The Weekly Messenger

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ALBERT BIENVENU.

It is understood that the Maine, the big 6000-ton armored cruiser, and the first iron warship ever built at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, will be launched on July 4.

It has been decided by Judge Thayer, of the United States district court at St. Louis, that it is unlawful to dun a man through the mails by means of a postal card.

One method of preventing fires seems to have been overlooked in the discussion which has followed the disasters in Lynn, Boston and Minneapolis. It is the French regulation which makes a tenant or house-owner financially responsible for damage by fires that spread beyond his premises.

It is estimated that our American tourists in 1889 spent ninety million dollars in Europe, and it is almost certain that scarcely a bagatelle of all this will ever float back to our shores. This is an enormous amount of money. It is double the amount Uncle Sam has on deposit in all the National banks of the country. It is nearly the sum which Secretary Noble estimates for the entire pension list in 1890. It is far more than it takes to run two or three department of the Government for a year. It is about time, the New York *Telegram* believes we had a fair on this side of the water and prevented all this flow of good cash to Europe.

Dr. Alfredo da Luy, of Rio Janeiro, believes that the climate of Brazil is degenerating to Europeans, especially to persons from the north. He has noticed that Brazilians in general are more pallid, and are less vigorous and energetic, than persons coming from temperate and cold climates. The degeneration of the Portuguese race may also be noted in Rio de Janeiro. An anæmic condition, caused by malarious influences, is common among them, and, while it does not kill by itself, weakens the hold on life and greatly increases the infant mortality. The children of Portuguese and Italians do not seem to fare so badly as the children of parents coming from more northern countries.

Even in conservative England the times are indeed changed. The cane has always been considered as necessary a part of the schoolmaster's possessions as the spelling book and corporal punishment prevails there to an extent that would not be tolerated here. A schoolmaster was recently sued by the father of a pupil whom he had unmercifully beaten by caning him on the hand, and the magistrate gave judgment against the pedagogue on the ground that caning on the hand was attended by a risk of injury, and there were "methods of corporal punishment quite as available, efficacious and not necessarily attended by any risk, which the defendant might have used."

The post schools of the army may receive some attention from Congress during the current session. It is not likely that any attempt will be made to carry out General Lew Wallace's idea of converting every military station into an academy; but, according to the New York *Times*, this view is gaining adherents that a somewhat better use could be made of a part of the time of the enlisted men than employing it in endless repetitions of rudimentary drills. The recruit must of course be made first of all a good soldier, and have such daily training as will keep him a good soldier; but it is not necessary to look at West Point to see about what proportion of the day is really required for that and how much is left for mental improvement.

To Avoid Accidents in Factories.

A very useful invention, tending to lessen the possibility of accidents in factories, is now being extensively adopted in England. The breaking of a glass, which is adjusted against the wall of every room in the mill, will at once stop the engine, an electric current being established between the room and the throtle valve of the engine, shutting off the steam in an instant. By this means the engine was stopped at one of the mills recently in a few seconds, and a young girl, whose clothes had become entangled in an upright shaft, was released uninjured.

Poetry and Miscellany.

WHAT THE CHILDREN DID.

All day with busy thought and hand,
The patient mother thought and planned,
And strove to do with needed care
A duty here, a duty there:
Yet on her face, about her work,
A covert smile would often lurk—
A mother's smile that came unbid
At something that the children did.

She watched with pride some boyish feat;
She marked her girls and saw them sweet;
She thought the sight was passing fair
Of baby grasping at the air.
The swift retort of childish wit
She heard, and keenly relished it:
And underneath the look that chid
She smiled at what the children did.

When at the weary end of day
The children, soundly sleeping lay,
The mother by the evening fire
Recalled their pranks to please their sire.
And when the fire was but a spark,
And all the quiet house was dark—
When slumber came with drooping lid,
She dreamed of what the children did!

—Detroit Free Press.

PRISCILLA'S FORTUNE.

"YOU were born to good luck, Priscilla," said stout Mrs. Hackett, as she accepted a cup of fragrant tea from the hands of her niece. "You know I always said so from the time you were a baby."

Priscilla Carew looked about her, a faint smile on her lips. The room was small, the furniture old, the floor covered with a rag carpet, very much the worse for wear. The damask on the teatable was the last of her mother's wedding set, and had been darned in every direction; and the only comfortable chair was a big wooden rocker, with a faded patchwork cushion, stuffed with duck's feathers. The room had a cosey look, however, for Priscilla was a born housekeeper, and about her always reigned order and cleanliness. The cookstove was as bright as a daily polish could make it, the row of bright tin pans on the dresser shelf were without a stain, and the old dresser itself was white with innumerable scrubbings. In the family sitting-room beyond the andirons before the fire-place shone like gold, the bricks were newly reddened, and an immense bunch of feathery asparagus filled the empty space, for it was only on state occasions that a fire was built there. The floor was covered with a plain, dark, three-ply carpet, to buy which Priscilla had made many sacrifices of youthful inclinations in the way of cuffs, collars and ribbons. A round table stood in the centre of the room, and on it were the family bible, two small albums, a copy of Shakespeare and a large lamp. There were half a dozen wooden chairs against the wall, and a settee covered with a cretonne cushion. On the high mantel were a pair of glass vases, a china shepherdess, a cup and saucer that had belongsd to Priscilla's great-grandmother, and a small basket of wax fruit under a glass case.

Priscilla's gaze took in every article of furniture in the two rooms, and then her eyes rested on her mother, a faded, weary-looking woman, whose life had been one long struggle with care, privation, poverty and hard work. Priscilla always felt a little bitter towards fate when she thought of her mother. It seemed hard that even now, in her old age, her mother was obliged to toil, and to turn every penny before she spent it.

"I never thought myself very lucky, aunt," said Priscilla.

"That's because you ain't one of the thankful sort," said Mrs. Hackett. "You'd find plenty o' girls willin' to step into your shoes, now you're to have old Matthew Pounce's fortune.

"Oh, very likely, *now*," said Priscilla. "But don't be too sure that I'll have the fortune, Aunt Hackett. The will may be found after all."

"Tain't likely now; they've looked everywhere for it. Simpson was up there a-searchin' before the breath was fairly out of the old man's body. Pity he died so sudden. But perhaps it's better for you, Priscilla, that he did, for he might a' cut you out o' your fortune. What you are going to do first, Priscilla?"

"I am going to wait until the fortune is really mine before I do anything, Aunt Hackett. Meanwhile, I shall teach school, as usual."

"Well, if you ain't the queerest! You don't seem a bit set up. Some girls would 'a' gone clear out o' their heads over such luck. But maybe you're right to hold on to your school; for your Uncle Eben says it'll be some time before the estate can be settled. I'll look for you to make a good match, now, Priscilla."

A sudden flush dyed Priscilla's cheeks scarlet. Her thoughts flew to John Morris. Would he be considered a good match? Probably not, for John had only his farm and stock, and if report did not speak falsely, old Matthew Pounce had been worth a hundred thousand dollars.

Time had been when Priscilla, planning for the days to come, and sure of John's love, and that he would some day ask her to be his wife, had thought of the comfort her mother would enjoy at Cloverdale Farm, her working days over forever. But now it was of Matthew Pounce's big stone house that she thought. If she were indeed heiress to a hundred thousand dollars, she would not care to live at Cloverdale Farm. But would John consent to share her wealth? Would he, for love of her, give up his independence? These were questions she could not answer.

She walked to the garden-gate with Mrs. Hackett when that good woman went away, and stood there looking out into the dusty road long after Mrs. Hackett's substantial figure had disappeared in the dusk.

Priscilla had talked very little of Matthew Pounce's fortune, but she had thought of it a great deal, and had made vague plans for the future already, though in the great stone house on the hill the undertaker and his assistants were yet busy.

Matthew Pounce had never married, and Priscilla was the only child of his only nephew, and the last of the line. But she had never looked upon herself as the old man's heiress. He had been cold, crabbed and selfish, and had never been known to do a generous or kindly act. Priscilla well remembered the day ten years before, when she had gone to the stone house to ask aid for her dying father, who would never have made the appeal himself. It had been refused in no gentle terms.

"I've never asked any one to help me," said the old man, "and I started without a dollar. What one man can do another can. When a man's down it's his own fault, usually, no one to blame for it but himself, and he can't expect other people to suffer for his faults. My money was made by hard work, and I aint goin' to squander it. You won't get a cent of it now, nor after I'm gone. Don't expect it; you'd only be disappointed. My plan for disposing of my money has been cut and dried for twenty years."

The cold, heartless words came back to Priscilla now, as she stood at the gate in the dusk of the June evening, the fragrance of roses filling the air. Matthew Pounce was dead, and no will could be found. If he had died intestate, as seemed to be the case, Priscilla would have everything.

"It's only on mother's account I want it," she though. "Poor mother! She won't know herself as mistress of Uncle Matthew's big house."

She heard the sound of horse's hoofs on the hard road, and looked up eagerly, her color brightening, as she saw John Morris on his big black mare Diana. It seemed at first as if he did not intend to stop, and Priscilla's heart turned sick with disappointment and surprise, for John seldom passed the cottage without pausing for a few words with her at least.

But just beyond the gate he pulled up the mare with a jerk.

"I hear you've come in for a big fortune, Priscilla," he said, as he swung himself from the saddle. "I suppose I ought to congratulate you."

"Wait until the furtune is really mine," said Priscilla.

"Oh, there seems to be no doubt that you'll have it," said John, gloomily. "And I can't affard to wait, for probably I shall leave here in a day or two."

The color died out of Priscilla's face. For a moment she could not utter a word.

"What do you mean, John?" she asked, when she could command her voice.

"Only that I've had an offer for the farm, and I think I'll take it. I want to try ranch life in Colorado. Cicely's going to be married next month, you know, and there'll be nothing to keep me here."

He did not look at her as he spoke, but kept his eyes on the ground.

Priscilla said nothing in reply. She was asking herself what could be the cause of the change in her lover. She

could not understand it. He was usually radiant with good-humor, and she had expected to talk freely with him of her changed prospects. But his air of gloom and the coldness of his manner did not invite confidence.

Her heart was very heavy when he had ridden away again, and as she washed the supper dishes and put the kitchen in order for the night, she was scarcely conscious what she was doing, so occupied was her mind with thoughts of John Morris. It was almost a year since he had began to be attentive to her. He had met her often as she was leaving the schoolhouse at four o'clock, and had walked home with her, leading his horse by the bridle, and saying all sorts of pleasant things, which, while neither brilliant nor witty, made Priscilla's heart beat fast, and gave her the assurance that she was beloved.

He had made a practice, too, of coming to tea on Sunday evenings, and lately had referred more than once to his dread of being very lonely when Cicely should be gone, and only old Sarah Cole left to keep him company.

And Priscilla had fondly imagined this was the prelude to asking her to make Cloverdale her home.

"Seems to me you're awful quiet this evenin', Priscilla," said her mother, who was knitting by the light of a kerosene lamp. "You don't seem a bit pleased over your fortune."

Her fortune! Priscilla had, in her misery, forgotten all about that. What did it matter if she were rich or poor if John Morris were to be hundreds of miles away from her, roughing it on a Colorado ranch?

She cried herself to sleep that night, and dreamed that she saw John Morris married to a Colorado girl, who was terribly old and ugly and walked with a limp.

She was reminded of her dream the next morning when Cicely Morris stopped in on her way to the village, eager to talk to Priscilla about old Matthew's money.

It was Saturday, and there was no school, and Priscilla was at home, busy making cake. It was a jelly cake, and the jelly was laid very thick between the thin leaves—just as John liked it. For Priscilla cherished the hope that John might come to tea as usual the next evening.

"You don't look a bit like an heiress, Priscilla," said Cicely. You're as sober as an owl."

"What ought I to do?" asked Priscilla.

"Well, I don't know exactly, I never saw an heiress before. I'll read up on the subject and let you know. Are you going to the funeral this afternoon? But of course you are. Everybody's going; everybody except John. He has gone to Barnesville, and won't be back till night. I shouldn't wonder if he were courting Amelia Bacon."

The knife with which Priscilla was spreading jelly dropped to the table with a clatter. She pulled open the table drawer, and bent over it, pretending to be searching for something.

"Who is Amelia Bacon?" she asked.

"A girl he met at the country fair last year. She lives in Barnesville," answered Cicely.

"Is she ugly?" asked Priscilla, remembering her dream.

Cicley stared at her a moment.

"What a queer question," she said. "No; she's perfectly lovely. But she isn't the sort of a girl to get along on a farm. John ought not to think of her for a moment."

Mrs. Hackett came in just then to see if Priscilla intended to wear mourning to the funeral, and so the subject of the fair Amelia was dropped. But enough had been said to add considerably to the weight on Priscilla's heart, and she began to feel as if the gulf between herself and John was growing very wide indeed.

The funeral was a long, dismal affair, the discourse commonplace and tedious; and Priscilla was very glad when it was all over, and she was at liberty to return home.

She had hardly removed her bonnet and the black dress she had worn out of respect to her Aunt Hackett's ideas of decorum, when Mr. Simpson, her late granduncle's lawyer, called to see her. His manner was the very essence of respect. It seemed to Priscilla that he did not forget for a moment that she had inherited old Matthew's money.

"There's been a thorough search made for the will, Miss Carew," he said. "But it hasn't been found. I can't account for its loss, for Mr. Pounce wasn't a man to burn one will before he had made another. And his heart was set on building an hospital for old men; he spoke of it to me very often. But as things are, you're the heir, and you can move into the stone house to-morrow if you like."

"I think I'll wait awhile," said Priscilla, coolly. "I want to be on the safe side, and the will may yet be found."

"There's not much chance of it," said Mr. Simpson, but he did not argue the matter.

Priscilla put on her best dress and tied a pink ribbon at her throat Sunday evening, for, in spite of what Cicely had said about Amelia Bacon, she felt that there was a chance that John might come.

But hour after hour passed and he did not appear, and only Mrs. Carew tasted the jelly cake at supper. Priscilla would not touch it. She told herself she was sorry she had been so foolish as to make it, and that she might have known there'd be no one to eat it except her mother.

"Let him go to Colorado," she thought, as at nine o'clock she repaired to her own room. "I sha'n't say anything against it. And he can marry that Amelia Bacon! I don't care."

She cried herself to sleep, nevertheless, and looked like a ghost when she came downstairs the next morning.

She rode to the schoolhouse after breakfast in Farmer Nesbitt's light wagon, having thankfully accepted the offer of a "lift;" but before she had driven a rod she wished she had gone on foot, as usual, for Mr. Nesbitt began at once to talk of John Morris.

"John told me last evenin' that he had to give an answer to-morrow about the farm," said the old man. "He seems set on goin' to Colorady, 'n' won't wait no longer'n to get Sissy married. I don't see who first give him the notion o' goin', I allers thought John one o' the steady sort."

Priscilla was glad when the schoolhouse was reached and she could escape the sound of her lover's name. But she found it hard to give her thoughts to her work, and her teaching that morning was purely mechanical. She could not forget for a moment that John was going to Colorado.

At recess, as she sat at her desk, trying to give her mind to the correction of some examples in multiplication, she was surprised to see her Aunt Hackett enter, breathless and excited.

"Priscilla, I've got some awful news to tell you," she cried, as she threw herself exhausted into the nearest seat. "Try to bear it, child. They've found the will—tucked away in an old dictionary. And you won't get a penny—not a penny. It all goes to a hospital. Oh, ain't it shameful! I declare, I could 'a' burst right out cryin' when I heard it."

Priscilla had started to her feet as her aunt began to speak, but now sank into her chair again.

"I always supposed they'd find the will, Aunt Hackett," she said. "I never felt at all like an heiress. And you see I wasn't born to good luck, after all."

Mrs. Hackett was amazed at her niece's coolness.

"Never in my life did I see anybody take news as easy as Priscilla," she said later, in telling her story of her call at the schoolhouse. "If anything she seemed glad she'd lost her fortune."

It was a long, weary day to the young school-teacher, and she was detained at her desk later than usual, having to prepare some work for the morrow. It was nearly six o'clock when she locked the schoolhouse door behind her, and turned away—to see John Morris standing under a tree not a yard off.

"I've been waiting for you, Priscilla," he said, as he took from her the pile of books she was carrying. "I want to tell you that I'm not going to Colorado, after all."

"Not going!" exclaimed Priscilla. "Why have you given it up?"

"Because you've lost your fortune, Priscilla, and I want to take the place of it, if you'll have me, darling. I couldn't ask you to be my wife if you were going to be rich, Priscilla, but—"

"And—and Amelia Bacon," interrupted Priscilla. "Cicely told me—"

"A lot of nonsense. She told me about it, dear. She only wanted to find out if you really cared for me. Do you, Priscilla?"

It was quite dark when Priscilla entered the snug kitchen of her humble home, where her mother and aunt were discussing over the tea-table the loss of old Matthew's money, and wondering why Priscilla didn't come home to discuss it with them.

The girl's eyes shone like stars—her cheeks were flushed and her mouth smiling.

"Aunt Hackett," she said, bending over that comely little woman to press a kiss on her still smooth cheek, "you were right. I was born to good luck."

"Whatever do you mean, Priscilla? Gracious! to look at you, one wouldn't suppose you had just lost a fortune."

"I've lost one and found another," laughed Priscilla.

And then she told them about John. —[American Cultivator.

China's Chief River.

The Yang-tse-kiang, the third largest river in the world, and more than 3,000 miles long in all its windings, from its rise in the northwestern mountains of China to its discharge into the Yellow Sea, is navigable, says a correspondent, by steamboat as far as Jehang—1,000 miles up from Shanghai.

The distance from Shanghai to Hankow is 500 miles, and the trip there and back, which occupied nine days, proved in every way interesting and enjoyable. At near intervals, all along the river banks, are little mud-hovels, similar in shape to, and not much bigger than, an ordinary dog-kennel. Here the fisherman lives and plies his trade all day, occasionally, by means of a bamboo-pulley, raising his net from the water when he imagines he has made a good haul of fish.

"I've been on this river over twenty years," said our captain, "and I never saw one of them catch anything yet."

As he spoke, the fisherman at whom we had been looking drew up his net, and lo! there was one great fish in it, some two feet long. Oddly enough, it was the only fish I saw caught while on the river.

All that day we passed walled towns, built on the slope of the hillside, and occasionally bristling with fortifications; and now and again we would see a group of children playing beside the water, far from any signs of habitation, or a water buffalo would appear to enliven the scene, but as a rule there was a still, desolate air over everything.

Next day we passed close to the walled town of Nganking. It wore a peaceful air in the early morning—the drooping willows and brown sails of the fishing junks beneath the old gray wall, and the slender pagodas, and the quaint joss houses within the city, rising from amid green foliage, lent a pretty and picturesque charm to the scene; but those who could read between the lines, and who knew what an amount of degradation, squalor and vice a Chinese town is capable of containing, were not deceived by this outward appearance of slumbrous calm and peace. It was horrible to think that even as we looked some poor wretch behind those walls might be undergoing tortures indescribable.

The Favorite Beverage of Turks.

Coffee- drinking in Turkey is universal and continuous. The writer passed a greater part of four years in Constantinople, where he had occasion to call upon the officials of the Sublime Porte so frequently that it would be difficult to enumerate these official visits; and with few exceptions, when the visit was protracted to any length, black coffee, pure in quality and prepared with the grounds, was regularly served in small, delicate cups.

All Turks, from the highest to the lowest, indulge in the beverage, a few swallows at a time throughout the day, and without any evil effects. What makes the fact more remarkable is that neither the sedentaty habits of the Turk nor the quick, energetic temperament of the Greek, seems to be affected by the perpetual imbibing of the beverage.

Spectacles, it may be remarked, are as little used in Turkey as in Greece; nor are complaints of the eyes more prevalent, if we except opthalmia, which is brought from Egypt, and exists chiefly among the unclean and dissolute lower orders. An old pasha once told us that he considered coffee to be one of the greatest blessings vouchsafed by Allah to the faithful, not only from its grateful aroma, but from its health-preserving qualities.