servants found her; but she was the only living being in the great house. Colonel Humphries and his two black servants had vanished, no one knew whither.

The empty bottle of chloroform on the floor—the fact that he had left little behind him, and that he had always kept his money in a farm that he had left to leave the country at any time, all proved that detection had been prepared for. And he was never traced—or had the means to bribe those who were set upon his track.

Ida Halfont lived through it all. She lives to-day in the quiet house beside the river, but no one has ever seen her smile since that hour. No one will ever see her smile again; and from her deepest slumbers she often starts in terror, fancying that she sees uplifted menacingly above that cruel, terrible arm marked with the blood-red stain. There is no hope of happiness for her, for she never can forget that this arm has also embraced her.

Aunt Silvy's Recollections of a Barbecue.

Marley came bolting into Aunt Silvy's cabin. The next is what he usually did when things vexed him.

"It's mean!" he said, snatching off his large straw hat and wiping the perspiration from his brow.

Aunt Silvy was peling peaches for drying—great luscious Indian peaches, too, beet-red from down to pit.

"Seems like yer's alvays finin somethin' mean," she said, as the long peeling dropped in the pan, and she proceeded to stone the peach, which looked as though pared by machinery. "What's de matter now? Somethin' 'bout de barb'cue?"

"Yes, de committee's been 'roun' here to see what Pa'd subscribe, an' he signed for o-n-e shoat! Think how it 'll look!"

"Wm. Coleman, one shoat." An' the paper's goin' all over de country; everybody 'll see it.—General Brandshaw, and Mandy, and all de girls! If I could n't give anything but a mean old shoat, I would n't put my name down 'n' shoat."

"Gober had no sich puffalances at yer granpaw Thompson's. He uster subscribe a heap o' deaf an' dumb an' mals. I members one Foaf July he subscribed—lem me see of I kin member what all he did subscribe. 'Thar wuz two oxes an' seven milk-cows, an—"

"I don't b'live it," Marley interrupted.

"It's de bawn troof," said Aunt Silvy, solemnly. "I members dar wuz nuff oxes left ter git milk fer de white folks—coffee ne' mawwin arter dat barb'cue. But, law, mah'r Mawley! dat wuz n't haf yer granpaw Thompson subscribed. 'Thar wuz foun'teen fish-shoats, an'—lem me see how many tuckies; twenty-four tuckies; thutty foun' Muscovy ducks, fawty chickuns, sebetteen geese an' ganders, an—"

Marley gave a long whistle.

"Well, if that is n't de biggest story that ever I heard since I was created!"

"He did so. I could prove it by yer maw, but her wuz sien a little gal when it happened, her's fawgot. I members we all didn't hab no geese ter pick arter dat barb'cue 'cept one old gander; an' I members goin' to de hen-house, an' sein' n't a solitary human critter let' in dat dar hen-house, 'cept de ole saddle-back rooster. An' law! I fawgot de hams, a heap o' hams—more'n a hundud; an' de sheeps—law! I dunno how many sheeps dar wuz."

"An' didn't he subscribe a team of mules an' a half-dozen negroes?" said Marley.

"An' I want to know where my gran'pa got all de wagons to haul all the things to de barb'cue? I reckon it would take fifty wagons to do it; I'm goin' to ask Pa."

"Law! I wouldn't go pesterin' mah'r 'bout it. I neber say yer granpaw tuck um ter de barb'cue; I say he subscribed um."—*Sarah Winter Kellogg, St. Nicholas for July.*

Urged To Go Into Bankruptcy.

"Boggs," said Mrs. B. suddenly, the other evening, "why don't you go into bankruptcy, and have some style about you?"

"Go into bankruptcy?" repeated Boggs, "what for?"

"Because it's the fashion," replied Mrs. B. "Every body who is anybody goes into bankruptcy now-a-days. Our neighbors are all getting the start of us. Here's Boggs, who lives across the street, he is in the list to-day. Now we have lived in this town a good deal longer than Boggs has. Why couldn't you have got your name in the papers as well as he?"

"I don't want my name in the papers in that way," said Boggs.

"That's the way; always behind everybody else. We never could hold our own along with our neighbors."

"But we couldn't hold our own if I went into bankruptcy," persisted Boggs.

"Nonsense," cried Mrs. B. Don't the Sprigguses, who went into bankruptcy last summer, live just as well if not a little better than before? Now Boggs, do oblige me by buying a file."

"Buying a file? What for?"

"So that you can file your petition. Do it this very day, and it will be in the morning papers. Then your wife and children can hold their heads up with the best of 'em. Somehow I feel that we are under a sort of cloud now. People look at us as much as to say, 'There's something a matter with the Boggses.'"

"Mrs. Boggs, I never take the advantage of nothing."

"I know it. And that's what keeps us under. But couldn't you put in a petition? You know there is a petition upstairs that we don't need. You couldn't take it down and—"

"Woman, how foolish you talk. You don't know anything about the business."

"But I do know that we are getting left, and it won't be long, you will find, before folks give up inviting us anywhere. Haven't you any liabilities?"

"I have liabilities," replied Boggs, "but I haven't any liability to lie."

"O! your lie nece for anything where the welfare of your family is concerned. Tell me about your assets."

"I wouldn't have any if I did as neighbor Boggs does across the street."

"How is that?" asked Mrs. B.

"Why, the ass-sets around all day doing nothing, and it is no wonder that he had applied to the bankrupt court for relief."

Then Boggs laughed a low contented, laugh at his little joke.

Said Mrs. B., tartly, "You'll bankrupt your stock of wit if you keep drawing on it after that fashion. Then you won't become a bankrupt to maintain our social position?"

"No, I won't," said Boggs, bluntly.

"Then I give you due notice that I shall receive or make no more calls. I shall give up our pew in church and take the children out of school. I will close up the house, give out that we have gone into the country and we will all live in the kitchen. If we can't do like the rest of folks and be somebody, there is no use trying to live."

A Close Shave.

"I reckon you've heard tell of Jim O'Neil, who was 'assinated' down at Bloomington the other night?" remarked Jack Reynolds to a reporter on Saturday. The latter acknowledged that he heard a good deal, lately, about the man referred to. Jack Reynolds does the stoking on one of the largest locomotives on the Chicago & Alton Railroad.

"Just wait till I toss