

# The Jamestown Alert.

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JAMESTOWN. D. T.

## Weaving the Web.

"This morn I will weave my web," she said, As she stood by her loom in the rosy light, And her quivering eyes, hopfully glinted and clear Follow'd afar the swallow's flight.

"As soon as the day's first tasks are done, Whither I am wash and string," said she, "I will hasten to weave the beautiful web Where I am known to none but me.

"I will weave it fine, I will weave it fair, And ah! how the colors will glow!" she said, "So delicate and strong will I weave my web That perhaps it will live after I am dead."

"Ah! life is so rich and full," she cried, "And morn is short though the days are long! This noon I will weave my beautiful web, I will weave it carefully, fine and strong."

"Ah! life is too busy at noon," she said; "My web must wait till the evening, Till the common work of the day is done, And my heart grows calm in the silence wide!"

"So, one by one, the hours passed on Till the creeping shadows had longer grown; Till the house was still, and the breezes slept, And her singing birds to their nests had flown.

"And now I will weave my web," she said, As she turned to her loom ere set of sun, And laid her hand on the shining threads To set them in order, one by one.

## Humorous Items.

Soliloquy by a tippler—The public always notices when you have been drinking, and never when you are thirsty.

All the theology in the world has never succeeded in answering the child's question, "Why doesn't God kill the devil?"

The Boston Post says it costs as much to bury a man decently in New York as it does to live six months in fine style in London.

What does it benefit a congressman if he assess the whole civil service of the United States and lose his own seat?—Chicago Times.

If a man is on his way to the woods to commit suicide and a bull suddenly gives chase, the chances are that he will run for his life.

It is all right, young fellow, to be ambitious, but in your haste to get in the van, see that it is not driven by a municipal employe.

We'll give a handsome wedding present to the man who'll marry the young lady who thumps all day on the piano in our boarding-house.

The man who can hum a hymn while joining a stove-pipe is good enough to walk right into full membership in any church without probation.

There may be some doubts as to a cat's having nine lives. It is an undisputed fact, however, that every cat has a nine-norse-power voice.

Farmers cease to notice the poetic beauties of autumn when they fail to get a fifty-dollar premium on a pig worth eight dollars and a half.—Graphic.

If a man succeeds in driving a good many hard bargains he will in the end drive in his own carriage, but the carriage road will end this side of eternity.

Science says that it took millions of years to evolve man from the oyster; observation shows that it takes less than a minute to transfer the oyster to the man.

A North Carolina editor declares that "the man who will read a newspaper three or four years without paying for it will pasture a goat on the grave of his grandfather."

The grand and awful difference between a tree and a bore is—hurray, now!—the tree leaves in spring, and the bore—why, he never leaves.—Syracuse Sunday Times.

Scientific men say that a person is half an inch taller in the morning than in the evening. In spite of this we all know that men get fearfully high in the evening sometimes.

about banged hair and tight dresses. Europeans over here on a visit would be asking where all our idiots are kept if they didn't meet any on the streets.

Love impresses its tender image on all its environments. Even the scattered penant shells at the front gate Monday morning are silent witnesses of its all-embracing sway.—Boston Transcript.

Probably the mild-eyed goat is the only animal ever invented that can eat twenty-four hours a day, and then get up an hour before day and devour a flour-barrel and seven old fruit cans for lunch.

In the state of Alabama the negroes chew the tassel of the fir-tree instead of tobacco, and seem chief pleased with the substitute. Well, does not the old adage say, "Be fir-chewers and you will be happy?"

The Indianapolis Herald has discovered that the number of tools is to the number of wise men as the number of times one gets nothing for something is to the number of times one gets something for nothing.

Ask "Who'll go after water?" at a base ball match, and fifty urchins will poke their heads over the fence, while, if a gang of men at work on the street ask the question, the silence is as thick as molasses in cold weather.

In these times of trouble it is well to recall the philosophical remark of the old lawyer, during the war, who, when told by an alarmist that everything was going to h—l, replied, "Well, we should be thankful we have a h—l to go to."

A Michigan woman says she hopes never to go to heaven unless there are post-offices there. She can think of nothing nicer than to be handed a fat letter in a brown envelope by the general delivery clerk.

"What fine dark hair you have got, Miss M—! My wife, who is much younger than you, has her hair quite gray," "Indeed," rejoined Miss M—, "if I had seen your wife my hair no doubt had been gray too."

The Nation thinks that a part of the drill of every girl's school ought to be the reception by a wife in an old gown to a dinner of corned beef and cabbage of an unlooked-for guest, thoughtlessly brought home by a reckless husband.

The exclusive influence of the mother over the son for the most part ends in positive disaster or comparative failure; and licentious self-indulgence, effeminacy or piggishness is the almost sure result of the experiment.—London Truth.

The Philadelphia Times has a department headed "Men and Things." It is all right to give the man the first place, but does the Times consider it the most gallant thing in the world to snub women by calling them such a name?—Rochester Express.

M. Labouchere in London Truth remarks: "I found the wife of a Hampshire blacksmith working at the anvil the other day, the hammer rising and falling with ease in her practised arms. I pitted her husband, should she ever, like Joe Gargary's wife, go on the rampage."

There are some days when it is impossible to think, and when it is unwise to try to do so. The mind, like the maid, has whimsical spells of wishing to be let alone and having its own way. Only on certain days are the oracles to be consulted.—A. W. Stevens.

It is better for ordinary boys to be hungering after the world of independent action for which they are not as yet mature enough, than to be tossing about on the ripple of small susceptibilities and emotions, without either a great ambition or high aspiration to guide them.—London Spectator.

If I should marry Eliza Jane," said a prospective son-in-law, "I should frankly confess one thing in advance—I am of rather a hasty temper and apt to get mad without cause." "Oh, that'll be all right," blandly replied the dear old lady; "I shall go and live with you, and I'll see that you always do have cause."

## Marriage.

One of the most remarkable features of this extraordinary institution, is the successive changes it undergoes, in the course of its history.

When the young husband and wife first enter upon the new relation, how little do they foresee what is before them. As they take possession, for the first time of their new home, and enjoy its cheering aspect, its regularity and quiet, and its expression of domestic peace and joy

how little do they anticipate the trials and vicissitudes, the deep yet unseen fountains of joy and sorrow, which lie in their way! In a few years how changed!

One after another has been added in various ways to the company, which began with only two, until, at length, they find themselves presiding over a numerous circle of children and relatives, and domestic; the father and mother both involved in responsibilities, from which they would have shrunk had they anticipated them in the beginning.

In a few years the happy circle must be broken in upon and scattered. Death comes and makes one after another his prey; others gradually arrive to maturity, and leave their father's roof to seek other homes, and to return no more to the ark which sheltered them at first; and at last, the father and mother are left alone, to spend their declining years at their solitary fireside, to look back on scenes of activity, and trial, and enjoyment which can never return. Such is the outline of thousands of families.—Old Tip.

A New Jersey physician, heavily loaded with town lots, for which he had paid only in part, hastily prescribed a box of pills for a patient and allowed his mind to wander back to his real estate. The patient asked how the pills were to be taken. The doctor replied: "One third down, the balance in six and twelve months, with interest."

Miss Edith Comfort's Brother Jack. "Crying! Of course I am crying, and I guess you'd be crying, too. If people were telling such stories as they tell about me, about you, Oh yes, you can laugh, if you want to, and smoke as you didn't care how, and get your brains softened like Uncle—Dr. Jones says you're getting it now."

"Why don't you say 'stop!' to Miss Isley? she cries twice as much as I do. And she's older and cries just for meanness—for a ribbon or any thing new. Ma says it's her sensitive nature." "Oh, my! No I shan't stop my talk! And I don't want no apples nor candy, and I don't want to go take a walk!"

"I know why you're mad! Yes, I do, now! You think that Miss Isley likes you. And I've heard her repeatedly call you the bold-faced boy that she knew; and she'd like to know where you learnt manners! Oh yes! Kick the table—that's right! Spill the ink on my dress, and then go 'round telling Ma that I look like a fright!"

"What's that? Pretend you don't know that they're saying I broke off the match 'Twixt old Money-grubber and Mary, by saying she called him 'Crosspatch'! When the only allusion I made him about sister Mary was she was his temper, and you know, Jack, you said that to me!"

"And it's true! But it's me, and I'm scolded and Pa says if I keep on I might By and by get my name in the papers! Who cares! Why 'twas only last night I was reading how Pa and the Sheriff were selling some lots, and it's plain If it's awful to be in the papers why Pappa would go and complain."

"You think it ain't true about Isley? Well, I guess I know girls—and say I There is nothing I see about Isley to show she likes you anyway! I know what it means when a girl who has called her cat after a boy Goes and changes its name to another's. And she's done it and I wish you joy!"

—Bret Harle, in Scribner for September.

## Ghost Stories Unveiled.

What I am going to do, says a writer for Chambers' Journal, is simply to give some instances in which what might have been made a capital ghost story proved to be nothing of the kind, and to draw from thence the inference that all such stories could, if only we were acquainted with all the facts, be accounted for by natural causes.

I have myself been sorely puzzled to account for what I have seen. On one occasion I was passing by a cemetery on my way to a distant part of my parish. The night was dark and foggy, and as I walked along the road close to the iron fence, I perceived within the inclosure, apparently but a few yards off, a body of dim light that seemed to come up from the ground. Now, my impressions were all in favor of ghosts, and if my judgment also had been equally in favor I should have had a ghost story to tell about that place. But I was determined to seek an explanation of the phenomenon, so I went up to the railings and looked hard at the light, but could make nothing of it. At the same time I became conscious of a dull sound proceeding from the ground where it stood. I could not understand it, and there I stood peering in until my ears suddenly gave me a clue to the mystery, for I fancied I detected the thud of a mattock. And such it was. The sexton was working against time to dig for a large vault, and the mysterious light was nothing more or less than that of his lantern, some feet below the surface, which threw up into the foggy air a volume of strange misty brightness. But really it made a very creditable ghost.

A gentleman living in a country-house which I had once inhabited, wrote to ask me whether during my residence there I had ever heard any reports of its being "haunted." He did not believe in such things himself, he said, but he always liked when he heard anything of the kind, to investigate the matter as far as possible. It was a very sensible thing to do; and I was able to give him a satisfactory explanation. It was news to me that the house had this evil reputation; but when I heard of it, it immediately occurred to my mind how it was to be accounted for. It so happened that a certain mischievous female member of my family had, during the latter part of my stay in that house, been guilty of the cruelty of terrifying the servants out of their wits. She appeared one night in their rooms covered over with a sheet, which sheet was raised over her head by means of a stick, to the end of which was fastened a bull's-eye lantern—a ghost of commanding stature and terrific gaze. It is very wrong to play such tricks, as the consequences might be serious to some weak minds. In this case, however, no harm was done, except that the servants were unalterably settled in the persuasion that they had seen a ghost, and that they had, as a matter of course, innoculated the village with their own firm belief that the house was haunted.

What condition the witnesses were in who saw the following "well-accredited" feat of a ghost, I will not venture to determine. The story is related by an enthusiastic believer in and even admirer of ghosts of every sort and kind, and the ghost and witnesses are all phlegmatic Germans. "One night as Kezer lay on his bed, and the servant was standing near the glass door in conversation with him, to his utter amazement he saw a jug of beer which stood on a table in a room at some distance from him slowly lifted to a height of about three feet, and the contents poured, into a glass that was standing there also, until the latter was half full. The jug was then gently replaced, and the glass lifted and emptied, as by some one drinking; while the servant exclaimed 'It's terrible! surprise! look, it swallows!' The glass was quietly replaced, and not a drop of beer was to be found on the floor." No doubt there was not; and let us hope the ghost was all the better for having taken only the half-glass. But what scrutinizing of the witnesses we should require before

believing such nonsense as this! What, we repeat, must have been their condition!

## THE MOUNTAIN TARN.

In a lone glen, surrounded by lofty mountains, and miles from any habitation, lies a small loch or tarn, around which tradition hath cast a legend of the olden time. Situated amid the Grampians, the scenery is wild and rugged; such a scene amid which the wanderer may pause, and feel that the hand of man has never disturbed Nature in her solitude.

Years and years ago, when the turbulent state of Scotland rendered life and property insecure, a large amount of treasures was supposed to have been thrown into the loch, there to escape detection, and to await the return of peaceful times to enable it to be recovered. It had been thrown into its hiding place in the night by those who possessed it, and the secret had been solemnly sworn to on the naked blade of a dirk—an old form of Highland oath held to be binding and sacred. Time passed, and quiet times or necessity induced those who held the secret to attempt to recover the treasure. In those primitive days, appliances were limited, and the first attempt failed, from inability to reach the bottom. Months were spent in the manufacture of rope from hides, in hopes that the dark water would give up the coveted treasure it held within its inky depths. By different routes, in the lone hours of night, the holders of the secret assembled on the shores of this Highland tarn, and vainly tried to reach the bottom. Fathom after fathom went down, but of no avail. Again and again, with increased lengths of rope, did these midnight seekers after gold prosecute their task, but to end in disappointment. The loch yielded nothing save the now almost certain fact, that it was unfathomable.

Years rolled away, and no further attempts were made, since dispirited they agreed to abandon the helpless toil of trying to fathom Lochan Kin Dhoan, or the bottomless loch as they then styled it; nor was it ever attempted by those who first essayed it. Subsequent, however, to their last failure, an incident occurred that, in that age of superstition, cast around the loch the weird belief that it was haunted.

In the baronial keep lived a chief in all the rude pomp of feudal pride. His lady had died, and left an only daughter, who, now grown up to womanhood, provided over the household. Her father's temper was haughty and imperious, and he ruled every one around him with stern sway. As was the custom in those days, he had long been at enmity with the neighboring chief; but Love laughs at Highland pride as well as locksmiths. His neighbor had a son, who became enamored of the maiden. But how was the fatal gulch of feudal strife to be bridged? Time went on. Stolen interviews, when by accident they met, or when her father was absent, were all that the young hearts could glean from the stern hate of both the parents; till, unable to bear the long weary weeks that occasionally prevented their meeting, the young chieftain determined to beard the lion in his den, and demand the hand of his daughter. Accompanied by an escort, he arrived before the drawbridge, and demanded an interview with the chief. The interview over, the young chieftain with a heavy heart recrossed that drawbridge, and doffed his bonnet to a fair form on the battlements.

It was some time before they again met. The chief had used harsh words and harsh measures to his daughter; "but Love will find out the way," and at the next meeting of the lovers they had arranged to elope. The strong power of women's love nerved her to the deed; the cold heartless home she was about to leave seemed to palliate the act. The temporary absence of the old chief afforded opportunity. On a dark November evening, about two hours after sunset, a horse bearing the young chieftain and his intended bride was wending its way with difficulty along the rugged mountain-path, amid the darkness, when the sound of horse's hoofs were heard. To turn was to encounter foes behind (as well as in front) if foes they were, as doubtless the flight of the lady had been discovered at the castle; besides the nature of the ground and darkness rendered flight hopeless. To move a little to the side, and quietly await the chance of being passed in the darkness, was all that now remained to the youthful lovers.

The night had hitherto been dark but still. The wind was now sweeping over the bleak moor, and hurrying the black clouds across the sky with increasing violence. The young chief felt the fair hand that held his girdle tighten as the sound of the horses' hoofs were heard; but no scream, no signs of fear. All had as yet gone well; when a gleam of moonlight lit up the scene and revealed a party of horsemen scarce thirty yards distant. There was no time for deliberation; the young chieftain dashed his spurs to his horse, and with a bound the noble animal was crossing the now moonlit moor, at full speed, hotly pursued by the chief and his party. "Capture, but don't fire," was the brief command.

At first, the lovers outstripped their pursuers; but the double burden began to tell on the young chieftain's horse, and the distance between lessened. The chief was gaining on them at every stride, and the pale moon still shone on the scene. Suddenly, as if the earth had opened at their feet, over the precipice that overhangs the Lochan Kin Dhoan, leaped the horse and his riders. An exclamation of horror, a wild yell of agony from the chief as he beheld this fatal leap. A dull heavy splash in the deep, dark water beneath was all that responded. From that hour it was shunned as a fatal spot.

The story of the treasure had been handed down from father to son, and a party of stout hearts again resolved to

brave the dangers that surrounded the scene of the hidden gold. A night was fixed. But scarce had the task begun, ere an arm and hand, holding a naked dirk, is said to have risen from the water and an unearthly voice to have ejaculated, "Forbear!"

Such is the story of the haunted loch, as told long years after on his death bed by an old and wrinkled man, the last of the band that met that night; and as an example of the kind of oral tales which are now happily dying out among the superstitious folk in the North of Scotland, we offer it to our readers.

## A Thirsty Boy.

I saw the boy who wanted a drink—a restless, questioning, uneasy, thirsty boy. He let the window fall on his fingers before the train had gone a mile. He stood out on the platform until he was incrustated two inches deep with ashes and dust and cinders. He went to the water cooler and got a drink; then he came back and told his mother he was hot, and went back and got another drink. He drank about four times per mile, seldom of one, unless he was seized with a sudden uncontrollable spasm of thirst. If he was drinking, and somebody else came after a drink; the boy would suddenly seize the cup he had just set down and refill it, and drink as if though he had wrapped his stomach in the desert of Sahara, glaring suspiciously over the top of the cup at the waiting passenger as he drank. When he was in his seat he watched the aisles narrowly, and if he saw any passengers get up and move toward the water-cooler, he would jump up and race for it. If he got there first, he would drink and snore over the cup until the thirsty traveler forgot what he went down there after. People began to wonder how much the boy was gauged for, and if he wasn't rather straining his capacity. The remotest hint or suggestion was enough to send him back to the cooler. When the train ran over a creek, the water made him think of his thirst.

When it rattled over a long stretch of dry prairie, the absence of water drove him mad. I was afraid the supply of water would give out before the boy was filled up, and he was rather a small boy, too. His interior circumference, I think, must have inclosed an area double in extent to that inclosed by the exterior belt. Near Waseca we ran nearly a mile without the boy making a stop at the tank. I grew very nervous now, for I was fearful that during such an unheard of abstinence from water his pumps would run dry, rust out, and he might blow up. So I leaned over the edge of the seat and said carelessly:

"By George, but I am thirsty. I wonder if there is any water in the car?"

You want to understand me now, as recording very plainly, and without any mental reservation, the fact that the boy's mother, sitting beside him, was no fool. Her eyes snapped when she heard my careless and innocent remark, she took in every syllable of it, and she turned on me in a flash with "I wish you would mind your own business and leave my boy alone!"

A low, mocking murmur of applause went through the car, a little of it for the indignant mother, some of it for me. She suppressed "yours truly" very successfully, but it was too late. Long before she had finished that brief sentence her boy was down at the water-cooler holding his eyes tight shut to keep the water from running out of them, while his flood-his system as though he had taken a contract to keep up a perennial freshet inside of himself."

Setting Tires with Hot Water.

The use of hot water in place of fire for expanding tires may not be new, but it is less common than it ought to be, if we are to accept as accurate the results said to be obtained in the workshop of the Moscow-Nizhni railroad, in Russia. There an iron tank, one fourth filled with water, is fixed near a stationary boiler, from which a steam pipe is led through it, capable of heating the water to 213 deg. Fahr. Into this the tire is plunged by means of a portable crane, and, after an immersion of from ten to fifteen minutes, is taken out and immediately placed on the wheel. The officials of the railroad named above made a comparison of the two methods, from which it appears, during six years' trial of fire shrunken tires, thirty-seven per cent ran loose, and five per cent were broken; while, during a three years' trial of water shrunken tires, less than one per cent ran loose, and only a single tire was broken.—Germania Telegraph.

Careful experiments have shown that wheat cut twelve to fourteen days before the grain is fully ripe weighs heavier, measures more, is of better quality, and yields a larger proportion of flour. There is going to be a second crop of good hay in many localities, on account of the recent rains. Grass, when made into hay contains 14 to 15 per cent of water; in the green state some 80 per cent. The dry part contains, besides its nutritious substance, gum, sugar and oil, and about 50 per cent of woody fibre. The time of cutting grass has much to do with the nutritious value of hay. When the leaves and stems are green they contain large quantities of sugar, gum, etc., a part of which is changed into woody fibre as they ripen. A large quantity of poor hay is brought to market simply because farmers are not particular as to the time of cutting their hay.

It is said that Dr. Chievalier, of Norfolk, England, observing some very fertile ears in a crop of barley, separated them from the rest, and, by sowing the grains separately, gradually propagated the variety which goes by his name. Its prolific qualities has been tested by the extraordinary fact that 380 stems have issued from a single grain.