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Home Song.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

Stay, stay at home, my heart and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed
They wander east they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest;
The bird is safest in its nest;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky;
To stay at home is best.

—*Atlantic Monthly.*

Mrs. Lofty and I.

Mrs. Lofty keeps a carriage,
So do I;
She has dapple-grays to draw it,
None have I;
She's no prounder with her coachman
Than am I,
With my blue-eyed laughing baby,
Trundling by.

I hide his face lest she should see
The cherub boy and envy me.

Her fine husband has white fingers,
Mine has not;
He could give his bride a palace—
Mine, a cot.
Hers comes home beneath the star-light—
Ne'er caresses she;
Mine comes in the purple twilight,
Kisses me,
And prays that He who turns life's sands
Will hold his loved ones in His hands.

Mrs. Lofty has her jewels,
So have I;
She wears hers upon her bosom,
Inside I;
She will leave hers at death's portal,
By-and-by;
I shall bear my treasure with me
When I die,
For I have love, and she has gold—
She counts her wealth—mine can't be told.

She has those who love her—station,
None have I;
But I've one true heart beside me—
Glad am I.
I'd not change it for a kingdom,
No, not I;
God will weigh it in His balance,
By-and-by,
And then the difference He'll define
'Twixt Mrs. Lofty's wealth and mine.

LOVE AND FROST.

There was beauty enough to be found in Mataska valley, what with the river and the lake and the forest-crowned hills, at least in summer time; and even the dry, cold rigor of a Minnesota winter could not take it all away. Nevertheless, there was nothing else there half so beautiful as Norna Ericson.

Her withered, old Norwegian father had settled himself on a good-enough piece of land, away up above the head of the lake, miles away from Mataska village, and no one could say he had so much as one friend more, at the end of a five-years' residence, than the day the first timber was cut for his house.

A thoroughgoing miser was old Jan, and his crusty selfishness included not only his earthly goods, and the gift or use thereof, and his own not very desirable company, but also his one jewel of a daughter.

Rarely was Norna seen in the village; almost never at all at any merry-making of the neighborly country folk; and old Jan seemed to take an ogreish sort of pleasure in preventing her from entertaining visitors—young men especially—at his own house.

And so, the more Norna's beauty grew and became known among them, the more unpopular was old Jan Ericson among the free-hearted settlers of the Mataska valley.

And yet there were those who had succeeded in breaking through or climbing over the odd old miser's wall of reserve.

John Pinner had done it, by his father's advice; for Judge Pinner was Jan Ericson's lawyer, and he had more than once hinted to his son and heir that Norna had other and more solid attractions than her beauty.

If, therefore, any fair occasion offered to send a message to the Ericson farm, John Pinner had been generally quite ready to oblige his father by carrying it, and more than once he had even ventured on a brief call without any special errand.

As for Paul Wood, on the other hand, either he had not sufficient cunning to invent errands, or his pride forbade any subterfuge, for he had positively and openly braved, more than once, even the harsh discourtesy of old Jan, in his uninvited, unabashed intrusions.

If Paul did not pretend to vie with John Pinner in dress, wealth or apparent prospects, he was certainly a fine, manly specimen of a young Western farmer, and his dark curls and almost swarthy features wore a pleasant contrast to even the ripe blonde Norse loveliness of Norna herself.

One bit of strategy it seemed that Paul had stooped to, for more than once Norna had been surprised that he had been "out a-hunting in that neighborhood" on the very days which old Jan had chosen for a bit of teaming on the furthest edge of his possessions, or a trip to the store at the village.

Nobody ever knows how such things come to be common property; but, somehow or other, Judge Pinner and his son were made aware that they had reasons for distrusting Paul Wood, and he had been made to feel the fact very sensibly, more than once.

There had been an added bitterness the past autumn, in the fact that John Pinner's nomination to the State legislature had only resulted in showing the folly of the Mataska valley people, for the stupid fellows had known no more than to choose Paul Wood instead; and even Norna Ericson had said she was glad of it.

There came a day, however, in the early winter, when Paul would have given his political honors and his best horse, perhaps even his farm to boot, to have known why it was that Norna suddenly became as distant and repelling as old Jan himself.

Not a word would she vouchsafe him, though he met her a full half-mile from the house, and walked to the very door by her side.

He did not give the matter up, even then, half so much for the volly of bitter abuse with which the old miser greeted him, as for the icy look of indifference with which Norna marched straight on into the house, and closed the door.

There was really very little "give up" in Paul's composition; but he met John Pinner, before he had left the farm a mile behind him, and there was a look on John's face that suggested a good many ugly thoughts to the sore heart of the discomfited youth.

The next day and the next, and, in fact, a good many days after that, were decidedly unfavorable to courting of any sort.

It was weather to have "bred a coolness" in a blast furnace. First, there came a driving northerly storm bringing untold freights of drifting snow from the Arctic regions, till all the country was buried under a genuine "Minnesota blanket." No roads, no paths—no use in trying to make any, almost.

And then there followed a cold snap, that utterly exhausted the expressive powers of the thermometers. The only way to get the mercury low enough was to hang it down a well. Thirty, thirty-five, and some said forty degrees below zero—only, when people are half frozen, they are apt to exaggerate.

Anyhow, there were terrible stories of suffering, here and there, and nobody cared to stir far from home "until the frost should let go its hold a little."

"John," said the careful judge, on the third day, when the abating storm began to let in the frost—"John, don't you think you'd better go and take a look at the Ericsons? I don't believe the old man was ready for this."

"What! You ain't in earnest?" exclaimed that ardent lover. "Ten miles through these drifts! Do you want me to bury myself?"

"Well, maybe you're right; but I wouldn't wait too long. They'll be breaking out the roads in a day or so," replied the judge.

But more than "a day or so" went by before the Mataska people cared to attempt a good deal in the way of road-making, and in the meantime the Ericsons "had not been ready for this."

With endless supplies of timber-land close by—that is, within a mile or so, and generally fine winter weather to haul in what he might want, old Jan could never see the policy of making up much of a wood-pile.

Besides, a huge provision for warmth, such as his neighbors made, offended Jan's keen sense of economy. They would surely waste what they had so much of.

When, however, the old man saw the storm beginning, the even unusually bare condition of his pile of chips struck him with a sudden dismay, and he at once started for the forest with a yoke of oxen.

It was a rash thing to do, for a man of his age; but he had counted on his thorough Scandinavian toughness to carry him through. And so it did; for at supper-time he fought his way to the house again, through the heaping drifts and the blinding rush of the storm; but he came alone, for his team and their load were hopelessly stalled and snowed under.

There was fuel enough on hand for that night, with economy, and old Jan cheered Norna with the promise of what he would do on the morrow. And Norna tried to be cheerful; but the howling, dismal tempest without was only too well in keeping with the dismal state of her own internal feelings and thoughts.

The night went by and the morning came, and the storm still raged; but old Jan Erieson did not go out to cut wood.

He did not even leave his bed, for exposure and cold and over-exertion had done their work on his rheumatic old limbs, and imprisoned him only too effectually.

Poor Norna's heart sank within her, for she knew that such attacks were apt to be tediously long, and even fool might fail her, as well as the means of cooking it.

She was a brave girl, and she made out to go to the barn and the stables that day, so that the stock did not suffer; but the few fence-rails and old pieces of timber she was able to bring in enabled her to make but a poor defense against the fast increasing cold.

Moreover, old Jan was chilly, and fretted and complained of the absence of the grand old fires he had been used to in his youth, among the distant hills of Norway.

That was a terrible day for Norna, and when another morning dawned, she looked out upon the white and more than Arctic desolation around the house, with a feeling near akin to despair.

Still, with true courage, the Beauty of Mataska faced her troubles, waded through the drifts, fed carefully her one feeble fire, attended to the querulous demands of unreasonable old Jan, and wondered, now and then, if the people at the village would ever dream of sending out to look after them.

Then there followed another long, dark, miserable night, and Norna could not get a wink of sleep till toward morning, for thinking of what might come.

She did not even rise at once when the tardy light began to come through the thickly frosted panes of her window. Why should she, when she had nothing to make a fire with?

"Would it not be better to burn the furniture than to freeze? She could make a cup of coffee, at least, with the kitchen chairs."

Just then she heard a slight sound in the adjoining room, and wondered if her father could be stirring.

It was an effort even to rise and dress in that stinging cold; but Norna was brave, and in a few minutes more she was ready to face the labors and perils of the day.

Her heart was heavy enough when she laid her hand on the kitchen-door; but when she opened it she fairly started back in astonishment, for a blast of warm air, balmy with the breath of blazing pine, smote her in the face.

Not the cheerless, chill, deathly desolation she had expected was the ample kitchen, but the high-piled hearth blazed and crackled with a store of unwonted prodigality of pine, oak and hickory, while heaped on either side of it were ample supplies for at least that day's consumption, whatever might be the condition of the thermometer.

Norna did not believe in miracles, but she thought of her bedridden father, about to be frozen to death but for that pile of wood, and she just sat down by the window for a good, wholesome cry before she set herself to work at getting breakfast ready.

The tea-kettle had evidently filled itself, and started for a boil on its own account, and Norna's curiosity took her at once to the door, to see what solution of the puzzle might be found outside. Not a sign of human life was there, but somebody had been at work with a shovel, for there was a very decent pathway cut as far as the barn.

Tracks, of course, here and there, but big boots are too nearly alike to tell tales to the eyes of any one less acute of vision than an Indian trailer.

Still, Norna wondered and wondered how all that wood could ever have got there.

Getting into the house was easy enough in a region where wooden latches take the place of combination locks, but, whoever the unknown benefactor had been, he must have possessed wonderful faculties for silence.

There was magic in it, and Norna called to mind the old Norse tales she had heard of good-natured demons of the forest; but, then, all that belonged to Norway, and not to Minnesota.

Later in the day, as Norna paced here and there among the drifts, she got one hint, at least, for those broad though deep dents in the surface of the snow-drifts could only have been made by snow-shoes.

When she finally found her way to the stables, Norna saw that her work there had all been done for her, and a good deal more, and that even an old wood-sleigh had been dug out of the snow, as if in anticipation of future use.

Inside the house the "food question" was fast becoming an important one, so closely had the narrow and stinting policy of old Jan permitted the current supply to run down; but, for all that, Norna Ericson sang all day the quaint and musical rhymes of her northern ancestry, which her mother had taught her years before.

Bitter, bitter cold it was without, but the bountiful provision of the unknown friend left little to ask for within, and the very dancing blaze itself seemed to laugh in mockery of Norna's curiosity.

The long night came again, of course, and Norna tried hard not to go to sleep, so that she might listen.

Youth and health forbade any such doings, however, and Norna woke in the morning, not to find her fire alight, but all preparation made outside, in the shape of heaps of fuel.

It was evident, moreover, that Jan Ericson's remaining ox-team had been having a night of it. Well they might be jaded and used up, for, not only had some pitiless driver forced them to help him break a road to the timber through a mile of drifts, but to haul home again a very respectable load.

"All that was a later discovery of Norna's, but the first thing to greet her eyes, as she swung the door open, was the carcass of a goodly deer that hung against it, and she knew very well how much better venison-steaks are than utter starvation. They are a good deal better!

The next day and the next went by, and the terrible cold seemed to have griped everything with a hand of frozen steel.

Again and again did Norna Ericson shiver and turn pale, as she thought of what would surely have been her fate, but for her unknown helper.

Old Jan was able to sit up now, and grumble at the sad necessity of burning so much good wood, just to keep warm!

In reply to Norna's speculations as to who had sent it, however, he testily replied:

"I knowed Judge Pinner would keep an eye on us. That coffee you say was left this morning came from Jones's store at the village. I knowed it soon as I tasted it. It's what the judge always buys, and it's two cents a pound more than I want to give."

True enough, Judge Pinner had by no means forgotten his client, and at last he succeeded in stirring up John's chivalry and his own, now the roads were becoming a trifle better broken, and the mercury ventured a few points higher up in the glass.

It was with more than a little misgiving that they started, and they decided to take some of their neighbors with them, "in case they found anything bad had happened at old Jan's."

Bitter cold yet, but when the double team of Judge Pinner pulled his comfortable, closely packed sleigh in sight of Jan Ericson's homestead, the curling smoke from the chimney promptly dispelled all their fears.

"Hurrah for old Jan!" exclaimed the judge. "Jack Frost didn't catch him napping."

Great was the surprise of both and son, however, when the old man hobbled out to meet them, to be greeted with such a torrent of what seemed to be genuine gratitude for the kind attention they had shown during his illness, and all they had saved him and Norna from during the cold snap.

Just at that moment a man on snow-shoes came plodding down the road, but nobody thought much about him, and John Pinner mustered self-possession enough to answer:

"Well, of course, we were anxious about you and Norna, and we've come now to see if there's anything else we can do. How's Norna?"

"I'm pretty well, thank you," said that young lady herself, from the doorway. "Father, you should thank Mr. Pinner for the venison and the coffee."

The man on snow-shoes had half halted within hearing distance, and could not have lost a word of Jan Ericson's thanks, or the dubious protesting and yet acknowledging acceptance thereof by the Pinners.

"Is that you, Mr. Jones?" again interrupted Norna, addressing the "store-keeper," who still sat muffled up in the sleigh. "I'm glad you've come. I want you to read something for me."

"All right!" exclaimed the gallant merchant, springing out into the snow to take a large slip of brown paper from Norna's extended hand. "Where did that come from?"

"Read it—read it!" said Norna.

"Paul Wood! That's plain enough; and it's in my own handwriting. Oh, I remember, I did up a whole lot of things that day for one and another, and I put the names on 'em, so's not to git 'em mixed."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" said the beauty. "I see now. Father, John Pinner got Paul Wood to buy the coffee for him and bring it out. Mr. Pinner, how much did you pay Paul for working all night in the storm? Did you tell him not to forget about the venison and the rest? It was real good of you. 'Twas good of him, too, to give up his courting in the village all through the cold snap."

"What's that?" suddenly exclaimed the man on snow-shoes, untwisting a huge fur muffler from his head as he spoke—'what's that about courting in the village?"

John Pinner was evidently chilly, judging by the way his teeth chattered, and it was really a very cold day; but Norna Ericson's face was all in a bright warm glow.

"Paul!" she exclaimed—"Paul Wood! Come right in now! Come and warm yourself by the fire that would have been out for ever if it hadn't been for you. Father, John Pinner and the judge would have let us freeze and starve. It was Paul that saved us. Come in, Paul. Mr. Jones, you come too, and the judge and John may come if they want to."

"John," dryly remarked the store-keeper, "don't you think we'd better go home while the sleighing's good? This is Paul's day. Elected again, sure's you live!"

There was no doubt about it. Paul Wood was Norna Ericson's "elected."

A Bite.

In Chili there is an elderly farmer who is passionately fond of sport—especially fishing and hunting—and he has a son who is a chip of the old block in that as well as in other respects.

One day last summer the old gentleman left home, but before going set his boy at a job he was anxious to have done. Returning sooner than he was expected, he found that the boy was missing.

"Where's Tom?" he growled, as he entered the kitchen.

"Gone fishing," said the girl.

"Fishing! the rascal; I'll fish him when I catch him."

And away the angry old fellow went for the brook. Coming within hailing distance of his hopeful son, who was bending eagerly over the stream, the father yelled:

"Tom! you scoundrel, Tom!"

There was a deprecating movement of one hand on the part of the boy, who did not, however, turn his head. Still more angry the avenging parent came nearer and bawled out—

"I'll learn you to stay home and work when—"

"Sh! sh! sh! father," said young Isaac Walton. "I've got a bite."

The old fellow's passion perceptibly cooled at that announcement, and, lucky for the boy, the latter just then hauled up a handsome perch. This was too much for the dad, who sprang forward and helped unhook the fish, and then—

"Tom, have you got another hook?"

Victory perched on the boy's fish line.
—*Rochester (N. Y.) Sunday Herald.*

The Leech.

Recent observations on the comparative anatomy of this little animal, have made known to us that just within its mouth it is furnished with three little jaws, triangularly arranged, on each side of which are inserted a row of very minute, sharp-pointed teeth, much resembling the teeth of a saw. Each jaw has its appropriate muscular apparatus for its peculiar action, and thus is explained the constant shape of the wound observed after the application of this very useful animal.—*Annals of Chemistry.*

TOWN VERSUS COUNTRY.

Comparative Growth of Urban and Rural Population.

Scribner's Monthly for January contains an article on the comparative increase of urban and rural population in the United States; but it only gives the chief cities, leaving out the large town and village population. The Cincinnati *Commercial* has tried to supply this omission in the case of ten States, and it points out the following among the consequences of excessive urban growth:

1. Concentration of population.
2. Concentration of wealth.
3. Breaking down the great middle class.
4. The increase of the poor at a very much greater ratio than that of the population.
5. The increase of the power of realized wealth.
6. Increase of mortality and effeminacy.
7. Increase of vice and crime.
8. Physical and moral degeneracy.
9. Increasing peril to free institutions.

Accurate statistics, carefully and honestly handled, are indispensable to a full understanding of our economical, social, political, moral and educational relations. We have made a somewhat tedious scrutiny of the State of New York, and separated the entire town population from that of the purely rural, and find that the grand aggregate to have been in 1870, 2,824,986, against 1,652,317 in 1850. We have now the following:

	1870.	1850.
Total population	4,382,759	3,097,394
Urban population	2,824,986	1,652,317
Rural population	1,557,773	1,415,077
Inc ease of t tal population		1,285,365
Increase of urban population		1,172,669
Increase of rural population		112,699

Increase per cent.—Total, 43; urban, 71; rural 8.

A thorough analysis for the whole State of Massachusetts gives a rural increase during the two decades, of but seven per cent., against an urban increase of ninety-two per cent. Were all the town population of Pennsylvania gathered up, the rural increase would be found to have been about ten per cent., and the urban 120 per cent. In Illinois, a comparatively new State that was chiefly settled during the two decades, we find thirteen cities and towns of over 7,000 people in 1870 that can be compared with 1850. The aggregates are:

	1870.	1850
State population	2,539,891	851,470
Urban	448,475	66,187
Rural	2,091,416	785,283
Increase of State population		1,687,421
Increase of urban population		382,288
Increase of rural population		1,306,133

Rural, 166 per cent.; city, 579 per cent.

Were all the towns and villages of the State sifted out, the rural increase would be found to have been much less than 166 per cent. Ohio is a fair average between the old and the new States. After scanning all the townships of Ohio, and separating the village, town and city population from the grand total of the State, we have reached the following results:

	1870.	1850.
Urban population	1,000,000	480,000
Purely rural	1,655,260	1,500,329
Urban increase	520,000	108 per ct.
Rural increase	154,931	11 per ct.

The aggregates for ten of the principal northwestern States are as follows:

	1870.	1850.
Ten States	20,988,767	11,192,023
Seventy cities	5,141,925	2,198,137
Cities deduct d	15,846,842	9,993,875
Increase of population		8,796,735
Increase of urban population		2,943,766
Increase of rural population		5,852,967

Increase per cent. total population, 83½; city, 137; rural, 58.

These States are New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and Michigan. The great lesson from these facts is that efforts to prevent the increase of vice and crime, and to mitigate the calamities of poverty in our cities, should be increased in proportion to the increase of concentration. The philosophers and philanthropists can study the problem at their leisure, and the more they study the more they will find it necessary to do in order to counteract the unfortunate results of this tendency of population.

Reckless Competition.

A couple of stationers living opposite to each other in a seaside resort on the south coast of England recently got at loggerheads. One of them, in order to draw his neighbor's customers, piled his window with shilling packets of note paper marked at elevenpence. People stared, walked in and purchased. The next morning, when the other man's shutters were taken down, the window was filled with shilling packets of note paper marked eightpence. Day by day this little game went on, one underselling the other until prices gradually dropped to sixpence, fivepence, fourpence, threepence and twopence.

By this time the town saw and enjoyed the joke; and, notwithstanding the efforts made to keep the sales down, by taking at least ten minutes to seal or tie up every purchase, the two stationers were heavy sufferers, and every man, woman and child in the town was stocked with enough note paper to last them half a lifetime. However, the fight went on, each man devoutly wishing he had stuck to his legitimate trade, and had not tried to undersell his neighbor. The following morning the "2d." day found the opposite window with the shilling packets 1d. This was too much.

Within ten minutes an enormous placard obscured the windows of the other man, bearing in huge letters, the words: "Go to the fool opposite." But the "fool opposite" had had enough. In a few minutes the penny ticket disappeared, and in its place the old price, one shilling. In a twinkling down came the poster bearing the obnoxious words, and an exactly similar placard appeared, announcing that "the price of a shilling packet of note paper is one shilling." And thus the war of extermination ended.

The English Channel Tunnel.

Operations connected with the submarine tunnel have already been commenced on the French side of the channel, several pits having been sunk to a depth of 110 yards. At the same time the French and English committees have definitely drawn up the conditions of working for the route. The property of the tunnel is to be divided in half by the length; that is to say, each company is to possess half of the line, reckoning the distance from coast to coast at low tide. Each company will cover the expenses of its portion. The general work of excavation will be done, on the one hand, by the Great Northern of France, and on the other by the Chatham and South eastern companies, the two latter having each a direct route from London to Dover. All the materials of the French and English lines will pass through the tunnel in order to prevent unnecessary expenses and delay of transshipment, as in England and in France railway companies use each other's line, and goods can pass from one line to another without changing vans. It is understood that an arrangement will be established for a similar exchange of lines between all the English and continental railway companies when the tunnel is completed. The tunnel will belong to its founders. At the expiration of thirty years the government will be able to take posession of the tunnel upon certain conditions.—*Mining Journal.*

Millikens' Grief.

It was too bad, just after these nice rains had filled the cistern up so finely, too. It had been perfectly empty, and Mr. Millikens had just got it cleaned and fixed up in time for the welcome showers which filled it with an abundance of nice pure water. And the next morning Mr. Millikens delivered his family a touching lecture on the blessings of water, and in his beautiful and vivid imagery, he quite surpassed the Davidson fountain. And then when he stopped the car at Maple street night before last and walked rapidly to his happy home, how do you suppose he felt when his staring children met him at the gate and yelled in excited chorus:

"Oh pa, pa, pa, Mrs. Muggridgers' cat went and fell down our cistern and drowned!"

Mr. Millikens always did hate that cat of the Muggridgers'. A great brindled monster, with only one eye and the hair scalded off its tail, it had killed more little chickens in the Millikens' coops than there are rats in Iowa, and many a time and oft, she had found her way into the Millikens' cellar and filled her bloated form with cream and sirloin steaks. And Mr. Millikens could not remember the number of times he had sprained his arm and nearly threw his shoulder out of joint in hurling bricks at that cat, which would sit on the back fence, singing serenades and winking placidly at him with its lone eye, and wondering what all the racket was about. That cat had been the chairman of the anti-midnight district central committee for three years, and had attended more caucuses and called more conventions in Millikens' back yard than it had hairs on its back. It had made the summer nights a burden to Millikens all its life, and now it had drowned itself in his cistern. It was a piece of demoniacal spite work. You couldn't make Millikens believe otherwise; there was a terrible, fiendish intelligence in that cat, and its desire to torment Millikens had been greater than its love of life. Ever since Millikens had scalded the hair off its tail he had been expecting something like this.

If it had been a decent kind of a cat, he said, as he pulled off his coat, tucked his trousers in his boots and began the painful labor of emptying the cistern with a bucket, he might have stood it to get the cat out, and go on using the water; but that one-eyed, rat-tailed, hideous, serenade screecher, faugh! The disgusting thing, he would never use the cistern again; he would fill it up as soon as he got the water out, and would dig another one. Dog gone the cat, he said. He toiled manfully on, and the water grew lower with terrible slowness. He felt the bucket strike the body of the floating cat several times, but he hadn't hauled it up yet. He kept on tugging at the bucket rope till his arms ached. And his back. And his legs. And his head.

No, he snappishly told Mrs. Millikens in answer to her tenth summons, that he wasn't coming to supper till he had emptied this cistern. He didn't care if it was spoiling. What? Well, let the flies eat everything up, he didn't care; he could eat the flies, he reckoned (sarcastically), couldn't he? Hey! Well, he didn't care if it did take him a week, he was going to keep at it till it was emptied. Dog gone the cat, he wished it was Muggridger himself that was in the cistern. Blast a cat, anyhow.

How he did haul water, and splash his clothes and swear and swear, and how the neighbor's wives hung over the front fence and talked glibly to Mrs. Millikens about the catastrophe, and how he wished they were all in with the cat. And Mrs. Muggrider came and hung over the fence and wept, and told wonderful stories of that cat's sagacity and its affection for children. "Affections for my chickens," Millikens muttered. And the women talked and jabbered, and pitied Mrs. Muggridger more than if it had been one of her children that had been drowned. Millikens toiled on, his face very hot at being made the focus of so many eyes. Dog gone the dog-gonned cat to thunder, he said, with considerable asperity. How he did hate cats, he said.

The cistern was getting pretty low now. The sun had gone down behind the western hills, in a glory of peaceful splendor, and the ruddy tints of the dying day touched the clouds and sky with a serene, solemn beauty, almost too ethereal to hang over a world tainted with the blight of sin and one-eyed cats. The noisy prattlers at the front fence felt the hallowed influence of the hour, and Silence laid her fingers on their lips. Only Milliken's stertorous breathing and the plash, plash of the bucket broke the oppressive silence. Thank heaven, Millikens sighed, it is nearly empty.

"Mian-ow-ow-oow!"

A weird, unearthly shriek that curdled the blood in the bravest heart, and made Millikens drop bucket, rope and everything down into the cistern. He stood up and glared in speechless amazement at Muggridger's cat, perched on the back fence, which winked pleasantly at him with its lone eye, and went on calling the names of the delegates. There wasn't a damp hair on it. When Millikens could speak, he called his children and savagely demanded what they meant by telling him that lie about the cat.

"Well, pa," they said, "we thought it fell down the cistern, anyhow; but we couldn't see very well just where it did go, and maybe it only run around the box."

There was weeping and wailing in Millikens' house that night, but long after the sobbing children had found a place they could lie on without howling, the voice of Muggridger's cat was distinctly heard closing the debate, which had been unusually long and stormy, in an eloquent argument against the admission of violin strings free of duty. Millikens heard every word of it, and he pounded his pillow and flopped over to a new position.

"Dog gone that cat!" he said.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

"The City of Lions."

A correspondent of the New York *Times*, who dates his letter from Singapore, in the north-eastern part of Asia, writes: The lions of Singapore (which means "City of Lions") are not numerous. There are two gardens, one belonging to the corporation and one belonging to a Chinese merchant, both of them well worth a visit. The luxuriance of tropical growth is well illustrated, and one sees new and curious trees that would require much space for a description. Each garden has an orang outang, one of them the largest I have ever seen, and so human in appearance that my heart warmed toward him, though I kept it carefully out of his reach. There are pretty drives around and over the island, and one may now and then meet a tiger in the portion of the jungle nearest the mainland, and indulge in a discussion with him. The mainland is infested with tigers, and they occasionally swim over the channel in search of prey, which is plentiful, as the island is well peopled. The number of natives and Chinese annually eaten by tigers varies from year to year, but it is always unhappily large, and there seems no way of reducing it. The tigers only attack people on foot, and for that and other reasons (not unconnected with heat and heaviness) I shall make no pedestrian excursions to distant points.

FAMOUS SOUTHERN DUELS.

Fighting on Horseback—Prentiss and Tom Marshall—A Personal Reminiscence.

Over the signature of "B." some one sends the following letter to the New York *Sun*: The *Sun* has recently published some interesting reminiscences of noted duels in the South, but the record is by no means exhausted. A long residence in the South and West has made me familiar with the history of many of these encounters. One of the most singular, which happened at New Orleans, was fought between a gentleman recently before the public, in a suit to maintain or recover his commission and emoluments in the United States army, Capt. Schemberg, and a Mr. Chevalier. The combat took place at the race track near New Orleans, on horseback, with sabres. Schemberg's horse, a fine animal, was killed, and, I believe, suit was brought by the owner to recover damages. No other harm was done.

The duel between the great orator, Sergeant S. Prentiss, of Mississippi, and ex-Gov. Henry S. Foote, occurred near Vicksburg. A large crowd was present, and after one or two harmless shots had been exchanged, Prentiss, with his inimitable good humor, called out to some youngsters who were perched on a tree near by, "Take care, boys; the governor is firing very wild to-day." Foote was finally wounded. Prentiss was one of the coolest and bravest, as well as the most magnanimous men I ever met. He was one of the counsel for the defense in the celebrated Wilkinson and Murdaugh trial for murder in Kentucky. The case was removed to Harrodsburg on account of the prejudice against the accused at Louisville, where the killing occurred. When Prentiss arrived at the Galt House on his way to the court, some one warned him of the bitter feeling existing against his clients, remarking at the same time: "They will be hunting you, Mr. Prentiss, if they find out you are in the city." "Ah!" said he, reaching over the counter for his travelling bag and taking out a pair of pistols, which he placed in his pockets. "Well, I am a hunter myself when there is game around." No one molested him, however.

The celebrated Thomas F. Marshall, of Kentucky, fought several duels; that with Col. James Watson Webb is familiar to most northern readers. Tom once told the writer that if Webb had not stood cross-legged and disconcerted his aim, he would have killed him; that he had meant to have another fight with him, but the colonel, unfortunately, took the pledge to Gov. Seward. Another of Tom's duels was with John Rowan, of Kentucky, a crack shot, but one of the most amiable and gentlemanly of the old "fire-eaters." Tom received a bullet in the leg, and, as Rowan, who did not wish to kill him, walked up to express his regret, Marshall, lying on the ground, exclaimed: "Mr. Rowan, you shoot a fellow and then apologize for it with more grace than any man in Kentucky."

With one of these Kentucky affairs, which occurred in 1845, I was unfortunately connected, and the course it took may illustrate the state of feeling on the subject at that time. The principals were Dr. T—— of Harrodsburg, and Counselor H——, brothers-in-law. The cause of offence was a family affair. I resided in Lexington at the time, and was induced to interfere, in the interest of peace, on behalf of Dr. T., who was a stranger to me. After several days' discussion on the part of the doctor's friends, and canvassing as well as I could the views of the other party, I found an amicable adjustment impossible, and having gone so far, there was nothing left for me but to carry a challenge. The elder brother of the doctor, himself an eminent lawyer, the brother-in-law of the latter, and even the venerable mother—the last two strict members of the church—were consulted by me, but the feeling among them all was that their relative had been grossly insulted, and must vindicate his honor in the usual manner. The meeting was appointed to take place at a retired spot in Boyle county, but was prevented by the authorities, and I remember well we had a scamper to get beyond their jurisdiction and avoid arrest.

In the meantime I received a request from a reverend gentleman, whose death I saw noticed last year, to withdraw the challenge for an accommodation which he hoped to bring about. I gladly agreed to comply provided the opposite party consented to the arrangement without prejudice to my friend; but the overture was plumply rejected by them. The meeting took place the next morning at a wild, romantic spot on Dick's river. The law officers were on the hill above us, but an old boatman and his sons, whom we were compelled to take into our confidence, and who had the Kentuckian's instinctive love of a "fair fight," kept them at bay. The weapons were the old-fashioned duelling pistols, those used by the opposite party being a pair belonging to Henry Clay. Counselor H. fell, mortally wounded, at the first fire, and, as there was but one boat to cross the river, the constables waiting for us on the side we occupied, and only kept back by a wholesome fear of our friends, the boatmen, we were compelled to wait until the wounded man had been transported across. I never saw a man suffer more mental agony than the doctor did during the time, having been informed of the result. He had not wished to kill his opponent, only to inflict a wound such as might end the affair. We both left the State, going in different directions, he to Missouri and I to Louisiana.

From what I subsequently learned of his history, this affair wrought the most singular change in the character of Dr. T——. Prior to the fight I had found him amiable, inoffensive, and averse to bloodshed, though truly brave; but afterward I heard that he was frequently engaged in desperate encounters, in one of which, I believe, he was killed. This duel created considerable excitement at the time, and the Louisville *Journal* having published an account derogatory to Dr. T——, Mr. Geo. D. Prentice, the editor, was called on to correct it, which he did.

Italian Superstitions.

The superstitions existing among the common people in Italy is thus strikingly illustrated in a Florentine letter to the Philadelphia *Telegraph*: "Mr. George P. Marsh has just returned from Rome, where he has been busy looking for an apartment for this season. His return was delayed after having found a desirable and very handsome residence by an amusing circumstance. The marchese from whom Mr. Marsh rented the apartment refused to sign the contract on Friday, that day being tabooed in this country. So the United States minister was obliged to stay another day in Rome to satisfy the scruples of this superstitious nobleman. This matter is carried to excess in Rome, where no one will light three candles or sit in a room where three candles only are lighted. Here in Florence this deep-rooted horror of certain numbers and days takes quite a comical form. In many streets and squares there is no No. 13, but 12½ has been substituted, so that the numbers run 11, 12½, 14. In this ingenious way the dread number is completely done away with. Houses bearing the unlucky 13 rarely find any Italian lodgers."

The King of Smokers.

A year or two ago there died in Rotterdam a certain Mynherr Van Klaes, to whom is certainly due the title of "The King of Smokers." To gain this distinction in the great nation of puffers must require almost superhuman powers and a love for the Indian weed that passes human understanding. But Van Klaes was ever superior to the emergency. It took no effort on his part to gain the smoky crown and wear it while he lived. He did not even die young, as we might have anticipated from his immoderate use of the weed, but both enjoyed life and smoking until after he had passed his eighty-first birthday.

During the long vista of smoking years in which he reveled in his pipe, Van Klaes consumed four tons of tobacco, well wetted down by 590,000 quarts of ale which he drank, not to mention Schiedam schnapps and other national beverages.

In Mynheer's house was a sumptuous apartment, entirely devoted to pipes and tobacco. Every variety of weed grown on the earth's surface was to be found there, in the plug, cut up or shredded; cigars, cigarettes and cigarillas were grouped about in tasteful display. But, above all, Mynheer's pipes first riveted the visitor's eye. In this choice collection every branch or variety of the pipe family had its representative; one could trace the whole evolution of the race, from the clumsy bowl and thick stem of Sir Walter Raleigh's clay to the carved meerschaum from Trebizond.

In this temple of tobacco the veteran would sit, puffing prodigious volumes of smoke from his well-filled pipe, only pausing now and then to wet his thirsty lips with a drink of ale. It is said that his last reflecting breath was borne from his lifeless body on a cloud of smoke.

A few hours before his death Van Klaes called for a notary to make his will. Puffing vigorously, and after taking a pull at his Schiedam, Mynheer gave precise directions for the performance of his obsequies. In the first place, his coffin was to be thoroughly lined with the tops, bottoms and sides of boxes that had contained his favorite cigars; then a bladder of the finest dry-cut Dutch golden leaf was to be placed at his feet. Most important of all, his favorite pipe must be laid at his side. A firm conviction that his soul was not going to dwell in those latitudes where fire is sure to be close at hand, caused Mynheer to direct his executor to place a box of matches by his side, and, with great foresight, he also desired that a flint and steel should be added, as by some unforeseen occurrence the matches might dampen before they would be wanted.

Having thus attended to his personal wants in the next world, Van Klaes desired that the smokers in the neighborhood should be invited to his funeral, each one to be presented with ten pounds of tobacco and two pipes stamped with the name and arms of Van Klaes, together with the date of the donor's demise. These guests were to be admonished to keep their pipes lighted during service and to scatter ashes on the coffin as it was being consigned to mother earth.

The poor of the vicinity who observed these instructions faithfully were to be presented on the anniversary of Mynheer's death with ten pounds of tobacco and a firkin of ale apiece. After these items were arranged to his liking Mynheer smoked his last breath, constant to the last, and certainly deserving to be immortalized as the "greatest smoker since the flood."

Genius on a Tramp.

A wonderful piano-player with a romantic history is exciting the musicians of Bridgeport. About two weeks ago a shabby tramp entered a well-known music-store on Main street, and asked for permission to use a piano for a short time. The proprietor refused at first, but afterward consented because the man's manners were much better than his clothes. The tramp sat down and played a difficult composition with great ease and brilliancy. The pity and contempt of his listeners were at once changed to admiration. Friends sprang around him, and they are trying to get him once more on his feet. His history, as told by the *Farmer*, is as follows: He belongs to a titled German family, and had for his godmother and patroness no less a personage than the Queen of Wurtemburg. He received a university education, and became a lawyer. He was at one time consul to Paris from Wurtemburg, and moved in the highest circles of the capital when Napoleon and Eugenie were on the throne. The cause of his fall from all this high estate was dissipation of the wildest kind. As a result of his wild and reckless courses, he lost his official position and standing in society, and not only squandered the income from his family estate as fast as it came to him, but, in order to raise money, sold his claim to what should be due him for twenty-seven years ahead. When he had exhausted his resources at home he came to this country and engaged in some kind of business or occupation in New York. His ignorance of the language, or the dishonesty of his associates, or both, caused him to fail, however, and left him utterly destitute. It was then that he started out from New York on the tramp, picking up an odd job now and then on the road, but growing all the while more ragged and wretched. His aimless tramping journey had brought him so far as Bridgeport on the morning when he passed the music-store, and was irresistibly impelled, by a sight of the pianos, to go in and ask to be allowed to play.—*New Haven Palladium.*

An Inhuman Father.

Frank Lynch, a would-be suicide, was recently arrested on the Fort Wayne railroad bridge, over the Allegheny river, at Pittsburgh,