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GRASS AND ROSES.

I looked where the roses were blooming,
They stood among grasses and weeds;
I said, "Where such beauties are growing,
Why suffer these paltry weeds?"

Weeping, the poor things faltered:
"We have neither beauty nor bloom,
We are grass in the roses' garden,
But the *Master* gives us room.

"Slaves of a generous Master,
Born from a world above,
We came to this place in His wisdom,
We stay to this hour from His love.

We have fed His humblest creatures,
We have served Him truly and long;
He gave no grace to our features,
We have neither color nor song.

"Yet He who has made the flowers
Placed us on the self-same soil;
He knows our reasons for being,—
We are grass in the garden of God."

THE DEAD LETTER.

BY HARRY MAPLE.

Ten years! Yes, just ten years since that night.

As memory retraces the journey of those years the time seems very long, and yet the events of that night could not be more vivid had they occurred on yesterday.

Then my hair was brown, my life was full of hope, my soul full of trust. There are threads of silver among the brown to-night, and the intervening years between that time and this have brought a succession of disenchantments and sad experiences.

How one changes in a decade.

Among my lady acquaintances and friends none were to me so fascinating and perfect in all that goes to make up the sum of female loveliness as pretty Jennie Fisk, and I shall not conceal the fact that the mention of that name bears to me a cruel memory.

One evening upon arriving at my lodging I found an invitation from Jennie to attend a party her father intended to give to celebrate her eighteenth birthday. The thought of Jennie's "coming out" caused me a momentary pang, for I was confident that her beauty and expectations would soon surround her with a host of admirers. The possibility that some one else might lay siege to her heart and carry off the prize made me very unhappy, and I determined to see her as soon as possible and ask her to be my wife.

Putting on my best suit, and arranging my toilet with as much care and precision as a society belle would have done, I set out for the Fisk mansion. It is needless to say that my anxiety about the result of my visit made me somewhat nervous. I ascended the steps, paused a moment to renew my courage, and then rang the bell.

A servant answered the summons, and showed me into the parlor.

"I suppose you wish to see Miss Jennie," the young woman remarked with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes.

"Yes; is she at home?"

"She is; I will announce you, and I presume she will soon be down."

That, I thought, was suspicious. At least the manner as well as the words of the girl indicated that my footing with Jennie was favorable. Going to the long mirror at the end of the room to satisfy myself again that I was presentable, I heard the patter of footfalls on the stairs and hurried back to my seat.

Jennie came in. I thought I had never seen such a vision of loveliness. She was dressed in snowy muslin, that fell in fleecy folds about her graceful form; a pink rose adorned her hair, which fell, in golden waves, to her waist. Another rose of the same color reposed at her throat, vieing with her cheeks in loveliness of tints.

She welcomed me with a cordial yet modest greeting, and I sat down by her side. The restraint that I feared might make a coward of me, was soon gone, and I told her the "old story," which yet is ever new, of my deep love for her. Taking her willing hand in mine I asked Jennie to be my wife.

Her answer was not delayed. Her eyes had already indicated her reply, and her tongue confirmed the language of her heart speaking through them.

Speaking figuratively, I was in the "seventh heaven" of delight. Jennie had promised to be mine; what more on earth was there to covet? Strange infatuation; wondrous passion. It comes alike to all the sons and daughters of men—the cultured and the savage, the peasant and the king.

Well, the night of the ball arrived. It was clear and beautiful. The silvery light of the moon bathed the old Fisk mansion in a halo of soft radiance, and the stars gleamed and glistened like gems in Night's coronet, a bright augury of Jennie's happiness (such was my interpretation of the scene) through life.

I was among the first arrivals. Jennie met me with a smile of love and trust; she had her little hand again in mine, and though no words were spoken, each well knew the other's thoughts.

She was dressed in exquisite taste. Every circumstance connected with her on that night will never be effaced from my recollection. She had never looked anything but charming to me, but on this occasion she outshone herself. Her dress was of the whitest muslin and lace, puffed over blue silk. She wore a necklace of pearls, and bracelets to correspond encircled her shapely arms. Her whole toilet was faultless, and during the evening she was the cynosure of many eyes, the admiration of the young men, and the envy of a score or more of her own sex.

She welcomed her guests with perfect ease and grace. The rooms were soon filled with company, and then she chatted merrily with one and another for a while, and gradually found a place near me.

Presently the music sounded its preparatory note. Jennie took my arm, and we took our place at the head of the room.

A young physician, Richard Price by name, and his partner, were opposite in the quadrille. He paid little attention to her, and seemed rather abstracted and ill at ease. It is was a mystery to me then, this manner of his; but subsequently it was explained. Several times during the evening, when Jennie and I were together, Price hung upon our steps, much to Jennie's annoyance.

After a while, after she had filled several engagements with others, I claimed her again for my partner, and at the close of the waltz we sought the refreshing air of the summer-house, in the spacious gardens attached to the mansion. Here we conversed of the future; of our plans and prospects, and oh, how bright were the promises that the future held for us then.

How long we talked I do not know. But fearing our prolonged absence would occasion remark, we returned to the house.

At length the guests departed, and then I bade my betrothed good night. Her manner towards me was all that a lover could expect, and yet at parting some unexplained and undefinable feeling oppressed me. It was one of those strange forebodings for which no one can satisfactorily account. When I should have been the happiest of mortals I was depressed with a presentiment of evil. I tried to shake it off, but in vain. It bound me like some horrid dream, and the feeling did not leave me for several hours.

The next morning I slept late, and having partaken of a light lunch I went to the postoffice, impelled by I know not what motive, as my letters were usually delivered at my place of business.

At all events, to the postoffice I bent my steps, and there found a note from Jennie. She had been suddenly summoned by telegraph to a distant city by reason of the severe illness of a near relative—so ran the note—but would soon return. But the strangest part of it was that she hoped I would not write to her, stating that she would give a satisfactory explanation upon her return.

The days wore heavily away, and no word more came from her. I was depressed and oppressed with a feeling of anxiety and alarm. A week elapsed before she returned. The first intimation I had of her arrival was the following note:

FRIEND HARRY: It pains me to write this note, but it is very necessary, and I cannot shrink from it. When I told you that I loved you I did not know my own heart; and the future happiness of both of us compels me to say that I can never become your wife. Do not make any effort to see me; an interview would be of no avail, and could only prove painful to both you and me. JENNIE.

Need I say that this heartless note completely stunned me for a time. My brain was in a whirl, and I was so stupefied that I hardly knew whether I was dead or alive.

This condition passed after a time, and I looked at the matter as calmly and coolly as I could. I determined to leave the scene of this bitter disappointment and seek "surcease of sorrow" in the excitement and change of travel.

Arranging my affairs did not take me long, and drawing my funds from the bank, where they were deposited, I bade adieu to my friends and started for New York. My sudden resolution was a surprise to all who were intimate with me, but my explanation was that I had long meditated a trip to the old world, and a more opportune period than the present to gratify this desire would probably never occur. I had been entirely reticent about my relations with Jennie, and although some of my boon companions rallied me about leaving such an attraction when, to all appearances, I was the favorite suitor, I passed the matter off as though it was a capital joke while suffering unspeakable torture at my heart.

In a few days a gallant steamer bore me across the ocean. It is unnecessary to name the route pursued, or speak of my rambles in England and on the continent.

A year passed; then came a longing for my native land, and homeward I turned my footsteps. Upon arriving at New York I went straight to Washington, where I had friends, through whose influence I obtained a position in the postal department of the government. My duties were in the bureau devoted to "dead letters." Here another year was spent. Time passes very swiftly when one is busy, even if the heart is heavy. My duty was chiefly opening dead letters, and many a curious and quaint epistle passed through my hands.

One day while the room in which several clerks beside myself were engaged was undergoing repairs, several old letters dropped from a desk being removed from the wall. The carpenter picked them up and handed them to one of the employes in the office.

"Why," said he, "Harry here is a letter directed to you."

As I received it from his hand I recognized the hand-writing at a glance. It was from Jennie, and had been written nearly a year previously. By some means it had not reached me while I was waiting for the place I subsequently obtained, and had preceded me a few days in the "Dead Letter office." There it had lain almost a whole year through an accident, but for which I should never have received it, and probably never know the revelation it brought.

With a nervous tremor I opened it and devoured its contents, which were these:

DEAR HARRY: To-day I was surprised and pleased to ascertain that you had returned from your wanderings and are in Washington. I write all once because we have both been grievously pained I know by a cruel forgery.

When I heard that you had left N—— I could not believe it, but soon was compelled to do so. Believing that I knew your heart, it was impossible to understand the motive or reason for your sudden and strange departure. Fate solved the mystery. You remember the party on my eighteenth birthday, and you will recollect that Richard Price dogged our footsteps wherever we went. He overheard our conversation in the garden, and thus learned of our engagement. A year previously he had proposed to me and was rejected, and in revenge he determined to blast my happiness at all hazards. He was an expert at imitating the hand-writing of others, and having attended the same school that I did for several years it was easily enabled to produce a *fac simile* of my chirography. A few weeks after your departure he was thrown from a buggy and fatally injured. Before he died he sent for me, and I received from his tongue the secret he was the author of a letter to which my name was signed, and had caused your sudden and strange flight.

In whatever light you have come to look upon me, it is but right for you to know the truth. For myself my heart has never changed. JENNIE.

The first thing I did after reading this letter was to obtain leave of absence for a few weeks; the next was to hasten to my lodgings, pack my trunk and take the first train for N——.

The train was the "Fast Express," but to me it seemed a "slow coach." Close connections were made, and at six o'clock that evening I stepped upon the platform at N——. It had been two years since my feet had touched it. A crowd of recollections rushed through my mind, but nothing stayed me. At once I set out for Fisk mansion. It was summer, and as I followed the walk from the gate to the door every object seemed as familiar as if I had seen them only the day before.

My desire was to find Jennie alone, and my wish was gratified. The old hall door was open, and I stepped in unannounced. I turned into the parlor softly and saw her sitting at a west window gazing at the glowing sunset sky, but oh how changed. There were Jennie's eyes and hair, but the rounded form and glowing cheeks were wanting; in their place were sun features and an emaciated form—a wreck of her former self. The hand of the destroyer was upon her, and evident that her sufferings were fearful. My heart sank within me, and again my dream of happiness vanished.

She uttered a cry of delight as I hastened to her side, and, half-rising, extended both hands toward me. I caught her in my arms and pressed her to my heart; then she sank exhausted into her chair. In a few moments she revived, and a look of angelic sweetness overspread her features as I told her the history of the "Dead Letter," for then she saw that it had remained unanswered from accident and not from design.

We went over the bitter past, only to prove how cruelly we had been defrauded of happiness by untoward accidents following the malice which had first directed our paths apart.

Supper was announced, and I attended Jennie to the dining-room. The family were not aware who their visitor was, for Jennie had purposely kept them in ignorance thereof, to surprise them as I had surprised her. They greeted me cordially, and were soon made acquainted with the facts. Although a shade of sadness pervaded the household and tinged the conversation, still the evening passed very pleasantly.

Several weeks I remained at N——, and passed most of the time with Jennie. She seemed to rally, and one and all began to entertain hopes of her recovery. How I longed and prayed that her life might be spared. She was cheerful and hopeful, and as my leave of absence approached its limit I made up my mind to resign, so that I might be constantly near her. With this view I bade her good by for a short time, my intended absence being only for the period necessary to close my affairs at the capital.

Scarcely had I arrived in Washington when a telegram reached me that Jennie's condition was exceedingly critical. It was the recoil from the temporary improvement consequent upon the excitement, which we had mistaken for returning health. I hurried through my business and returned to N—— at once. Reaching the house, I went at once to the parlor door, opened it, and looked in. A cold chill crept through my body as I discovered the unwelcome sight. Not a sound broke upon the stillness except the throbbing of my own heart. It was the stillness of death. I sank upon my knees by her lifeless clay; the fountains of my soul were broken up, and my aching heart found vent in tears.

We laid her to rest under the willows and maples. A shadow rests upon a stricken home—as dear to me as to her kindred—but the cloud that cast it wears a silver lining, for the white soul which left the earthly casket basks in the sunshine of eternal bliss. In that bright realm she will yet be mine.

How Granny Roberts Took Her Coffee.

She was very particular about it, that was sure. She generally timed her calls on my grandmother when that lady was away from home. Not that she would have failed of her peculiar and cherished entertainment had my generous and kindly grandmother been at home. But she doubtless felt more at liberty when the girls were the only dispensers of hospitality.

"Now, honey," she would say, when she had laid her green sun-bonnet on the floor beside her chair and had filled her corn-cob pipe from my grandmother's tobacco box, lighting it by means of a coal held in her horny and callus fingers: "Now, honey, can't you give me a cup of your mother's good strong yaller coffee? I hain't had none like that since I was heah last. Yer mother allus has sich nice yaller coffee."

This of course meant a raid on the thick cream set for making butter. Granny Roberts scorned anything thinner than the *creme de la creme*.

My mother, besides being generous and hospitable by nature, was also young and inexperienced. Consequently she suffered a good deal at the hands of this old neighbor and frequent visitor. Her older and more worldly-wise sister and the very touchy black cook were not thus imposed upon. Granny Roberts "sensed" this attitude of mind toward herself on the part of these two members of the family, and she took good care not to provoke hostilities by any act of her own. But my mother, sensitive and fine fibered, could not bring herself to snub this old woman, whose feelings she ignorantly imagined to be as sensitive as her own. Cunning old granny! She imposed on this high-minded young soul as systematically as any professional humbug the world has ever known.

She never came at meal-time. The most ample of coffee-urns would not have stood the demand's of Granny's capacious appetite. She usually came in the middle of the afternoon, when the kitchen fire was out, save the few embers in the middle of the huge fireplace, covered up in order to keep fire till time for supper. So my mother would kindle a fire—as much a martyr to blazing logs as anyone would suffered at Smithsfield (imagine this on a sultry July afternoon), and, grinding a large millful of coffee, would proceed to make an amount of the liquid ordinarily sufficient for a large family.

"Now, honey," Granny would say, following her young hostess to the kitchen, "make it too d and strong. You know I'm kind o' silin'. I'm trembly like, an' I've got a 'fliction! in my head, and a sight o' misery in my side, and I know a cup o' your mother's good, strong, yaller coffee would kinder o' set me up. I only want a cup, child. Never take more'n a cup. That's my rule."

This single cup was filled and prepared according to minute instructions from Granny. When more than half drained she would pass the cup, saying:

"Too sweet, honey, leetle too sweet. Jest fill it up, won't ye?"

This time perhaps two-thirds was swallowed and the cup passed with the request for a little more cream. Replenished in this direction, it seemed to be entirely satisfactory except the last tablespoonful. "Jest a leetle mite o' sugar, honey. You put in mos' too much cream that time."

Sugared, it seemed the nectar of the gods for a little while, and my mother would take up her netting in the vain hope that granny was at last satisfied. Not by any means.

"Now, honey, this is a heap too cold. I wish you'd jest fill it up with hot coffee." And so proceeded the futile attempt to satisfy the very critical taste of this old woman until the last drop of the strong brown liquid was exhausted, and then Granny Roberts praised her cup of coffee highly. This cup of coffee required a pint of thick cream and caused a perceptible lowering of the ample sugar-bowl, but it was only one cup.

"I never drink but one cup, honey, but I like that good and strong and yaller.

Love of Flowers.

A wealthy farmer, a widower, lived in a happy retiredness with his only daughter, whom he cherished tenderly. Many courted her, but upon one among the suitors, the son of a poor woman, she bestowed her affections. After her father was pressed hard by many of them in regard to the marriage of his daughter, he said calmly: "He who can explain and solve the question I ask him shall carry off the prize." The knotty query is; "What is on earth the oldest and least lasting, the most admirable and ill-treated; it speaks without a voice, and after demise is useful." The young fellows tried to solve this riddle, but did not succeed. The poor girl became alarmed, lest one of her undesired wooers might hit upon the conjectures of her father. Meanwhile one evening her favored lover entered the room of the old man with a nosegay, presented it to him and said: "The flower appears sooner than the fruit; none are older than they are; nothing is less durable; they are admired above all things, and at the same time used ill; the hand pulls them, the sickle cuts them off without mercy; they speak without a voice, because they have for lovers a secret language. In fine, to be useful, the tooth of the animal and the scythe of the reaper give them the finishing stroke." After a few moments of deep reflection, the old man answered, "Be my son; take my blessing. I suppose that a man who loves flowers will also love his wife."

Good Hints.

Pipsy Potts, in Arthur's, is full of hints, all helping tired housekeepers to lighten their work:

About squash. Did you ever try any? I cooked some that way to-day, and it was nice. Take a summer squash, cut it up in slices, roll it in flour and fry it in a spider in hot butter. Salt and pepper it; and if you like fried oysters, you'll like this.

Two other things. Take your board that you scour knives on and nail it firmly so that it will be stationary near the table where you wash dishes. You don't know, unless you've tried, how much labor it saves; for if at any time you use a knife, just step right there and rub it over with the scouring material. I use both brick and a large cork. And you wouldn't do this if you had to go to some cupboard; take down the board, and afterward have to put it back again.

I learned something from a little twelve-year-old girl who worked for me last winter, that I never thought of before. She was scrubbing and mopping in the pantry, and got too much water on the floor; and how did she go to work to get it up but take the dustpan and scoop it up with that, and then wipe the floor nicely with the mop. How much better that was than wringing out the mop ten or a dozen times, until your hands are almost blistered, and your back almost broken.

CAUSE and consequence. The great New York merchant prince, Stewart, advertised to the extent of $85,000 last year. But it was less than one per cent of the total amount of his sales.

HOW THE IRISH HEART BEATS.

An Extraordinary Incident of the American Team's Visit to Dublin—Enthusiastic Reception of the "Star Spangled Banner."

Dublin correspondence (June 23) of the New York Times.

After fifteen minutes of the most tremendous enthusiasm ever known in a theatre, Miss Bessie Sudlow, well known in Niblo's and other New York theatres, came forward to sing the "Star Spangled Banner." She seems to have made hosts of friends at this side of the ocean. She looked uncommonly well and much more womanly than when I last saw her at home. She sang the song splendidly, though manifestly affected by the great crowd and the enthusiasm of the time. When she had finished the applause was deafening. Mrs. Dakin sent her a beautiful bouquet, and the whole party handed down a basket of flowers ornamented—and wax flowers can be ornamented—with the stars and stripes. Miss Sudlow kissed the flag and sang the song again. I can hardly tell you, in the hope of credence, the scene that ensued. Our people were very well pleased—the Irish were boundless in their enthusiasm. Matters were not made easier by the conductor of the band. He played, and the forces at his disposal being superb in number and skill, he played, magnificently, "The Star Spangled Banner," "Hail Columbia," "Tramp, Tramp," "Yankee Doodle," "Red, White and Blue," and one of the negro melodies. The first two went off well. I learned from Mr. Michael Gunn, who is a public man here, that "Tramp, Tramp" had a political insignificance in Ireland. This was soon made manifest by the cheering with which it was received, and the effect was heightened when the audience, numbering nearly 5,000, sang the last verse in good time and with amazing power. Was there ever such a people for merriment? Now they were on the tiptoe of good humor. In five minutes they were hooting, yelling, hissing, whistling and groaning "Red, White and Blue," because the flag of England was thus composed. One-half the crowd was of one opinion and the other of a very different. They maintained the argument contest all the while, and there was no peace until the band had concluded. Then the weight of the crowd began to tell upon two stairways leading from the pit floor to the stage. Half a dozen times the occupants came down pell mell on the people below them, and then they fought and laughed and cursed and shouted in a manner more surprising than pleasant. A very unfortunate young gentlemen with a very excellent tenor voice came forward after one of these encounters and essayed to sing the "Death of Nelson." He proposed to sing "The Marseillaise" in a Berlin singing house he could not have raise a more thunderous storm. The audience lashed themselves into a terrific rage. I need hardly tell you the song celebrates the English victory over the French at Trafalgar. The very instant the vocalist sang the second line, showing the French to be foemen, the uproar began. They hissed the singer off the stage—hissed him in a manner which you should hear before you could believe. He ran off soon enough. They were not satisfied. They demanded a song of their own choosing; but he was inexorable, and so the programme, so far as vocalism was concerned, came to an end. The band played various selections from operas; but the audience hooted to the last, and cried out for the "programme" in lusty wrath. Finally they got tired, or recovered their good humor; and fearing lest the Americans should mistake their local and native pleasantries for anything but what they were, they gave a tremendous cheer for the team, comically adding, "We wish you every success except at the match." I consider last night's experience suggestive. The Irish people ought to be let alone. They are naturally good-natured, exuberant, humorous and easily led. When they don't get what they want, they seldom look far for it, and they readily content themselves, though they are very angry if you say so. But to tease with philosophy a people who cannot listen to a song which celebrates the melancholy death of a man to whose memory and exploits there is the grandest memorial in Dublin, is foolish in the extreme.

A $2,000,000 Head of Hair.

The London Echo prints the following: "We have it upon the authority of a medical journal that there are "from 160,000 to 200,000 hairs in a lady's head," and upon other, if not higher authority, we know that "beauty leads us by a single hair." What, then, in this eminently commercial and money-making age is the obvious conclusion? Is it not evident that every one should consider what is the worth of a single hair "upon a lady's head," what is the worth of it when removed from a lady's head, and what fortune may she, under penalty of baldness, be supposed to carry? And we are not without data, for the same journal tells us that Mme. Nilsson lately sold a hair from her head for £2, "and in a few moments the Swedish songstress was surrounded by admirers anxious to buy a hair at the same rate." Of course, this pelican-like conduct on the part of Mme. Nilsson was, we need not say, done with a good object—it was to feed the sick and wounded, and of course it occurred at a fancy fair, and in New York. "Mme. Nilsson was asked by an American banker to let him have a hair at her own price;" and she valued the treasure at $10, which at once set our cousins to "calculate" that "the Swedish songstress" carried $2,000,000 on her air head. Here, then, is a new line of business for young ladies at fancy fairs. But all may not have Mme. Nilsson's success. We once saw an English lady displaying to an Arab family a hair of Chas. James Fox, at which they distinctly turned up their noses. But, then, he was a man.

Death of George Washington's Grand-Niece.

We are called upon to chronicle the death of that distinguished lady, Mrs. Frances Parke Butler, wife of our esteemed friend, Col. E. G. W. Butler, of Dunboyne, parish of Iberville, but for the past four years a resident of Pass Christian, Miss.

The deceased, one of the most gifted and accomplished women of her time, was born at Mount Vernon, Nov. 27, 1797, and was the daughter of Lawrence Lewis and Eleanor Parke Custis, of Woodlawn, Fairfax county, Va. Lawrence Lewis was the son of Fielding Lewis and Elizabeth Washington, only sister of Gen. Washington, and was one of the executors of his uncle's estate. Eleanor Parke Custis was the youngest daughter of John Parke Custis, only son of Mrs. Washington by her first husband, Daniel Parke Custis, and her mother was Eleanor Calvert, of Maryland, grandaughter of Lord Baltimore; and she, in common with her brother, George Washington Parke Custis, of Arlington, father of the late Mrs. Robert E Lee, was adopted by Gen. and Mrs. Washington, at the death of their father, at the close of the revolution. Her eldest son, Edward George Washington Butler, resigned his position as secretary of legation at Berlin, and fell at Belmont as major of the 11th Louisiana regiment, requesting Gen. Polk to say that he died like a Butler, in the discharge of his duty.

Her second son, Maj. Lawrence Lewis Butler, served, during the late civil war, on the staff of Lieut. Gen. Polk, and now resides in St. Louis, Mo., as a member of the house of Edward J. Gay & Co.

The eldest daughter, Isabel, married Col. George Williamson, of Louisiana, present United States minister in Central America, and died soon after the close of the late war; and her youngest daughter, Caroline Swanwick married the late William B. Turnbull, of Louisiana, and has resided with her parents since the death of her husband.

Her youngest sister, Angela, married the Hon. Charles Conrad, of Louisiana, and at her death left two sons, Charles A. Conrad, of New Orleans, and Lawrence Lewis Conrad, of Baltimore.

The deceased was the nearest living relative of "the father of his country," and with Mrs. Commodore Kennon and George Washington Peter, of Maryland, was the nearest living relative of Mrs. Washington.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

Burial in Baskets.

The case made out by the cremationists against the prevailing mode of disposing of the remains of the deceased was a strong one, but they found it impossible to overcome the natural antipathy of mankind to consuming their dead friends in fire and bottling up their ashes as mementoes. People shrink from this appearance of a sacrifice to the dread enemy of the race, and cling to the practice of laying away the mortal part of their loved ones to sleep beneath the daisies. And yet the objections to the present mode of burial are many. It is unnecessary to repeat them now, as they have become familiar through the arguments of the advocates of cremation.

But an ingenious gentleman of England, Mr. Seymour Haden, has hit upon a compromise. The main objection to the usual mode of burial arises from the use of close coffins, which arrest the kindly processes of decay. The purpose of burial should not be preservation, but a prompt surrendering up of the individual being to mix forever with the elements. The earth that nourished us claims our growth to be resolved to earth again, and we should not resist its claim. Accordingly Mr. Haden proposes to substitute for caskets of rosewood, or other more or less impenetrable material, baskets of wicker, in which the body may be laid in the bosom of the earth in close contact with its dissolving influences and pass into its elements without any unseemly resistance. Every thing that pertains to death and burial, though abhorrent to the sensibilities of most persons, has a strange fascination for us all. There is nothing which more interests us than the disposition of the earthly remains of our fellow-beings when the immortal part has taken its flight. Honest old Montaigne notices our inconsistency in making such a pomp and parade over the senseless and useless body, when life is gone, and preserving such a close privacy in the circumstances attending the passage of the spirit into the world. It is one of the foibles of our nature which we cannot get rid of, however clearly the philosopher may point out its absurdity.

No sooner does Mr. Haden bring his burial baskets to the attention of the world than he finds it full of eager interest. He had quite a levee lately in the stately gardens of Stafford House, the lordly mansion of the duke of Sutherland, where he exhibited a fine variety of his wicker caskets. A large company of lords and ladies gathered to look at these fragile receptacles for the still more fragile forms which they were at that moment wearing, and to listen to the descriptions of the inventor. Children peered curiously into some slender specimens adorned with black and gold, in which an attempt was made to gratify the love of display which is carried even into the grave. It was a curious party, and it would hardly be possible to gather such a company to inspect a collection of ordinary coffins. It was the novelty of the thing and the interest which is excited by anything new pertaining to the disposal of the dead that brought them together.

What is in the Bed-Room.

If two persons are to occupy a bedroom during the night, let them step on a weighing scale as they retire, and then again in the morning, and they will find that their actual weight is at least a pound less in the morning. Frequently there will be a loss of two or more pounds, and the average loss through out the year will be a pound of matter, which has gone off from their bodies, partly from the lungs, and partly through the skin. The escaped matter is carbonic acid and decayed animal matter or poisonous exhalation. This is diffused through the air in part, and absorbed by the bed-clothes. If a single ounce of wool-cotton be burned in a room, it will so completely saturate the air with smoke that one can hardly breathe, though there can only be one ounce of foreign matter in the air. If an ounce of cotton be burned every half hour during the night, the air will be kept continually saturated with smoke, unless there be an open window or door for it to escape.

Now, the sixteen ounces of smoke, thus formed is far less poisonous than the sixteen of exhalations from the lungs and bodies of two persons who have lost a pound of weight during the eight hours of sleeping; for, while the dry smoke is mainly taken into the lungs, the damp odors from the body are absorbed both into the lungs and into the pores of the whole body. Need more be said to show the importance of having bed-rooms well ventilated, and of thoroughly airing the sheets, coverlids and mattresses in the morning, before packing them up in the form of a neatly made bed.

The Black Hills Bubble.

Prof. Jenney has sent to the interior department a later and fuller report confirming his first dispatch, in which he stated that nothing had been discovered that would warrant extensive mining operations in the Black Hills. He says the best dirt does not average one cent and a quarter to the pan, which is altogether a different story from the sensational reports heretofore published. Gold has certainly been found in the Hills, but only in very small quantities and over a very large area of country.

It is probable, however, that the professor's unfavorable report will have very little effect in deterring parties from going to the Black Hills who have decided to try their fortunes there. In the present stagnation of business throughout the country there are thousands of men whose hopeless financial condition renders them easy victims to the gold fever, as well as a certain restless element who are always ready for a change that involves excitement and adventure. Besides, the impression has gone abroad that a ring of government officials has been formed at Washington to gobble the best mining localities before the general rush for the Hills begins, and very little confidence is placed on reports that are sent there to be revamped for publication.

THERE is nothing which man can propose, however ridiculous, but that some one will be crazy enough to take it up. Tyndall's prayer test has found somebody to try it in the Peculiar People, who have hired an old building in London Fields, and stuck up a notice inviting the halt, the lame, the blind and incurable generally to present themselves to be prayed over. Measles, smallpox, and all similar ailments receive the same medicine. A number of the sect are already under commitment in the Old Bailey to be tried for manslaughter, and the rest are on little better terms with the police.

Our Riflemen Abroad.

As the details of the great rifle match at Dollymount, Ireland, reach us, they confirm the skill of our marksmen and the completeness of their victory. The results show a great improvement over the shooting at Creedmoor last year. At both places the ranges were 800, 900, and 1,000 yards; the targets six feet by twelve in size, with a center six feet by six, and a "bull's eye" three feet by three. The sporting journals tell us that a shot in the bull's eye counts four, in the center three, in the outer part of the target two. The teams are each six men, each man having fifteen shots at man range, and forty-five in all.

By a comparison of the shooting at Creedmoor and that at Dollymount it will be seen that there was great improvement in favor of the latter. The figures are thus given at Creedmoor: The total of the Americans was 934, that of the Irish, 931—thus made up: At 800 yards, Americans, 325; Irish, 317; 900 yards, Americans, 310; Irish, 315; 1,000 yards, Americans, 298; Irish, 303.

At Dollymount the total was as follows: Americans, 967, Irish, 929—thus made up: At 800 yards, the Americans made 337; the Irish, 338; 900 yards, Americans, 327; Irish, 292; 1,000 yards, Americans, 303; Irish, 299. Therefore the Americans beat their former scores heavily in each case—12, 17 and 5 points, respectively. The Irish gained heavily at 800 yards, 21 points—lost 23 points at 900 yards, and at 1,000 yards lost 4. The Americans beat the Irish by 38 points, and their Creedmoor score by 33 points; the Irish fell behind their Creedmoor performance 2 points.

Toward the conclusion of the shooting at Dollymount the Irish blood got up too high and great excitement prevailed. The police were unable to preserve order. The crowd swayed to and fro and gave ominous signs of disorder, and the Americans refused to proceed until quiet could be restored. The Irish did not seem to entertain any particular inhospitable hostility to the Americans. They were more enraged, perhaps, against their own team. But they seemed to want "a bit of a row" on general principles, and it was feared they would indulge their proverbial propensity of hitting at every head they saw. Everything passed off peaceably and pleasantly, however, and they became more enthusiastic than ever over the Americans.

But there are new triumphs for our countrymen to win. Their shooting, though excellent, was not superior to the best shooting at Wimbledon, the great English rifle ground. The match will come off at that range in a few days, and the American team will have to guard with great care the laurels they have won. The English are cooler and more deliberate than the Irish, and on the whole better shots. They will be nerved to their best shooting at the approaching match, and we may expect the public interest of both countries to be greatly stimulated by the result in Ireland.—*Courier Journal.*

Early Birds.

My idea of perfect happiness is the consciousness of having done our whole duty, and the certainty of getting our reward for it.

Life is short, but the majority outlive themselves anyhow.

It is a great deal easier to be saucy than to be sarcastic; but there is many critics who haven't discovered the difference yet, and probably never will.

The man whom success renders more humble, and at the same time more cautious, is one whom a defeat couldn't weaken.

If a man is going to leave the world and retire into solitude he must take a large stock of virtues with him, for these are the only things he can enjoy there.

There has seldom been a great occasion yet but what there has been found some one equal to it, and that one has often sprung from an unexpected source.

The man who fully understands a subject is always satisfied to use the simplest terms to explain it.

If you expect to keep yure friend yu have got to see all his virtues with both eyes and his failings with one.

The man who tells you that there ain't an honest person living has studied his own character too well.

Of all created things animate or inanimate, we find no fools except among mankind.

He who has the most authority and uses it the least is truly a noble character.

The world has always longed for sensations; if a man could invent a new Punch and Judy, he would be admired more than the one who could make one barrel of flour go as far as two.

You can't separate wit from truth; truth may not be wit, but wit is always truth.

Our pashions were not given to us to be destroyed, but to be controlled.

The man who told us "that virtue is its own reward," might have added that vice was too.

The theory of medicine has cured more patients than the practice of it ever has.

No really wise man ever asks questions that he thinks can't be answered.

Silence has been prized more perhaps than it really deserves, but in the case of folly it can't be commended too much.

You can't make an enemy of the meanest wretch with impunity, for the meanest wretch can set fire to your pigpen just as easy as anybody.—*Josh Billings in N. Y. Weekly.*

THE MATRIMONIAL MARKET.

Its Distressing Dullness All Over the Country.

Since the panic, the matrimonial market has been extremely dull, and heads of families are in most despondent mood. It had been hoped last fall that the usual winter's festivities or marriage fairs would have witnessed a revival in trade, and every legitimate effort was made by those having on hand stocks held over from the previous season to force off goods that were rapidly growing out of fashion and depreciating in value. Prices were liberally marked down; young ladies who before the panic were held (by themselves) at a Fifth avenue house, a Newport villa and an opera box, modestly hung out signals of distress and openly avowed their predilections for love in a cottage. But so depressed was the general feeling that even with these concessions very little real business was transacted; there was much skirmishing but few serious engagements. It is well known that at this moment it is a matter of anxious debate with the heads of our leading up-town houses as to what is the best plan to adopt during the coming summer campaign to infuse more briskness and firmness into the market. It is, at least, an open question whether the increased budget necessary to a vigorous taking of the field at Sharon or Saratoga would be justified in view of the barren results at these matrimonial centres during the past two years. These summer exchanges certainly attract the better class of buyers, but competition is necessarily so much the keener. Experience, too, has shown that two weeks at a quiet seaside or mountain resort will practically promote more business (not to speak of the vastly reduced percentage of operating expenses) than two months at a fashionable watering-place; but without men it is impossible for even the most beautiful and accomplished of maidens to launch her little bark on the sea matrimonial, and desirable men, the genuine, high-priced articles, rarely are kept on hand at the more modest resorts. When, however, they are found there, they are had at as eminent disadvantages as whales in shoal water, and, helpless for stout and prolonged resistance, fall an easy prey to their great enemy. Veteran dowager dealers, who for the last forty years have been engaged in this branch of trade, freely confess that during the whole course of their commercial experiences they have never known so prolonged a period of extreme depression, with not the faintest glimmer of better times. The out-look is, indeed, gloomy. Washington, which during the winter season is a sort of matrimonial Novgorod or Leipzig, offering to the speculative investor a greater choice of goods than can be found at any other center in this country, was so overstocked last year that there was a fall of at least fifty per cent. in first-class fancy calicoes, and even at these ruinous sacrifices, though the offerings were large, but little property changed hands.

Learned Fools.

The exuberant fecundity of the imaginative faculties of some geological savants led them into a blunder recently, which would be amusing if only it were a degree or two less ridiculous. It appears that in the Turkish collection of geological specimens which were exhibited at the Vienna exposition were a number of odd-looking instruments of flint, six inches long, an inch broad, and a quarter of an inch thick. After a close examination of these unique curiosities, and a large amount of reckondite cackling over them by learned geological experts, they were pronounced to be flint knives of the veritable stone age. The discovery was hailed as a great acquisition to science; and in the opinon of these learned pundits, went far to prove that man existed and delved and worked with tools at a period far earlier than any of which we have any record in the Bible. Geologists were triumphant over these wonderful flints, which had proved the antiquity of pre-historic man and dissipated another of the fables of the Inspired Record. But "mark now, how plain a tale" has put down them, and how completely they hoaxed themselves by trusting to their own fertile imaginations. It has been discovered that the flints in question are modern instruments which are in universal use at this day by peasant husbandmen of Rumelia, Anatolia and Syria, in the construction of their threshing machines, which are armed with these knives. There is the whole of the mystery! The learned geologists knew all about the stone age, but were utterly ignorant concerning the present age. The incident is an evidence of the slight foundation on which the scientists are wont to build their facts, as well as of their easy credulity, or shall we say gullibility?—*Christian Intelligencer.*

Wachtel Singing While His Child is Dying.

The opera-house is thronged with an expectant audience, for Theodore Wachtel is to appear in "Der Postilon von Lonjumeau," and all Leipzig must hear him. Perhaps more than one person in that assembly is thinking what a fine thing it is to be a favorite actor, and wishing that he could charge places with Wachtel. The audience even fancy that he must be as impatient as they for the curtain to rise and the opera to begin. While they are waiting let us take a peep back of the scenes. The postboy stands at the threshold, and the attendants look from one to the other with awe-struck faces. Through the half-open door of a dressing-room we see the celebrated Wachtel in an agony of grief, and can easily guess that the paper he has dropped on the floor is a telegram with bad news. In truth it is, for it brings word that his youngest son is dying and wants to see him. He can not go; the audience must not be disappointed; he must swallow the lump that rises in his throat till it almost chokes him, and assume all the gayety of Chapelon, the postilion of Lonjumeau. At the end of the second act, while the audience is making the house ring with applause, Wachtel is reading another telegram. This one tells him that his son is dead. At the end of the third act he thrills the audience as he sings "Gute Nacht, mein Herzliches Kind." They think the postilion is singing that song, but we know that Theodore Wachtel is bidding his child a last good night.—*Leipzig Letter.*

Plants as Weather Guides.

It is well known that certain plants are very sensitive to changes in the atmosphere, and by their behavior, the opening and closing of their leaves and flowers, etc., serve as natural barometers to indicate the coming weather. A Prussian horticulturist, Mr. Hanneman, of Broskau, has published a long list of plants, the indications of which he has found trustworthy. The Pimpernell, or poor man's weather-glass, (*Anagallis arvensis,*) expand their flowers at the approach of wet weather, whilst on the other hand the different varieties of clover contact their leaves before rain. If fine bright weather is in prospect, the leaves of the chickweed (*Stellaria media*) unfold and its flowers remain awake and erect until mid day. When the plant droops and its flowers do not expand, rain may be expected. The half