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POETRY.

SEVERAL DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS.

The feasting of Christmas is over and past,
The turkey, the pudding, and cakes,
And pies, and confections, are eaten at last,
By the children who shovelled them in so fast;
And many a child has stayed awake
At night with a certain familiar ache,
Which follows on eating more than enough
Of pudding and turkey, and all such stuff.

That funny old humbug, Kriss Kringle,
Whom the boys and girls love so well,
Has had the sense to go and clear out,
And he's up the chimney or up the spout;
And the boys and girls are beginning to count
And trying to reckon the whole amount
Of the jolly old lot
Of the presents they got,
And we'll help to reckon them up on the spot.

Betsie and Susie and Maria declare
That their elegant dolls have lost their hair,
And marked their faces, and bruised their eyes,
And suffered other mishaps on this wise;
Jimmy's horse has lost his tail,
And his woolly dog, so curly and frail,
Has shed about a teacup full
Of his principal ornament, namely, wool;
And Johnny's drum
To grief has come
And is mute and dumb,
And no better than dead—
For Johnny's punched in the back of its head,
In order that he
The better might see
The inside of the drum,
And so find out where the sound came from.

WHEN YOU WERE SEVENTEEN.

When the hay was mown, Maggie,
In the years long ago,
And while the western sky was rich
With sunset's rosy glow,
Then hand in hand close-linked we passed
The dewy ricks between,
And I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

Your voice was low and sweet, Maggie;
Your wavy hair was brown;
Your cheek was like the wild red rose
That showered its petals down;
Your eyes were like the blue speedwell,
With dewy moisture sheen,
When I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

The spring was in our hearts, Maggie,
And all its hopes were ours;
And we were children in the fields,
Among the opening flowers.
Ay! Life was like a summer day
Amid the woodlands green,
For I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

The years have come and gone, Maggie,
With sunshine and with shade,
And silvered is the silken hair
That o'er your shoulder strayed
In many a soft and wayward tress—
The fairest ever seen—
When I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

Though gently changing time, Maggie,
Has touched you in his flight,
Your voice has still the old sweet tone,
Your eye the old love-light;
And years can never, never change
The heart you gave, I ween,
When I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Pittsburgh.

BY JOSH BILLINGS.

Pittsburgh is located on the land side of the Ohio river, and kontains a populashon fully equal to its size.

To a stranger, the bizzness done here would seem tew be all smoke, but it is really the most manufaktring place in Amerika.

The principal krop raised here, out of the ground, is kole. The atmosphere is composed of oxigin and kole dost, which gives the face of natur, and man, and lovely woman a brunette look.

The best steddy buzziness for a nu beginner to go into here iz the clothes washing bizziness, a common paper collar has tew be washed four times a day, and even then show signs oph colour.

Pittsburgh is celebrated for the wealth and refinement of its inhabitants, and the buty ov its wimmin sex. I saw more pretty sex here in 20 minutes than I ever did before in the whole ov mi eventful life. If I was an inconsolable widdower, I should at once move to Pittsburgh and commence married life again.

Yesterday I saw mi first stern wheel steambote. I thought for sum time that it was a stationary saw-mill, in the middle of the river, but after a while discovered what a condem phool I was.

Anecdote of a Dog.

An English lady tells this story of a dog's intelligence: I had expressed my wish for a real collie dog in the hearing of an honest cottar belonging to our parish; and one morning, being out in the garden, I saw a stout lassie coming up to the house with a large basket on her arm. On entering the kitchen, I was greeted with "Here, mistress, my father sent ye a 'fulpie' (little whelp) a' the road fra Strathdon." While delivering her message she untied the cover of her basket, and out rolled a black-and-tan puppy, as broad as he was long.

He was christened "Collie," and soon grew both in size and in favor with all in the house, especially with myself and "old Joseph," the minister's man, who divided his affections pretty fairly between Collie and one of my little girls. One morning, when Joseph was at his breakfast and Collie and little Nellie were both standing beside him, I came in to give him a message, when Nellie began her old trick of pulling the poor dog's tail. Growl after growl of warning produced no effort, for the offender was *very* young; when, in an instant, after a harder pluck than usual, the dog turned, and before any one could interfere, he had seized the whole of her arm in his mouth. My first feeling was to pull open the dog's mouth, but old Joseph cried out, "Na, na, mistress! lat him be, lat him be!"

It was a trying moment. The child's screams made me very nervous, and there stood the dog with his large jaws holding the little fat arm as in a vice, and the long white glistening teeth showing on each side. "Dinna move, mistress," said the old man again: "Collie kens what he's doin'; he no hurt her." And old Joe was right. Collie held fast the little arm that had been his tormenter, but when Nellie, finding that she was not hurt, became quieter, Collie gave her one expressive look from his large brown eyes, slowly opened his jaws and released the arm, without one scratch on it. He had given her a lesson, which she never forgot, to respect his feelings with regard to his tail.

Potash Necessary in the Soil.

Professor Voelker thus speaks of the use of the superphosphate of lime on soil not well supplied with potash: "On one of the experimental plots of the Escrick Park I used mineral superphosphate alone, and, to my astonishment, no effect whatever was produced by its application. This is an interesting result, seeming, as it does, to indicate that the great deficiency of potash, which is characteristic of the soil in that experimental field, entirely prevented the display of the usual functions which we know perfectly well superphosphate of lime discharges on land of a better character than that at Escrick. The superphosphate (or, rather, the phosphoric acid) in that manure did not act, simply because potash was not present to form part of the substance of the clover-plant. You can, I think, readily understand that. Place before a man all the dry food which tends to entice the appetite, and at the same time withhold from him drink, and you will find that he cannot assimilate the dry food. You may give him every description of dry food that can tempt him to eat, but if you keep from him for any long time that unimportant substance, as we are too apt to consider it—though it is, in fact, a most essential thing—water, he will ultimately perish. Potash is non-essential as regards many clay soils, because many clay soils contain abundance of potash; but it is most essential on poor sandy soils, because, generally speaking, these soils are very deficient in the necessary amount of potash which is required to bring clover crops to perfection. The mixture of potash, salts, and superphosphate yielded the largest weight of clover and rye-grass per acre which was obtained on any of the experimental plots. Further, it was astonishing to notice that not only was the weight of the first cutting larger in the case of this particular plot than on any of the others, but the second cutting also yielded a much larger quantity."

—There are two shops just opposite one another in the Rue de Rivoli, the most fashionable shopping quarter of Paris, in which the same goods are sold. The one, on its sign, offers "the only genuine product—beware of counterfeits;" and the other declares, "Every article that does not come from our house is a counterfeit." There are two sausage dealers in a different neighborhood of the same city, one of whom has painted on his glass window, over a pyramid of sausages: "At ten cents a pound; to pay more is to be robbed;" while the other puts his sausages into an obelisk, and paints above it: "At twelve cents a pound; to pay less is to be poisoned."

—An Irish absentee is said to have sent this comforting message to his steward: "Tell the tenents that no threats to shoot you will terrify me."

THE QUEER CUSTOMER.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

In a shabby little shop in a shabby little street, a man sat stitching away as if for dear life, by the light of a single candle. The name of John Todd was over the door, and John Todd himself it was who sat upon the shopboard, keeping time to his nimble needle with an occasional snatch of a song. If there had been a song of the trowsers, as well as of the shirt, he might with great propriety have sung that, for it was on a pair of those garments that he was employed. As it was, however, he did not confine himself to any one particular melody, but sang a verse of one and then a verse of another, as the fancy took him. Immediately above him hung a disreputable-looking old blackbird in a wicker cage who listened to the performance with an air of grave attention, as one who was qualified to be critical, and occasionally gave an encouraging chirp of applause. The singer was a merry little man, no longer young, but still lithe and active; with twinkling gray eyes and a cheery smile which it was pleasant to look upon.

On the present occasion he had just got through "Jock o' Hazeldean," and the "Banks of Allen Water" (which the blackbird applauded immensely), and had begun "Mary of Argyle," when the shop door suddenly opened, and pulled him up short in the very middle of a very effective shake. The person who entered was a short, stout individual, with his hat very far back on his head, a pen behind his ear, and a parchment-covered note-book in his hand.

"Well, Mr. Todd," said he, showing the while the end of a stumpy pencil; "ready for me I suppose."

The little tailor's cheerful countenance fell, as he replied—

"I'm very sorry, Mr. Sprague, but I'm—the fact is—I can't say I am quite ready to-night."

"Then, why the dooce ain't you ready?" amiably inquired Mr. Sprague, tapping the floor viciously with his fat cotton umbrella. "You're aweer, I suppose, that to-morrow's Christmas-day; and you're also aweer that to awoid unpleasantness at a gay and festive season, I collects the rents the night before. Then why ain't you ready?"

"To tell you the truth, sir," said John humbly, "I've had a disappointment this morning—a little account I was to receive—"

"Yah!" said Mr Sprague savagely. "That makes five on 'em, all been disappointed of a little account. Gammon! Now look here, Mr Todd. This is Toosday. I'm a man of my word, and if the rent ain't ready Thursday, brokers *is* the word. I've had trouble enough with you, and I ain't goin' to, no longer. So now you've got it."

"I'll do my endeavors, Mr. Sprague," said John Todd humbly. "But which way I am to turn to find the money, the Lord only knows!"

"You'll turn *out*, Mr. Todd, if you don't find it." And with a coarse laugh at his own wit, Mr. Sprague departed.

Poor Todd looked much depressed. After a few minutes he unconsciously commenced "The harp that once through Tara's halls," but the attempt was a failure. Even the blackbird turned his back in disgust, and after a few bars John gave it up, and stitched away in sorrowful silence. He might have remained so for perhaps half an hour, when the door again opened, and a little old lady in a black bonnet and cloak, and a basket on her arm, and a muff nearly as large as herself, peeped in.

"Do I intrude, Mr. Todd? Ah! quite by yourself. Dear me!"

"Yes, Miss Pinnifer, for want of better company,—quite by myself."

"Ye-es!" said Miss Pinnifer. "And very busy I see. Always busy!—Coat, I resume?"

"No, ma'am, trousers," said John Todd.

"Oh!" said Miss Pinnifer, with a little scream, and covering her eyes with her hand. "Very indiscreet of me—I beg pardon, I'm sure."

"Don't mention it, ma'am!" replied John gallantly. "It's of no consequence. Yes, I am rather busy, Miss Pinnifer. They're for a Mr. Brown,—an old gentleman who came in last Thursday. He ordered a suit of black, and said he'd fetch 'em himself this evening, and I'm a little behind, you see."

"Ye-es!" Miss Pinnifer had a habit of saying "Yes," when spoken to, irrespective of anything in particular. She used the word to indicate various shades of feeling; but in a general way it was expressive of a mild surprise and admiration which encouraged the speaker to proceed. Mr. Todd proceeded accordingly.

"I hope he won't come just yet, for I've got nigh on two hours' work to finish the job. He's a queer customer, very. Never saw him before in my life, and he comes and sits down in that very chair, and talks and asks questions as if he had known me ever since I was so high? All about the children and Milly and everybody—"

"Strange!" said Miss Pinnifer. "Can it be? Yes, that must be it!"

"Eh?" said Mr. Todd, inquiringly.

"Now, mark me!" said Miss Pinnifer, laying a rather bony finger impressively upon the queer customer's trousers. Mr. Todd marked her accordingly. "Did he ask anything about me?"

"I don't remember that he did," replied Mr. Todd.

"I dare say not. Indeed, that rather confirms my previous idea. I know their ways, Mr. Todd."

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," said John, in much bewilderment. "Whose ways might you be alluding to?"

"Hush!" said Miss Pinnifer, with an air of profound mystery. "You don't know who may be listening to us at this moment—detectives!"

"You don't think, ma'am—"

"Yes, I do; I do, indeed, Mr. Todd. I haven't the smallest doubt that I am at this moment the object of a private inquiry. You must know, Mr. Todd, though I don't often mention it, that I'm engaged in a Chancery suit, and the defendants are horribly wicked people. They've done it before, I know they have. Not content with keeping my poor brother and myself out of our property, they have us watched and annoyed in every possible way. You'd hardly imagine the number of lodgings we've been to, Mr. Todd, and the people were always so polite and friendly at first, and after a few weeks they quite changed, and were quite rude and unpleasant. They'd been set against us by the detectives, you know. It was all very well to say it was the two or three weeks' rent we might be owing, but I knew better than that. And now they've traced me here. Dear, dear, what shall I do?"

"But are you quite sure—"

"O dear, yes, certain. It's been going on for a long time. There was a pale young man in spectacles stared at me all church time last Sunday. I thought at the time it was only rudeness, but no doubt he had his instructions."

At this moment the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the queer customer himself. He was an elderly gentleman with a rubicund complexion, and a very good-natured expression of countenance, and certainly did not look like a detective. As he entered the shop, Miss Pinnifer dropped her veil, and drawing herself up to her full height af four feet six, faced the intruder with excessive dignity. The stranger politely raised his hat to the lady, and then turned to John Todd.

"Well, Mr. Todd, and how do you do to-night? Am I too early for my little matter of business?"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Todd, "I won't say but what I'd rather you'd have come an hour later. The coat and waistcoat have been done some time, but the trous—(Mr. Todd remembered the modest presence of Miss Pinnifer)—the other garments are not quite finished."

"Never mind, Mr. Todd, it's of no great consequence. I'm in no especial hurry. But I'm going to ask you a favor. I shall surprise you now, I dare say."

Poor Todd was so bewildered by the remarkable communication just made to him by Miss Pinnifer, coupled with the singular present appearance of that lady (she was standing with one foot advanced, her eye steadily fixed on the stranger, and held her muff across her chest, in a kind of boxing attitude), that he knew not what to answer, and could only reply confusedly.

"Don't mention it."

The stranger, answering rather the spirit than the letter of his words, continued—

"To-morrow's Christmas-day. For twenty years past I've been a wanderer on the face of the earth, and this is the first Christmas-day, during all that time, I've spent in England. I have no friends, not so much as a dog or a cat, and I don't like the idea of spending Christmas by myself. Will you take compassion on me, Mr. Todd? You've a Christmas face, and I've a notion I could enjoy Christmas very well in your company. Will you take compassion on a lonely old man, and let him spend to-morrow with you and your family?"

John Todd was in much perplexity. His warm heart felt for the lonely stranger, by whose frank address he was much prepossessed. On the other hand, there was Miss Pinnifer's statement, and John could not quite get rid of a vague apprehension that the stranger might, if admitted, take advantage of an unguarded moment to handcuff the family all round, and bear them away to perpetual imprisonment; last, but not least, was the consideration that the larder was by no means sumptuously furnished, and that the Christmas fare was likely to be of an especially meagre description. The last reflection dictated his reply.

"It you're really in earnest, sir, it 'ud be unbecoming in me to say no, when you do me the honor to ask it. But we poor folks don't live like the gentry, you know, sir, at the best of times; and this year we've got even shorter commons than usual. We've hearty good-fellowship, sir, but very little else to keep Christmas with."

"And hearty good-fellowship is the very best dish at the Christmas feast," said the stranger. "Beef and pudding are not to be despised, but they're only secondary, after all. Well, you haven't said 'no,' so I shall consider myself accepted. I've dined off a baked potato before now, and I shall find enough to eat, never you fear. What's your time? One o'clock—very good."

"This lady and her brother reside in the house, sir, and they were going to club their Christmas dinner with ours, if you have no objection."

"Objection! I, my dear Todd! you forget that I'm only a visitor. Objection! certainly not. The more the merrier, I say. Madam, your most obedient."

Miss Pinnifer relaxed so far as to courtesy with dignity, still, however, keeping her muff available for defence, if necessary.

"Well, that's settled," said the stranger. "And now I've got some little matters of business to attend to, so I'll wish you a good night. Good evening, madam. Don't distress yourself about the trowsers, Mr. Todd."

With these words the unknown departed, leaving Mr. Todd and Miss Pinnifer dumb with amazement. The latter recovered her speech first, with the observation, "Did you ever?" Mr. Todd looked at her for a few moments. At last he ejaculated, slowly and distinctly, "No, I never!"

"What a very singular person, Mr. Todd. You're quite sure you've never seen him before?"

"Never to my knowledge till the other night," said Mr. Todd.

"There's more in this than meets the eye," said Miss Pinnifer.

"You still think, ma'am—"

"Well, no, not entirely. I must say I expected to see quite a different style of person. But there's no knowing. I shall be on my guard."

"If he isn't a detective, what can he want to come here for?" said Mr. Todd. "It's the most extraordinary thing I ever heard in my life. I don't know what Milly will say to a strange gentleman coming to dinner: but I couldn't help it, could I now? I'd better tell her at once, and get it off my mind."

"I'll say good night, then," said Miss Pinnifer. "I've left my brother too long alone already."

Mr. Todd wished her good evening, and dived into a small parlor behind the shop, where his daughter, Milly, sat sewing, with three younger brother Todds, making more or less noise, around her.

Milly Todd deserves a paragraph all to herself, as the pleasantest possible specimen of a good little English girl. She was not a beauty, but better than a beauty in the possession of the more lasting comeliness which is derived from a bright smile, a sweet temper, and a pair of clear, earnest eyes, made none the less expressive by the near neighborhood of a saucy little *retrousse* nose. Her wavy brown hair had not a ripple out of place, and her plump little figure was encased in a well-fitting dress, which, though it bore the marks of long service, was neatness itself. In fact, take her altogether,—but that is precisely what you would have wished to have done; or if you did not you must have had very bad taste indeed. There are some women one always wants to kiss at first sight, and Milly was one of them.

John Todd entered the room in a high state of excitement. "Milly, my girl, here's a most tremendous go!"

"Why, father dear, what ever is the matter?"

"Matter enough, my dear. Here's a gentleman coming to spend Christmas-day with us. Invited himself, and accepted with thanks."

"He won't have much of a dinner, then, father, dear; but he's welcome. Let me guess who it is,—not old Mr. Bellamy?"

"No, my dear, it isn't old Mr. Bellamy, nor young Mr. Collins either, though I dare say he'll find his way here in the course of the afternoon, eh, Milly? No, this is quite a stranger; quite the gentleman, too, I can tell you."

"But what makes him want to come here, then, father?"

"Well, my dear, that's more than I can tell you, except that he said he was a stranger and had no friends, and that he thought from my face that he could spend a merry Christmas here. That's all nonsense, of course; but the long and the short of it is, he's coming."

"Nonsense, indeed, for anybody to like my dear old father's face," said Milly, kissing him. "It's handsomer than half the young ones now, and I like the gentleman for saying it. No friends! that's very sad. Poor old gentleman, I'm very glad he's coming; but I wish we had a little more to give him."

"That's where it is, Milly; so do I; but we must make the best of it. What have you got?"

"Well, father, I've a nice bit of beef, and Miss Pinnifer is going to bring some sausages. I'm going to make a pudding, but it'll be only a kind of a make-believe to please the boys. They wouldn't believe it was Christmas, you know, without the pudding. It isn't much of a dinner to set before a visitor, father."

"Never mind, my dear," said her father. "I wish it was more; but we must make it do. Make the pudding as good as you can. Let me see. I know I haven't much in my pocket—only eightpence. Well, my dear, every little helps. I shan't want my half-pint of beer to-night."

"Dear old father? No, no; you're not going without your supper, sir, I can tell you, for any amount of grand visitors. I know what I can do. I've got half a crown up-stairs that I had put by for something else, but it doesn't matter, and that will help us out capitally."

With a bright smile, though with a little choking at the throat (for the half-crown had been saved by pennies to buy a necktie for a certain Charley Collins, whose acquaintance we shall make by and by), Milly rose to seek her hoard; but her father stopped her.

"No, no, dear, keep your money, we may want it worse before the week's out. I didn't want to have told you bad news to-night, but perhaps it's best told, after all."

Having taken the plunge, John proceeded to tell his daughter of Mr. Sprague's visit, and the terrible threat with which he had departed. The announcement produced a very depressing effect. Even brave little Milly had tears in her eyes, and her younger brothers, seeing her distress, howled dismally in vague sympathy.

At this juncture the shop-door was heard to open. A man entered bearing on his shoulder a huge hamper, which he set down on the floor with a bang. "Parcel for Mr Todd." And without another word he departed.

The whole of the Todd family gathered round the big hamper, and contemplated it with silent astonishment. "Who can it be from?" said Milly, a little ungrammatically. "I wonder what's in it?" said John Todd, junior. "I hope it's something to eat," said Tommy Todd, an epicure of nine. Willie Todd, aged six, sucked his thumb and said nothing. Probably he thought the more.

"Hadn't you better open it, and then you'll know all about it?" said John Todd.

"Dear old father," said Milly; "he's always right. So we will."

John Todd, junior, produced a knife, and the hamper was speedily opened. The first glance revealed nothing but straw, and the hearts of the youthful Todds sank almost to zero. But the straw was quickly removed, and then was revealed, first a most remarkable turkey,—a turkey, if possible, inconveniently stout, with a red ribbon round its neck and a rosette on its breast. Second, a roasting pig, which for size and fatness might have been brother, or cousin at least, to the turkey. I don't suppose there ever was a roasting pig *quite* as broad as he was long; but if ever there was such a pig, that was the one. Last came a hare, of which it is only necessary to say that he did no discredit to the turkey and the pig. Before the party had recovered from their delight and surprise, the door again opened, and another man, bearing another hamper, came in. "Name of Todd here?" said the man. "Right; with Mr. Brown's kind regards, and paid." The door had hardly closed upon the porter when the youthful Todds, regardless of the "Glass, with care," in large letters on the top of the basket, rushed at it, and had it open in a trice. A fragrant smell arose from it, proceeding from sundry whitey-brown paper parcels arranged in trim order within. Milly opened them. One was found to contain currants, another plums, another spice; in fine, all the ingredients for a monster pudding of the richest character were there. A noble packet of tea was the next thing that came to hand, and then a goodly store of apples, oranges, nuts, almonds, and raisins. When these were removed there was still a layer of something solid at the bottom of the basket, which, being investigated, proved to consist of a splendid plum-cake, and bottles of brandy, gin, and rum with one of ginger wine. The little Todds executed a *pas de* all sorts round the hampers in a perfect ecstacy of delight, and Milly and her father, though less demonstrative in their transports, were hardly less excited. Before they had recovered from their fresh surprise a scuffling was heard outside the door, as if something was rubbing against it. Milly opened it, and found outside a boy, whose face was just visible over an enormous bundle of holly and mistletoe. He struggled into the shop with his burden. "Please 'm, Mr. Brown's compliments, and thought you might like a little 'olly and miz for the Christmas decorations. O my! ain't it prickly neither." Whereat he dropped it in a heap on the floor and disappeared.

"Now, father dear," said Milly, "you had better shut up the shop—I'm sure you won't be able to do any more work to-night. Isn't it wonderful?—just like a fairy tale!"

"And Mr. Brown's the good fairy!" said John Todd. "Isn't he a noble gentleman? Well, I think I'll shut up, dear. He said he wasn't in a hurry for the things, and I don't feel as if I could bring my mind down again to trousers to-night."

"That's a dear old daddy," said Milly. "And now then you shall have your beer and your pipe, and sit in the corner, and see us put up this lovely holly. Isn't it beautiful! What a dear old gentleman Mr. Brown must be! I declare I quite love him already!"

"Halloa!" said Mr. Todd, "what'll Charley Collins say to that?"

Milly rushed at him, and shut his mouth with a kiss.

"Be quiet, do, you wicked old man, that's quite a different thing, you know it is." And she forthwith began, with the assistance of her brothers, to decorate the homely room with the Christmas evergreens. It was worth a day's pay to anybody (say the Lord Chancellor, as his wages are tolerably good) to see Milly's lithe little figure stepping from chair to chair, or standing like a lively little statue, on the ricketiest of tables, her arms held high above her head, and her dainty little white fingers flashing among the dark-green holly, and deftly insinuating sprigs of mistletoe into artful places where nobody would expect them. And when at last, having hung holly and mistletoe in all possible, and two or three impossible, places, she sprang lightly to the floor, with her sunny face flushed, and her hair the least bit tumbled by her exertions, and led out her father by both hands for the first kiss under the mistletoe, I don't wonder that the boys hurrahed,—I believe I should have done it myself under the same circumstances. I'm afraid, by the way, that I've done those boys great injustice. It may possibly be imagined, as I have not chronicled their remarks, that they were silent. O dear, no. Quite the reverse. The fact is, they not only all three talked at once, but they all talked the whole time, with an effect which it is easy to imagine, but exceedingly difficult to describe. Had Providence made me three first-rate short-hand reporters, instead of only one gentleman of medium size, I might have attempted it; though even then I (we, I should say) should have found much difficulty by reason of the idiomatic nature of the young gentlemen's conversation. The number of "gollys" and "crikeys" with which it was embellished was, I regret to say, much above what is considered correct in polite society, and (like the organ-man's monkey, who never would dance but to the genteelest of tunes) I find I never can spell those vulgar words. At last the merry party retired to rest, the boys to dream of roast pig, and Milly of— Well, never mind, we won't intrude, but don't you wish you were Charley Collins?

II

Christmas morning came at last, as it generally will, if you only wait long enough; and a very respectable sort of Christmas morning it was. Bright and clear and cold, with the snow on the ground crisp and hard, the sort of weather that makes one wish one was a street boy, and not too dignified to cut in on a good long slide; the sort of weather that makes you button up your great-coat to the chin, and case your hands in your thickest wollen gloves; the sort of weather (I hope) that makes you give a kindly thought to your poorer brothers who have no great-coats to button, and no warm gloves to cover their frost-nipped hands. Pile on the logs, by all means; heap up the blazing fire; do honor to the dainty cheer, and pass round the rare old wine. But little they know of Christmas who think to win its magic gifts of light and life and joy by such means only. A single spark, lit by your bounty in a poor man's hovel, shall shed a warmth that the roaring fire in your own mansion cannot give—a warmth that goes straight to the heart. The frugal meal, spread by the rich man in the poor man's house, shall bring to the giver a sweeter sense of enjoyment than the most sumptuous banquet spread for self alone. Happy he who has found the golden key—who knows, and uses the knowledge, that the treasures of Christmas happiness are reached through Christmas charity.

The whole of the Todd family woke up in a thoroughly Christmas state of mind, and the younger members (as might, perhaps, be expected, considering the nature of their dreams), with a perfectly ferocious appetite—two or three appetites each, indeed. Breakfast over, the junior branches were dispatched, under the care of dear old Todd, to church, while Sister Milly remained at home, and devoted all her energies to the preparation of the anticipated banquet. I am inclined to think that Milly had never seen, much less cooked, such a dinner in her life; but cooks, like poets, are born not made; and with the aid of Miss Pinnifer, and the simultaneous use of all the fireplaces in the house, Milly got on splendidly, and astonished herself with her success. It was in a moment of confidence, engendered by the close and intimate relation in which they were thus placed, that Miss Pinnifer imparted to Milly a secret.

"Milly, my dear," said Miss Pinnifer, "I want your advice."

"Hadn't you better ask father?" said Milly, conceiving that his counsels would probably be of greater value than her own.

"No, my dear; no, I think not. In a case of—of this kind, I don't think he would be a judge. I want to know, dear, whether I look best in my black satin spencer and pink muslin skirt, or in my Stuart tartan. Take time to consider, my dear."

"They're both very nice," said Milly. "The tartan for choice, I think."

"Do you, dear? Now I was thinking, do you know, that the tartan was rather—rather old-looking. One doesn't want to make one's self quite a middle-aged person, you know, dear."

"Of course not," said Milly; "but I always thought the tartan so very becoming. What makes you so particular to-day?"

"Well, dear, I really hardly know how to tell you. But we girls never can keep our little secrets, can we?"—the dear creature was fifty if she was a day—"the fact is —it's—it's on account of Mr. Brown, dear."

Milly looked at her inquiringly, but with a roguish twinkle in her eyes. The old lady continued,—

"The object of Mr. Brown's coming, my dear, is, as you are aware, enveloped in mystery. He must have an object, you know, and I have reason to imagine—strong reason, I may say—that that object is myself."

"You don't say so!" said Milly. "Pray accept my best congratulations. Has he declared his intentions?"

"Well, no, dear, I can't say he has exactly declared himself, in words at least; but if you had only seen how he *looked*—you couldn't mistake his expression, my dear. He looked at me with a positive smile, quite lover-like, I assure you. And then he insisted on coming to dinner."

"Well, dear, I'm sure I'm very pleased," said Milly. "We've all been puzzled to account for his wanting to come, and I dare say that's it. You won't forget old friends when you are a grand lady, will you?"

"I haven't accepted him yet, my dear," said Miss Pinnifer, "and I shan't either, the first time of asking. It doesn't do for a girl to make herself too cheap. He'll have to be very attentive, I can tell him, if he expects to have any chance with me. O dear! O dear! he's beginning to burn!"

The last words referred to the turkey, which was under Miss Pinnifer's especial care, and which she forthwith began to baste violently.

"I've had a good deal of attention in my time, you see, my dear, so perhaps I think the less of it on that account. It isn't to be expected, you know, with my experience, that I should be dazzled by a Mr. Brown. Isn't he fat, dear?"

"Is he?" said Milly; "I haven't seen him, you know."

"Not seen him!" said Miss Pinnifer. "What *do* you mean? My dear, I was speaking of the turkey."

"Oh!" said Milly.

The conversation was interrupted by the return of the party from church. The younger Todds were found considerably in the way of the cookery, till Milly hit on the happy expedient of sending them to the baker's to fetch the pig. Forthwith they departed, with pig written plainly on their countenances, and raced all the way to the shop, upon the understanding that the tail should be the prize of the winner. Johnny, the eldest, as might have been expected, came in foremost, to the great grief and discouragement of his brothers, till he magnanimously promised them that they should have the tail after he had done with it. Rather more quietly than they had set out, the trio returned from the baker's, Johnny and Tommy Todd carrying the dish between them. Willy, the youngest, much wanted to carry the cover, but the more mature wisdom of Johnny suggested that perhaps the pig would keep hotter with it on; so Willy had to content himself with walking behind as near as possible, and sniffing the fragrance of the savory burden. When they reached home, Mr. Brown had just arrived, and their father and Milly were endeavoring adequately to express their appreciation of the hampers. Mr. Brown seemed pleased by the interruption, and patting the boys' heads paternally, asked them if they were good boys. Johnny and Tommy, though a little abashed, answered manfully (with a view to sixpences) that they were, but Willy, who was of a nervous temperament, began to cry, and promised irrelevantly that he wouldn't do it again.

Dinner-time speedily arrived, much to the satisfaction of everybody. A few minutes before the appointed hour came a young gentleman with a very stiff shirt collar, and a rather bashful expression of countenance, whom Milly's blushes at once designated as Charley Collins. Almost before Charley had been formally introduced, Miss Pinnifer came upon the scene, dressed in the black satin spencer, and pink muslin skirt, with little blue bows pinned on all over her, and leading by the hand a solemn looking individual, whom she introduced in a tragedy tone as "My brother." The individual thus alluded to did not trouble himself to salute the company, but dropped into the first chair in his way, and fixed his eyes with a strong glare upon Mr. Brown. The party arranged themselves round the table, and began to do full justice to the good cheer. For some time there was but little conversation, everybody being too busily employed to talk, when suddenly Miss Pinnifer's brother paused in the very act of conveying a large piece of turkey to his mouth, and pointing with his fork, and the morsel still on it, at Mr. Brown, said "Halloa!" Mr. Brown looked a little uncomfortable, when Miss Pinnifer hastened to explain,—"You'll excuse my brother, sir, he's of unsound mind." And then leaning over two of the little Todds, and seizing her brother by the collar of his coat, she shook him violently, and said in an impressive voice, "Robert, behave!" Whereupon Robert became much depressed and "behaved" accordingly. After the excitement caused by this little incident had subsided, the dinner proceeded with great smoothness, and the little party, which at first had felt some little constraint, was rapidly unbending under the genial influence of the Christmas cheer. At last came the crowning glory, in the shape of the pudding. And such a pudding! It was the very largest-sized pudding within the memory of the oldest inhabitant: so big, indeed, that Milly couldn't bring it in herself, but had to ask Charley Collins to help her. And rich! I should rather think it was! It was a regular millionaire of a pudding. Miss Pinnifer's brother again created a little confusion by insisting on eating pepper with it, and shedding tears when the cruet was taken away from him; but when at last he was prevailed upon to try it without seasoning, he sent up his plate three times, from which I infer that he was by no means such an idiot as was generally supposed.

At last the dinner came to an end—as dinners will, the more's the pity—and the party drew round the fire in a cosy semicircle, and set to work regularly to enjoy themselves. The kettle was put on the fire, the spirits and lemons and sugar were brought out, and Mr. Brown volunteered to brew some punch (which he did as though punch had been his daily drink from his youth up), and then, when everybody was served, the pipes and tobacco were brought out, and Mr. Brown called upon John Todd for a song. And John sang a song, and another, and another after that, to the most tremendous applause, even the blackbird dropping his critical airs for once and applauding as loudly as anybody. And then Mr. Brown sang a song; after which Charley Collins sang a song with a remarkable chorus, which was sung by the whole strength of the company with such good-will that the people next door couldn't hear themselves talk, and knocked at the wall with a poker as a gentle hint for peace and quietness. And Milly herself sang a song, and then Miss Pinnifer's brother murmured something which was understood to mean that he also would favor the company; but being asked the name of the song, he replied, after much consideration, "More pudding." So to make up for his shortcomings Miss Pinnifer volunteered, and after repeating five times that she had a cold (which wasn't true) and that she hadn't a note in her voice (which was), she began, with intense expression, "Will you love me then as now?" The direction of her glances made it quite a personal matter between herself and Mr. Brown, who should by every rule of propriety have sung in reply, "Dearest, then I'll love the more." But he didn't. Probably he didn't know the song, or, still more probably, he wouldn't have sung it *if he knew it!*

As a slight protection against the too oppressive glances of Miss Pinnifer, Mr. Brown entered into conversation with Charley Collins, who had by this time got rid of his bashfulness, and appeared, as he really was, a light-hearted, manly young fellow. Charley had conceived a great liking to Mr. Brown, and was very confidential with him; so that Mr. Brown was speedily made aware that his young friend was a clerk at the moderate salary of eighteen shillings a week; that he had had an offer of a situation where he could earn two pounds, but that security to the amount of three hundred pounds was required which put it out of the question. Charley Collins could not help a half-sigh as he stated what might be, and yet could not be, and Mr. Brown could easily understand that the situation so temptingly offered, only to be perforce refused, was just enough to give Milly and her lover the start in life for which they were waiting.

The merriment by no means flagged as the evening wore on. Mr. Brown was the life and soul of the party, cracked jokes, asked riddles, told stories, kissed Milly and Miss Pinnifer under the mistletoe, and generally proved himself the prince of good fellows. Forfeits were played, and blind man's buff, at which latter game Miss Pinnifer gave rise to grave suspicions as to her fair play by persistently refusing to catch anybody but Mr. Brown, and holding him an unnecessarily long time when caught. After blind man's buff, a dance was proposed, and carried out with great success, John Todd performing on the violin. Miss Pinnifer's brother had been rather gloomy during the previous amusements, but he now began to enjoy himself immensely, dancing away by himself in the very middle of the room with a funeral expression of countenance, and occasionally tumbling over one or other of the young Todds, who had rather indefinite notions of dancing, and were a good deal in the way. But he didn't mind, not he; he picked himself up and went at it again as if nothing had happened. One by one the dancers stopped, exhausted; and at last the fiddle stopped, too; but Miss Pinnifer's brother still continued to dance, without a smile on his countenance, and without any apparent intention of ever leaving off. Indeed, I think it highly probable that he would have continued dancing to this moment, had not his sister by certain whispered blandishments, in which the word "pudding" was plainly audible, persuaded him to leave off, and finally got him to bed.

The youthful Todds about this time began to show signs of weariness, and were with some difficulty induced to retire to rest, Johnny Todd with the inestimable pig's tail under his pillow. The remainder of the party gathered around the fire, and chatted quietly. Mr. Brown seemed to have suddenly grown silent since the children's departure. At last, after a pause in the conversation, he said suddenly—"Mr. Todd—I've a proposition to make to you. Don't go, Miss Milly—what I'm going to say concerns you too. This lady and gentleman are friends of the family, and I don't mind speaking before them. Mr. Todd, I'm not a young man—I've been knocked about a good deal in my time, and I mean, if I can, to have a little comfort in my old years. So I'm looking out for a wife, and I haven't seen any young lady so much to my liking as Miss Milly there."

At this startling announcement Milly turned red and pale by turns, Charley Collins clenched his fists, and looked unutterable things; and Miss Pinnifer became perfectly rigid, with only energy enough to turn up her eyes to the ceiling, and to murmur in heartbroken accents, "Cruel—kerrewel man!"

John Todd attempted to speak, but Mr. Brown continued,—

"Hear me out, please; and then give what answer you like. I'm not a young man, as I said before, but I'm easy-going, and I believe I should make a good husband. I've worked hard in my time, but I've made twenty thousand pounds, and now I don't intend to work any more, but just to enjoy myself. My wife will have a good time of it, mind you. Balls, concerts, parties, if she likes 'em, she shall have 'em, and that's all about it. Now, Miss Milly, what do you say? Will you be an old man's darling?"

"Mr. Brown," John Todd began, but Milly interrupted.

"No, father, let me speak. Mr. Brown, I thank you for your offer, and I don't doubt it's kindly meant. But I've given my heart away already (as you might have guessed to-night,) and I can't give it twice."

"I know, I know," said Mr. Brown, sadly, "But it's weary waiting, Milly, all through the long years, and a boy-and-girl fancy soon dies away."

"Ours isn't a boy-and-girl fancy, then, Mr. Brown, for I'm quite sure it'll never die away. Never, never, never! Will it, Charley?" Charley did not trust himself to speak; but a warm pressure of the hand answered Milly well enough.

"Don't decide in a hurry, Miss Milly. There are many things to think about, you know; your father, now. He ought not to work as he does, at this time of life, and his eyes are failing already. Now if you'll marry me, your father shall have a good house over his head, a nice little cottage in some quiet country place, and need never do a stitch of work again. And the boys shall have good schooling and a fair start in business. It's worth thinking of, my dear."

Poor Milly felt utterly miserable. She had not the smallest idea of wavering, but Mr. Brown had artfully contrived that by being faithful to her true love, she should appear to deprive her father and brothers of a host of blessings, all of which it was in her power to bestow. She could only sob out—

"It's very cruel," and burst into tears.

John Todd had made repeated efforts to speak, but now he broke out in a tone that bore down all interruption—

"Mr. Brown, for the kindness we've received from you, I'm obliged; and I don't go from it. But I'm not obliged, sir, by your coming into my house, and trying to steal away my daughter's affections from a young man as truly loves her. It ain't fair, it ain't manly, it ain't honorable. And when you go and try to work upon her feelings along of her old father, that she'd give her right hand for, it's mean and cruel and cowardly, that is what it is. And I tell you what, sir—I wouldn't take another kindness at your hands, no, not if I was starving. I'm a creaky old man, sir, I know I am; and my sight's failing, as you say; but I've work in me yet, thank God, and I'll work my fingers to the bone before I'll bid a child of mine marry for money without love."

"And perhaps you'll let me say a word, Mr. Brown," interposed Charley Collins. "It ain't much, it's only a matter of opinion, and it'll relieve my mind. It's my opinion, sir, that you're a canting, two-faced, hypocritical old humbug!"

"I'll trouble you to say that over again presently, young man," said Mr. Brown, who seemed to recover his cheerfulness under abuse. "It might be useful, if I wanted a character, you know. Well, Mr. Todd, then that's your answer, is it?"

"It is so, sir!" said John Todd, with great decision.

"And yours, Miss Milly?"

Milly's reply was of a rather remarkable description. She quietly turned round to Charley Collins, and put her arms around his neck.

"And yours, Miss Pinnifer. I beg pardon, I quite forgot I hadn't asked you a question."

Miss Pinnifer looked as if she wished he had.

"Well," said Mr. Brown, "after all, perhaps it's just as well as it is; and I've had the satisfaction of making my own acquaintance from a totally new point of view. I really had no idea I was such a very unpleasant person. Let me see now. I'm mean, and I'm cruel, and I'm cowardly. That's Mr. Todd's idea. Mr. Collins says I'm a hypocritical, canting, double-faced—dear me, what was it he topped up with?"

"Humbug," said Charley, boldly.

"*Old* humbug," corrected Mr. Brown, sternly, "I'm not going to let you off any of the adjectives, my young friend. You, Miss Milly, were of opinion that I was a wretch."

"I didn't say so," said Milly.

"No, my dear, but you thought so, and that's much the same. Dear, dear! if your poor mother had only lived to hear her brother Tom called all these horrid names, 'pon my word I believe she'd have boxed your ears all round."

"Uncle Tom!" exclaimed Milly.

"You're *never* Tom Hawkins!" cried Mr. Todd.

"Yes, sometimes," said the stranger, meekly; "generally, I may say. Allow me to introduce myself, ladies and gentlemen; Thomas Brown Hawkins, at your service. As for my character, I'm a mean, cowardly, cruel—a regular tragedy uncle, in fact."

"My dear uncle," said Milly, "of course we didn't know. And you were only in joke, after all."

"Well, my dear, I'm not so sure of that; but a man mayn't marry his grandmother, you know: and I rather think there's a similar foolish prejudice as regards nieces. So, on the whole, perhaps it's just as well you didn't say yes."

"I'm sure I heartily beg your pardon, brother-in-law," said Mr. Todd. "You won't bear malice for words said under a mistake, I'm sure."

"Well, I'm not quite certain whether I will or I won't," said Mr. Hawkins. "I should like to punch that young rascal's head for calling me an old humbug, but I'm afraid I should get the worst of it."

"I'm very sorry, sir," began Charley.

"No, your're not, my dear boy; or if you are, you needn't be," said Mr. Hawkins. "It was an old man's joke, and I rather think I saw the fun of it better than you did."

"But I had always heard you were dead, Hawkins," said Mr. Todd. "Many a time my poor wife used to talk and cry over her only brother, who was thought to have been drowned at sea."

"I ought to have been, by rights," said Uncle Tom. "I've been in three shipwrecks, but I was preserved, probably for a higher and drier fate. I've been a digger, and a storekeeper, and a good many other things besides. I'll tell you all my adventures, one of these days. And now I've made as much as I care to make. Yes, that twenty thousand pounds is a fact, Miss Milly, and I've come to England to enjoy myself with my nephews and nieces. So you won't marry me, eh?"

Milly shook her head saucily.

"Well, then, as I've set my heart on a wedding, I suppose you must marry somebody else. I think I know somebody who'll find that security, Mr. Charley, though you did call me a canting old humbug. No thanks!—don't like 'em; always makes me feel as if I was being tickled and wasn't allowed to laugh. Milly, little woman, if you're very good, you and I will take a run out of town the very first fine day, and see if we can't find that same cottage we were talking about,—small garden in front, and the name of John Todd on the door, you know."

In spite of Uncle Tom's objection to thanks, there was a simultaneous outburst of grateful joy,—the overflow of happy hearts. John Todd squeezed his brother-in-law's left hand, while Charley Collins violently shook his right, and Milly, with both arms around his neck, kissed him repeatedly. Miss Pinnifer wept so violently that her small pocket-handkerchief looked as if it had been recently washed, and not recently dried.

The excitement rather increased than diminished in intensity, and Uncle Tom was in a fair way to be literally smothered with caresses, when the door suddenly opened, and Miss Pinnifer's brother, in a white and peculiarly airy costume, stalked into the room. The unfortunate man had waked from his first sleep with an uneasy sense that the promised pudding, with the hope of which he had been beguiled to rest, had not been duly furnished; and he had therefore risen at once, without the formality of dressing himself, to claim his due. There was an exclamation of astonishment, followed by a shout of inextinguishable laughter, and then Miss Pinnifer, with much presence of mind, seized the table-cover, and hurriedly draping it round the intruder, marched him back to bed.

For a little while longer the little party sat around the fire, talking of the hard times past, and the pleasant times to come; and hearing the story of the tempest-tossed life, come to an anchor at last. And then the time for "good by" came, and as with loving kisses and hearty hand-shakes, they said "good night," the chimes from a neighboring church tower rang out midnight, and Christmas-day was over. And Uncle Tom, reverently doffing his hat, said,—

"Thank God for a merry Christmas."

"Amen!" said Charley Collins.

"Amen!" said John Todd, "with all our hearts, amen!"

* * * * * *

Thank God for Christmas! So say we all, and God help him who cannot say Amen! For peace and good-will, for the quickened pulse of charity, for quarrels reconciled, and love renewed, the golden gifts of Christmas, God be thanked. Thanked, not alone with our lips, but with our hands and our hearts, by spreading these golden gifts, that others may thank Him too. None is so poor but that, once a year at least, he may be a "rich uncle" to somebody; none so joyless but that he may catch a reflected ray of happiness, by doing something, be it ever so little, to make merry Christmas in the heart of another.—*Holiday No. of London Society.*

Live and Dead Weight of Animals.

The amount of meat obtained from a domestic animal sold by its live weight is very variable, and experiments have recently been made in Liverpool to ascertain the proper allowances to be made. From the statistics to be derived from the public slaughter-houses or abattoirs of Paris and Brussels, it appears that the race and the condition of the animal, besides many other circumstances, affect the result, and that certain animals yield as much as 70 per cent. of meat, while others only give 50 per cent. The mean weight of meat produced, however, is calculated at 58 per cent. of the live weight in beef cattle. In the case of sheep, the proportion is from 40 to 50 per cent. From experiments made, it appears that the different products obtained from oxen and sheep are as follows: An ox of the live weight of 1,322 pounds yields meat, 771.4 pounds; skin, 110.2; grease, 88; blood, 55.1; feet and hoofs, 22; head, 11; tongue, 6.60; lungs and heart, 15.33; liver and spleen, 20.05; intestines, 66.15; loss and evaporation, 154.32—making the total of 1,322 pounds. The products from a sheep weighing 110.2 pounds are as follows: Meat, 55.1 pounds; skin, 7.714; grease, 5.51; blood, 4.408; feet and hoofs, 2.204; head, 4.408; tongue, lungs, heart, liver, and spleen, 4.408; intestines, 6.612; loss and evaporation, 19.836—making the total of 110.2 pounds.

To Boil a Turkey.—If you wish a plain stuffing, pound a cracker, or some bread-crumbs, very fine, chop raw salt pork very fine, sift some sage and any other sweet herbs that are liked, season with pepper, and mould them together with the yolk of an egg; put this under the breast and tie it closely. Set on the turkey in boiling water, enough to cover it; boil very slowly, and take off the scum as it rises. A large turkey will require more than two hours' boiling; a small one, an hour and a half. Garnish with fried forcemeat, and serve with oyster or celery sauce.

—In Adams county, Ill., several days ago, a woman attempted to fill a lamp whilst burning, when the oil in the can took fire and exploded, throwing the burning oil all over herself and a little son, burning the mother so that she died after lingering in horrible suffering for five days. The life of the son was despaired of. The husband and another son were badly burned. The house took fire, and but for the timely arrival of the neighbors all would have been roasted alive.

YOUTHS' DEPARTMENT.

"MAYN'T I BE A BOY?"

"Mayn't I be a boy?" said our Mary,
The tears in her great eyes blue;
"I'm only a wee little lassie—
There's nothing a woman can do.

"'Tis so; I heard Cousin John say so—
He's home from a great college, too—
He said so just now in the parlor;
'There's nothing a *woman* can do.'"

* * * * * *

"My wee little lassie, my darling,"
Said I, putting back her soft hair,
"I want you, my dear little maiden,
To smooth away all mother's care.

"Who is it when pa comes home weary,
That runs for his slippers and gown?
What eyes does he watch for at morning,
Looking out from their lashes of brown?

"Is there nothing you can do, my darling?
What was it that pa said last night?—
'My own little sunbeam is coming,
I know, for the room is so bright.'

"And there is a secret, my Mary—
Perhaps you will learn it some day—
The hand that is willing and loving
Will do the most work on the way;

"And the work that is sweetest and dearest—
The work that so many ne'er do—
The great work of making folks happy
Can be done by a lassie like you."
—*The Congregationalist.*

CLIFFORD'S CAP.

BY FRANCIS LEE.

"Willy and I are going out to grandma Denise's to-day, but I suppose you can't go with us, General?"

Clifford looked up quickly from the ship he was drawing.

"Why not? You *know* I have been wanting to go out there for a month," said he. "*Why* can't I go?"

"Oh! we are *going* in about five minutes, and it isn't likely you can find your cap in that time. Peter Shangle is here with his old donkey, and we are going to ride over, but he won't wait," answered Fred.

"My *cap!*" cried Clifford, starting up in great confusion. "Ma, where is my cap?"

"I don't know, my son," replied Mrs. Gabriel, with a discouraged sigh.

She had been asked that same question so many, many times!

"Where do you *think* it is? Where do you guess *maybe* it is, perhaps?" persisted Clifford, looking helplessly around the room.

"Clifford, dear, don't you remember I told you this morning you must find your things for yourself hereafter?" returned his mother.

"But just only for this once, ma! The boys won't wait; there is Peter now! Begin to-morrow with me, and then I'll put my things in their places, and know just where they are every time," Clifford pleaded.

But Mrs. Gabriel shook her head, with that little quick shake she never took back.

"All aboard, General Disorder!" called out Fred from the doorstep.

"Lucy, don't *you* know where my cap is?" cried Clifford, half distracted. "Boys, *do* wait one minute."

"You must not go away leaving your paints and paper scattered over the table," said Mrs. Gabriel, looking very indifferent, but wishing with her whole heart it was best to help him, "but just only for this once."

"Time's up!" shouted Fred from the tail of Peter's old cart.

"Go!" cried Peter, flapping the bits of rope he used for reins, and touching up the donkey with a grapevine branch.

Clifford rushed in a dark closet under the hall stairs, and lying down on a trunk cried out his disappointment; and when he came from the closet the first thing he saw was his cap on the floor behind the hall door, that, standing open, had hidden it before.

"Here is my cap, ma; I hadn't lost it," said he, going in the sitting-room looking pink and subdued like a rose after a shower. But his tone suddenly changed to one of horror. "Why, baby Gabriel! Ma, just see what she has done!" he cried.

"*M-m-m-m!*" answered the baby, shutting her eyes tight and shaking her curly head.

"Grandpa's beautiful ship, ma. It was almost finished, and now see here! Baby has wrinkled it and spit on it and torn it and spoiled it. Why *didn't* somebody see to her and take it away? I can't possibly do another before grandpa's birth-day."

"She couldn't have got the picture if it had been in its place," replied Mrs. Gabriel, calmly. "It was nothing to me."

Clifford felt very unhappy, but he had cried out his tears; so he sat down by the window and looked so sorry that his mother's heart ached for him. But she did not say anything, for talking had not cured him and she thought it best to try another way, and let him see what would happen if nobody did the work that belonged to him to do.

"I suppose Fred and Willy are out to grandma's by this time, pretty near. I shouldn't wonder if they are under the peach tree eating peaches this very minute—like enough, perhaps," thought Clifford, mournfully. "And grandma always, 'most, makes me a little pie and gives me some maple sugar when I go there, and all the milk I can drink possibly."

Then he took out his watch to see if there had been time enough for his brothers to be really enjoying these delights already. "Mother!" cried he, when he looked at it, "my watch has stopped! I didn't wind it this morning. What shall I do? Now Aunt Elizabeth won't give me the chain!"

"I suppose not; I am sorry," said his mother, quietly.

Poor Clifford! He felt as though every misfortune was happening at once, for when Aunt Elizabeth gave him the watch on his birth-day, she had promised him a chain for it if he would not let it run down for three months. Two months had passed, and this was the first time he had forgotten it; but he knew very well it was also the first time his mother had not asked if he had wound it.

Presently Lucy broke in upon his melancholy thoughts.

"Clifford!" she cried from the garden, "come out here, quick! Hurry!"

Clifford jumped through the low, open window upon the piazza.

"What is it, Lucy? Where?" he asked.

"Willy's rabbits! They are gone! Somebody left the door open," answered Lucy, "and we can't find them—Benny and I. We've been looking every place. We s'posed you hed gone to grandma Denise's."

Clifford's heart choked him. He remembered leaving the door of the pen unfastened while he went for a cabbage leaf; and then the oysterman came, and running in to see if his mother wished any, he forgot to go back.

"It is the fault of that lazy oysterman this time," thought he, trying, like his grandfather Adam, to excuse himself. "If he had gone to the kitchen door, as the way was for him, and not called me, I shouldn't have forgotten the rabbits. And Willy might have stayed home and seen to them himself."

But these excuses did not satisfy his conscience as he looked behind every shrub and clump of flowers in vain search for the lost pets. At last he gave them up, and went back toward the house.

"Who broke Fred's shovel?" said he, suddenly stopping short.

"I," answered Benny, complacently. "I was pounding for my *catafellow* to come and it broked. It wa' good for nothing."

"Yes, Benny broke it trying to make a caterpillar come out from under the door-step," said Lucy.

"How came Benny to have it?" asked Clifford, fiercely. "Father doesn't allow any of you little ones in the tool house; you know he don't."

Benny nodded. "I didn't. It was right here, and it broked. It wa' good for nothing," he repeated.

Clifford did not say a word more. It was he who had taken the shovel from the tool-house and dropped it carelessly on the walk. He went to his mother in despair.

"Ma," said he, "would as many things as this happen every day if you didn't pick up after me?"

"Yes; you haven't left your things about to-day any more than usual," she replied. "God has put certain things for each of us to do, and if we shirk them, somebody has *our* work as well as their own, or else it goes undone. It is always so."

"Do you really suppose, ma, hanging my cap is part of God's work for me?" asked Clifford, doubtfully.

"I am sure of it. And it is as much your duty to do that as it is the duty of your father to preach Christ's gospel and visit the sick. This is what Jesus himself says about it: 'He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.'"

This was not all new to Clifford, and yet he seemed to hear it for the first time. He had never really felt before the trouble his disorderly habits made for others. So he sat looking very sober for a long time. Then he drew a deep breath and said cheerfully.

"I guess I can break myself if I try real hard, and I have made up my mind I will, too."—*The Children's Hour.*

FACTS AND FIGURES.

Buffalo boasts of a seventeen-year-old bigamist.

A Brooklyn dog fancier has made $50,000 in two years.

Louisville has a negro child with ten fingers on each hand.

Mormonism, it is said, has thirteen thousand capable military men.

On a train that reached Knoxville, Tenn., from Virginia, lately were 47 babies.

Chicago built two thousand five hundred houses during 1869, at a cost of $10,000,000.

By the recent death in this country of five misers, nearly three million dollars will be put afloat.

A cheese factory at Cheshire, Mass, manufactured this year 102,231 pounds of cheese.

A lawyer of Atlanta, Ga., received a counter-pane as a fee from a woman in that city, in a divorce suit.

More rafts floated down the Mississippi river during 1869 than are remembered in any previous year.

Cincinnati has had a corn husking match. In nine hours one Hess husked 148 bushels to his opponent's 145.

A woman in the northern part of Maine, who is the mother of twenty children, has been granted a divorce on the ground that she has no affinity for her husband.

A man in Gloucester, a few days since, while smoking his pipe on the street, stumbled and fell. The pipe was broken off and the stem driven into the roof of his mouth an inch and a quarter.

Nearly three hundred Parisians took the oath as candidates before the recent special elections, merely to secure a gratuitous advertisement of their names and business in the official journals.

A father lately dropped his daughter and an umbrella from a Jersey City ferry-boat into the water. A ferryman rescued the young lady, the old gentleman confining his attentions strictly to the umbrella.

A charming girl of Boston is about establishing a female barber shop. Ten sylphs are being put through a tuitionary course of lather for the opening. A sweet shave will cost twenty-five cents, and a seraphic shampoo half a dollar.

A lady in Utica, N. Y., carried to a newspaper an account of her own suicide by drowning, and, after the item was published, in flesh, blood and bones she appeared at the editor's sanctum and demanded a contradiction.

A New Haven policeman got so sound asleep upon a door-step, a few nights ago, that the chief, who happened along, could not wake him up, but took his cap, bearing his number, to the police station, where it still awaits the call of the owner.

The building statistics of St. Paul for the year 1869 for buildings and improvements foot up $1,395,727, against $1,000,500 in 1868. Of this amount nearly $600,000 has been laid out in dwellings, $300,000 in business blocks, and $800,000 on public buildings.

In Hungary a landowner was lately attacked by one of his servants in a forest and killed. His right arm was then cut off, and a piece of paper, with the following words, placed upon it: "Here hast thou the hand with which thou hast whipped me." The murderer was arrested.

The *Maine Farmer* makes the following estimate of the crops of that State for the past season: Hay, 800,000 tons, (equal in quality to 1,000,000 tons produced in 1868); corn, 900,000 bushels; potatoes, 400,000 bushels; wheat, 200,000 bushels; barley, 800,000 bushels; oats 2,000,000 bushels.

It was in St. John's church, Richmond, in the Virginia Convention of '75, that Patrick Henry delivered his celebrated oration and uttered the immortal sentence, "Give me liberty or give me death." The place is still pointed out where he stood. The celebrated Virginia Convention of 1778 that met to ratify the Federal Constitution, assembled in St. John's.

Lord Palmerston, eleven years ago, expressed the opinion that the Suez Canal scheme was the "greatest bubble ever imposed upon the credulity and simplicity of the country." Robert Stephenson, the great engineer, who had conquered the difficulties of the Kilsby tunnel and built the Menai bridge, indorsed Palmerston's opinion, stating that the canal was "physically impossible."

An Ohio clergyman, several years ago, received a bright new cent as a wedding fee. The other day he met the bridegroom, who mentioned the circumstance, and said: "My wife was a comparative stranger to me at the time we were united in wedlock. I had not learned her value, and paid accordingly. I find her a jewel; so here is an additional fee," at the same time handing the astonished minister a $20 gold piece.

Prince Napoleon recently sent his eldest son, Victor, seven years of age, to a private school in the Rue Caumartin, in which there are about fifteen pupils. The principal asked the father how he should address the boy, as "Monseigneur" or "your Highness." "Call him simply Victor," said the Prince. "But on the lists of honor for attention and good conduct?" "Oh, then, Victor Napoleon; but when his companions give him a blow or he returns it, Victor, short; and in no case whatever Monseigneur."

Pine wood is of great value in North Carolina. They have discovered a new way of making turpentine. They char pine wood in a retort, and the production from a cord of wood is said to be ten gallons of turpentine, worth $4; eighty gallons of oil, $28; fifteen gallons of black varnish, $7.20; 100 gallons of wood acid, $5, and 40 bushels of charcoal, besides considerable inflammable gas; but besides this, the product has a market value of $48.50; all of which is obtained at a cost for wood and labor of $10.

The manner in which De Lesseps won his wife was a very singular one. He had brought to ladies in France a great number of Jericho roses, and was distributing them at an evening party. He stopped before the young brunette who is now Mrs. De L., and said: "It is not in my power to make this rose bloom afresh [every one knows the legend of Jericho roses], but express a desire in accepting it, and I swear that it shall be accomplished." "I desire—whatever you wish," murmured the young girl. "Well," said De Lesseps, "I wish you to be my wife." And she is.

The exports of tea from Shanghai and Japan during the period which elapsed between June 1 and October 11, 1869, amounted to 3,869,591 chests to the Atlantic ports of the United States, and 47,252,538 chests to Great Britain. During the same period in 1868 the exports to the United States were 5,395,141 chests, and to Great Britain 53,228,233 chests. Of the exports of tea from June 1, 1869, to the United States, 122,260 chests were of black tea, 3,213,912 green, and 633,412 Japanese. It is also announced that 19 bales of raw silk had been shipped from Yokohama to New York, by way of San Francisco and the Pacific Railroad.

—Of the 1,095 mountains in the moon, measured by Beer and Madler, thirty-nine are higher than Mont Blanc, and six are 20,000 feet high. The annular (or circular) mountains are highest; Dorfel, near the southern pole, measuring 26,691 feet, or nearly as high as the highest peaks of the Himalayas, the loftiest summits of our own globe. And there are also circular caverns, or craters, in our satellite which are 24,000 feet deep! and some are 100 to 130 miles in diameter.

—The Albany *Times* prints the following advertisement: Whereas, my new hat was taken from a rack in a barber-shop on Broadway, last evening, and an old one left in its place; now, this is to give notice that if my hat is not returned to me, at the address pasted in it, before sundown to-day, with the cost of this publication, I will foward to the wife of the person who took it the letter found concealed in the lining of the old one.