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A GREETING TO CHRISTMAS.

O, Christmas! happy Christmas!
We greet thee once again
With garlands and with posey,
And merry minstrel strains;
We greet thee for the millions
Who hail thy joyful morn—
For those who have long passed away—
For millions yet unborn.

We greet thee for the mothers,
And for the loving sires
Who call the little children
Around the household fires;
We greet thee with sweet carols,
With offerings free and glad,
And gifts more rare and precious
Than Eastern magi had.

Unto the Child of Mary
What shall the mothers give
But golden deeds of mercy
To all on earth who live?
We greet thee for the aged,
Who hail the dawning light
Which streams from Bethlehem's manger
As star of promise bright.

We greet thee with hosannas
And hallujahs sweet,
For they who seek the Holy Child
Have nearly reached his feet.
Unto the hope of Nations
What shall the aged raise?
Sweet odors of thanksgiving
And frankincense of praise.

We greet thee for the mourners
Who raise the holy hymn,
From hearts bowed down with sorrow
And eyes with tears grown dim.
We twine amid the holly
The cypress and the yew,
And keep the feast with bitter herbs—
The wormwood and the rue.

The myrrh of human anguish
To offer shall we dare,
Till in the heart's pure censer
'Tis changed to incense rare?
We greet thee for the children,
Fair girls and stalwart boys,
Who usher in thy dawning
With revelry and noise.

We bring no well-filled caskets,
But in our hearts believe
'Twill be a gift most precious
To lovingly receive.
And He who sent the Christ-child
Hath humbly deigned to say:
"'Tis better than burnt-offering
In meekness to obey."

O, Christmas! happy Christmas!
Be not in haste to go,
We've woven wreaths of holly
And merry mistletoe;
O, blessed Christmas evening,
Why dost thou haste away?
Roll round, New Year, and bring to us
Another Christmas day.

—*Kate Lawrence, in N. Y. Examiner.*

A GREEN CHRISTMAS.

A Red-Letter Day in the Life of Absalom Strong.

"It's ter'ble, isn't it?"

Old Absalom Strong stood in his shed door and looked out into the falling rain. As he had said, it was indeed disagreeable, that is if the quantity of rain could make it so. The month of December was wearing away and with it was vanishing the signs of winter. The snow had come early; the ground had been previously well frozen; the swamps filled with water and everything indicated a regular old-fashioned New England winter.

Absalom Strong had contracted to haul a large quantity of hemlock bark to a tannery a number of miles away, and from all appearances would have made an excellent thing out of it had it not been for the sudden collapse of all these fairy air-castles, or rather frost-castles, for spite of the aforesaid favorable prognostications, the chilling breath of winter had given place to almost springlike mildness, and Absalom Strong's hauling road, which led across a long stretch of boggy land, became suddenly impassable, and his horses munched their hay and oats in idleness. Rainstorm followed rainstorm, and now as Christmas time drew near the snowy landscape had given place to bare ground, slush and ice.

"This pesky rain wa'n't needed an' I can't tell fer the life o' me why's come," said the sharp voice of Mrs. Strong, as she came and stood with arms akimbo, beside her lord and master in the wide door of the shed.

Absalom was exceedingly well-to-do and much of their prosperity, so the neighbors asserted, he owed to his careful, saving, scrimping helpmeet, who toiled early and late, and whom he almost invariably consulted on all business matters, though for once in this bark-hauling arrangement he had neglected to do so.

"You'll lose money on this spec, anyway," continued Mrs. Strong, or Aunt Polly as she was generally called. "Ef you'd a asked me I'd a told ye bettern's to take the job so cheap."

"I thought sure, Polly," answered Mr. Strong, in as plaintive a voice as he could command, "that I'd make a good thing out of it, but——"

"But," snapped his amiable partner, this 'ere talkin' about ifs and buts and all sech like don't do no good. I've told ye, time an agin; to al'ays leave a little leeway, a sorter margin; same's when ye start a load in the snow ye want a chance to rack the sled. I shouldn't be surprised ef ye died in the poor-house."

Absalom winced and looked furtively at his wife, who had assumed an oratorical attitude and was swinging her bony right arm in rather dangerous proximity to his prominent nose. Then he turned his wrinkled face toward the watery outlook again.

At this moment a half-grown boy, bearing a strong resemblance to Absalom, came hurrying into the shed, shaking the moisture from his clothing like a huge dog just emerged from a bath.

"Well," said both parents, in a breath, "I thought ye was 'helpin' Si Wallace finish off his tie-up."

"So I was," returned the youthful Strong. "But ye see the Widder Nason's cow slipped on the ice an' hurt her so's she couldn't get up, an' Si' he went an' helped get her into the barn. There wa'n't any money in it, an' so I am home. Guess she'll lose the cow."

"Massy sake; it's all the cow they've got. What'll she do now," said Absalom as his son ceased speaking.

"'Taint nothin' to you how she gits along, Ab Strong," broke in Polly with considerable show of spirit. "Ef you're agoin' to carry all their burdens where do ye s'pose we'll end our days?"

"I hain't carryin' their burdens, am I?" retorted Absalom. "Can't I be sorry if they're in trouble?"

"Of course y' can be sorry, but y're al'ays a givin' away somethin'. Last spring ye give Pete Jones a pig——"

"'Twas a runt, an' wa'n't wuth raisin'," interrupted the more charitably disposed husband, but Polly was not silenced.

"An' then ye give away a calf last fall an'——"

"That calf, ye know, was half sick, an' the feed he'd eat was wuth mor'n he'd be in the spring. So I didn't lose nothin' on him," again interposed Absalom.

Polly's teeth came together with a vicious snap. "See here now, Ab, don't ye stop me again. Y're al'ays a doin' somethin' of that sort. You let Bill Taylor have seed oats last spring; you let old man Matthews have seed potatoes an' I don't know who ye didn't help. P'raps ye think they'll build a monument over ye when y'r dead. 'Twon't be nothin' more'n a slab stuck up in the poorhouse buryin'-ground."

Absalom was somewhat vanquished. For a few moments he held his peace, then he ventured to utter a few extenuating words.

"Taylor gin me a bill o' sale of his hoss, an' Matthews let me have s'curity on his sheep, an' they both paid me a good int'rest."

"S'pos'n the hoss'n sheep'd a died," snifted Polly, where d'y'a's'curity a been? I tell ye, Absalom Strong, y're on the road to the poorhouse," and the irate mistress of the house turned away, apparently disgusted at the lack of thrift displayed by her partner.

"It don't seem as though I'm so ter'ble careless of money an' tender hearted," mused Absalom—"though when I foreclosed an' turned Jake Smith off'n his place I couldn't sleep for some time. I'd a right to; the law was on my side; but I had money enough, though Polly was determined. Lucky I did it, though, 'cause the property riz to more'n twice what 'twas wuth before, so that I sold it an' made most a thousand dollars clean profit.

Absalom muttered these words over to himself, and somehow they caused a pang to shoot through his not altogether callous heart. Before his eyes rose a vision of a pale-faced weary man, harassed by creditors, burdened with a sick family, seemingly a mere foot-ball of fate, and then he strove to quiet his uneasy conscience again.

"S'posen the land had fallen off an' hadn't riz, wouldn't I a lost! Didn't I have to take my chances?" but the specter would not down.

He went into the kitchen where Polly was preparing for Christmas, which time-honored holiday was only a couple of days distant: She put the rolling-pin away and dusted the flour from her hands. "How did that contract read about haulin' the bark?" she asked.

"Well," returned Absalom, dropping into a chair and cowering down as though the subject were a very painful one, "I wuz to have it all hauled by the middle of January."

"Wa'n't there a forfeit?" sharply queried the wife.

"Yes, there wuz," he returned, somewhat reluctantly. "I wuz to pay $200 ef it wa'n't delivered by that time. But I don't b'lieve Mr. Case'll make me pay it."

He shifted uneasily in his chair and she went on about her work. She turned to him again in a few moments.

"You didn't lose nothin' on that Smith place, anyway," she said, as though she did not consider him as altogether deficient in shrewdness. "'Twas a mightly lucky thing for you that the railroad was put through; it jest helped you out."

He made no answer. He felt himself to be the weaker vessel, and he arose and went out to attend to some chores. The next day it cleared off, and Christmas came as fair and smiling as could be desired, though the ground lacked that fleecy covering without which the holiday seemed unnatural in the Pine Tree State.

Early in the forenoon a black-robed figure came up to the door of Absalom Strong's domicile; a tremulous knock sounded upon the panel, and the man of the house ushered in the Widow Nason.

She threw back her veil, while Mr. Strong chewed his shaggy whiskers and waited. At length she spoke:

"I know this is not an altogether proper day to come on a business errand; but I heard that you had a cow that you wished to sell—one that would give milk all winter. My cow was injured so that she died."

"So I heered," returned Absalom, drumming on the window-pane with his fingers; "I did have one that I thought some of sellin'; but I think I'll keep her; she's the best creeter for milk I ever see."

"I am sorry; I had hoped that you would let me have one, and give me time to pay for it. My oldest boy will work away from home this winter if the weather gets cold enough and snow comes. Then you couldn't really let me have her?" There was a pleading earnestness in the woman's voice that moved the man more than he would have deemed possible.

"I would like to accommerdate ya," he began, and then Polly stalked into the room.

"Absalom Strong," she said, grimly, "don't ye go an' make a fool of y'rself agin. It's flyin' into the face of Providence to take such resks as you do." Then she turned to Mrs. Nason. "Ain't you able to work; can't ye find nothin' to do?"

The pale face of the woman flushed. "I suppose I can," she answered. "I have been helping Mr. Smith's folks. His wife and children are miserable; and I helped them what time I had to spare."

"Didn't they pay ye nothin'?" queried Polly.

"I suppose they would have paid me," returned the other; "but Mr. Smith is all worn out, and is not able to work now himself; so I must wait for my pay."

"Is't Jake Smith?" asked Absalom, who had been listening to the conversation.

"Yes, sir," answered Mrs. Nason.

Mr. Strong wriggled about in his chair. "I'm sorry fer Jake," he muttered.

A sharp gleam came into the eyes of Polly, and, as the widow arose and left the house, she whispered to her husband: "Don't be an old fool."

Absalom was about to reply, but at this moment wagon wheels rattled over the icy road and a man drew rein at his door. It was Mr. Case, with whom he had made the bark-hauling contract.

"Well," said the owner of the tannery, as he was ushered into the unpretentious sitting-room, "I came to see about that bark business."

Again Absalom Strong became uneasy, this time with more reason than before, as he well knew that, judging from present appearances, he would be unable to fill his contract. But he waited in silence for the other to make known his errand.

Mr. Case seemed at a loss for words. At length he broke the silence: "You haven't done much toward hauling the bark yet, have you?"

"No, I hain't," answered Absalom.

"What I wanted to ask was whether or no you wouldn't like to throw up the job."

Absalom was about to jump at the offer when Mrs. Strong stopped him with an imperative gesture.

"What do you want the job throwed up for?" she asked, as her husband closed his cavernous mouth without speaking.

"Well, I'll tell you," answered Mr. Case a little nervously, for he did not fancy the intervention of the sharp-featured woman, "my tannery was burned last night, and I am thinking of building next spring and summer in a different place, and so I should like to have the bark lie where it is till next winter. It's well piled up and can be easily covered. I am thinking of building quite near to where the main body of the bark is."

Mrs. Strong eyed him shrewdly. "Ef Absalom hadn't a done as he agreed, you would a made him pay $200 forfeit. Now you want to throw up the bargain, an' you don't say nothin' of payin' him any forfeit."

The visitor drew down his brow sharply. "I thought perhaps he would like to cancel the agreement," he said, slowly. "The season is very backward about hauling; he has been to no expense so far, and I didn't know but that it might be to his advantage to do so."

Again Absalom essayed to speak, but once more Polly enforced silence. "It's all terrib'le nice an' smooth when it's a goin' to benefit you," she said, in a decisive voice, "but ef the boot wuz on t'other foot you wouldn't be so willin'. Now, Absalom," she said, turning to her husband, "don't ye let him off onless he pays ye; make him gin ye at least one hundred dollars."

Mr. Case redened with anger, while poor Mr. Strong looked first at his scheming wife and then at his visitor.

"I thought I made this bargain with a man and not with a woman," retorted the latter, but Polly, nothing daunted, interrupted him.

"Ef you an' him did have the doin' of it, I've got something to say about the ondoin' of it, an' Ab Strong won't take a cent less'n than one hundred dollars for throwin' up the contract."

Poor Absalom was powerless. The iron grip of fate was upon him, and he uttered no sound. But with Mr. Case it was different. He arose quickly to his feet, jammed his hat unceremoniously upon his head and made for the door. With his hand upon the latch he turned and said:

"I beg pardon for making any propositions whatever. Let the contract stand as it is, and, if the bark is not delivered at the time specified, I shall enforce the payment of the forfeit."

Absalom endeavored to expostulate, but the irate Mr. Case would listen to nothing further. He hurried out, sprang into his carriage and drove rapidly away without turning his head.

Absalom Strong was nearly choking with anger toward his wife, and for the time being, at least, their relative positions were changed. "Who's the fool now?" he cried, fiercely, stamping about in a towering rage. "Ef you'd held y're tongue I'd a got ont o' that scrape mighty easy. Now I'll have to pay that two hundred dollars sure's fate," and he ground his teeth savagely.

"I think there's sech a thing as drawin' the string a leetle too tight," he continued, as Polly sat in silence, for once at a loss what to say, "an' I'm goin' to turn over a new leaf this blessed Christmas. The Widder Nason shell have a cow an' pay me when she gets able; an' I'm goin' to do the fair thing by poor Jake Smith, too, see if I don't. This grindin', an' pinchin', an' screwin' the last copper out of poor onfortunits I'm done with. I'm sick on't."

"What do you mean by doin' the right thing by Jake Smith?" questioned Polly, as Absalom ceased speaking, though he kept up his walking to and fro.

"I'll tell ye some other time," ejaculated that worthy, looking at the huge old clock that ticked solemnly in the corner. "It's most ten o'clock," he said, an' I'm agoin' now, afore I git hard-hearted agin," and he left the house with the look of a man who is burdened with a weighty mission.

Polly Strong sat as one in a dream. She heard Absalom's voice as he spoke to the stolid old farm horse, and then she looked from the window and watched him till he disappeared from sight.

A short drive brought him to the Widow Nason's. He left the horse standing before the house and applied his knuckles to the door. He could not have told, for the life of him, whether it was indignation at his wife or a desire to do good, but be it either he felt a strange satisfaction in pursuing his present course.

"Is y'r mother in?" he asked of a little girl who answered his knock.

"Tell her to come to the door," he continued, as the child made an affirmative answer, and then as the widow appeared he said hastily:

"Mrs. Nason, I've been thinkin' that over, an' you can have that cow, an' pay me when yer git ready. I don't want nothin' to show for it."

Without waiting to hear her thanks he clambered into his wagon and clucked vigorously to his horse. Turning around in the wagon after he had gone a little distance he muttered as he looked back:

"Darned ef it don't make a man feel good to do a thing o' that sort, arter all."

Then he drove along in silence till he arrived at the poverty-stricken home of Jacob Smith. Somehow his cheerfulness deserted him as he got out of his antiquated vehicle and approached the door. He had not met the unfortunate Mr. Smith since the time he had been compelled to relinquish his home some months before, and the thought of coming face to face with him now was not pleasing, even though he brought cheering news to the inmates of the household.

His low rap was answered by a hollow eyed cadaverous man, who looked almost fiercely into the rugged face of his hitherto tight-fisted neighbor.

"I suppose I must ask you in," said the careworn man as Mr. Strong nodded to him, "but I can't say that you're welcome."

"Shouldn't wonder ef I wasn't," returned Absalom, whose courage returned now the ice was broken, and he followed his not overcordial host into the house.

A sick woman lay upon a bed, a couple of puny children, with pinched, prematurely-old faces, played wearily with some blocks before the fire, while an older girl was doing the housework as well as her youth and lack of strength would allow.

Absalom Strong looked carefully around the room. There was nothing of Christmas cheer visible, and then he attempted to make known the object of his visit.

"Now Jake—Mr. Smith—I come over here to-day to see ef I couldn't sorter lift you up a leetle, 'cause I knowed you wuz cast down, an' this is Christmas when every man orter try an' make some one happy."

It was the first speech of the kind Mr. Strong had ever attempted, and he was agreeably surprised at his own fluency, while Jacob Smith, after his first start of astonishment at such words from Absalom Strong, fell to wondering whether it was some half-starved goose or attenuated turkey that the close-handed farmer had brought to commemorate the sacred holiday.

"Look here now, Jake," continued the newly awakened man, "I want to do the fair thing by you about that farm business. Business is business, of course, but I sold the place at a ter'ble good figger, an' you'd orter git some benefits as well as me."

Jacob Smith nodded, while visions of such munificent sums as five or ten, or possibly twenty-five dollars, rose before his mind's eye,

"Everybody says I'm tight an' graspin an' mean," Absalom Strong went on "but I'm agoin' to try an' do the right thing by you. I made one thousand dollars slick an' clean out o' that farm, an' may I be roasted of I don't give you every cent of it."

Jacob Smith could not credit his senses. "Why," he gasped, "I never considered the place worth more than one thousand dollars."

"I know, but I got eighteen hundred dollars, an' my mortgage, all told, wuz only eight hundred dollars. You shall have the money to-morrow," and without waiting to hear a word of thanks, he quitted the house and once more betook himself homeward.

It was somewhat after noon when he arrived, and the well-cooked goose was growing cold, but Absalom Strong had never felt so happy before in his life. As he drew his chair up to the table he told Polly what he had done.

"You're a fool," commented the frugal housewife; and the husband smiled, if such a distortion of the face could be called a smile, as he answered:

"I wish I'd a been a fool long ago." And then he added as he looked from the window, "This is what ye' call a green Christmas. I think I'll keep its memory green as long as I live."

Mr. Case somehow got wind of Absalom's generosity, and did not insist on the payment of the forfeit, though Mr. Strong never hauled another load of the bark.

But Absalom is a different man. and even Polly has evinced at certain times a slight show of generosity, or perhaps symptoms of this commendable virtue would suit the case better.—*J. W. Davidson, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.*

AN OLD-TIME CHRISTMAS.

The Feastings, Games and Pastimes of Three Hundred Years Ago.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this whole season was given up to revels and jollity, in which eating and drinking had a prominent part. In London in the fifteenth century the first duty of the Lord Mayor and corporation was to dine, and then go, as soberly as might be, to the Church of St. Thomas Acon, and sit through the whole service. On other festival days and Sundays they had a habit of skipping out after the prayers were under way, but on Christmas they were bound to set an example of perseverance. Service over, their worships rode on horseback, by torch-light, through the market of Chepe and back to the church, where, being in a liberal frame of mind on account of the day and the good dinner, they made a money offering to the church. Each man contributed the magnificent sum of one penny to its treasury! This duty done, they returned to their own houses, and made more or less a night of it, after the immemorial manner of good city fathers, in private, the custom not having yet arisen of manifesting happiness by "painting the town red." We read a good deal about the excess of the Christmas dinners. Sir John Reresby in his memoirs makes a penitential note of a dinner at Thyrberg in 1681: "The Earl of Huntington, my Lord Ellend, and some others dined with me, when we ended the year in more than an ordinary debauch; which, God forgive me! it being neither my custom nor inclination much to do so." The next year there was at table a "Mr. Bolton, an ingenious clergyman, but too much a good fellow." The good fellows liked Thyrberg; during the holidays as many as forescore gentlemen and yeomen, with their wives, dined daily at the hall.

Christmas was always a democratic festival; all classes mingled in the games and merriment, and hospitality was universal. An English gentleman in the country, on Christmas Day in the morning, had all his tenants and neighbors enter the hall by daybreak. The strong beer was broached, and the black-jacks went plentifully round, with toast, sugar, nutmeg, and good Cheshire cheese. The great sausage (the Hackin) must be boiled at daybreak, and if it failed to be ready, two young men must take the maiden (i. e., the cook) by the arm and run her round the market-place till she was ashamed of her laziness. The maids had, however, some privileges of retort. In some places in Oxfordshire it was the custom for the maid-servant to ask the man for ivy to dress the house, and if the man refused or neglected to fetch the ivy, the maid stole a pair of his breeches and nailed them up to the gate in the garden or highway. During the festival days the tables were perpetually spread; the sirloin of beef, the minced-pie, the plum-porridge, turkeys, geese and plum-puddings, were all brought upon the board at once, and every one ate heartily and was welcome, so that the proverb originated of "'Tis merry in hall when beards wag all." The gentlemen went to early service in the church, and returned to breakfast on brawn and mustard and malmsey. Brawn was a dish of great antiquity. It was made from the flesh of large boars which lived in a half-wild-state, and when put to fatten were strapped and belted tight round the carcass, in order to make the flesh become dense and brawny. It came to market in rolls two feet long by ten inches in diameter, packed in wicker baskets. At dinner the first course served was the boar's head, on a silver platter, adorned with bays and rosemary, carried into the hall with much state, preceded by the Master of Revels, and followed by choristers and minstrels singing and playing compositions in its honor. A stanza of a common carol sung was this:

"Then sett downe the swineyard,
The foe to the vineyard,
Lett Bacchus crown his fall;
Lett this boare' head and mustard
Stand for pigg, goose and custard,
And so you are welcome all."

Another dish, common to Shakespeare's day, which added at least to the show of the feast, was the "stately pye," that is, a peacock or pheasant pie. In the days of chivalry the knights took their vows at a solemn feast, on presentation of a roasted peacock in a golden dish. This custom was kept up at Christmas by the bringing in on the most magnificent dish the house could afford, of a peacock in a pie, preserving as much as possible the form of the bird, with the head elevated above the crust, the beak richly gilt, and the beautiful tail spread out to its full extent. It was from this superb dish that the oath came, "By cock and pye, sir." At the supper two servants attended, bearing fair torches of wax next before the musicians and the trumpeters, and they stood above the fire (the fire of seacoal being originally in the midde of the room) with the musicians till the first course was served, when they retired, with the music, to the buttery. After supper, as well as before, there were revels and dancing during the twelve days of Christmas, and games in which all classes joined. One of the favorite games was known as snapdragon. Brandy was set on fire and raisins thrown into it. The diversion consisted of adventures to pluck out the raisins. The Master of the Revels sang a song or carol, in which the gentlemen took part at his command.

The requisites for good Christmas fare were plenty of good drink, a blazing fire in the hall, brawn, pudding and souse, and mustard with all (mustard is your great provoker of a noble thirst), beef, mutton and pork, shred or mince pies of the best, pig, veal, goose, capon, turkey, cheese, apples and nuts, with jolly carols. When the company tired of games and romping sports, it gathered about the ruddy fire, and had tales of legendary lore, adventures of knights and ladies and friars, of strange apparitions and ghosts, of coaches on lonely moors drawn by a team of headless horses driven by a headless coachman, with graveyard passengers, of wonderful portents in nature, stories of true love wrapped in mystery and ending in grief, and all sorts of ghostly reminiscences, which seemed as real as the dancing shadows which the light of the Yule-log cast upon the dusky timbers of the hall. Such tales, we read, formed principal part of the rural conversation at all such assemblies as this at Christmas-time.—*Charles Dudley Warner in Harper's Magazine.*

Riding Double.

Mr. Russell, a famous M. F. H. in the west of England, was on one occasion running a fox in a wild and unfrequented part of his country, when, on account of a strong wind and deep cover, he had for a short time lost all sound of the pack. Suddenly he overtook a miller, who, having tied his donkey, with his sack of flour, to a hedge, was joining the chase and running for his life. "Have you seen or heard the hounds?" said Russell, in a hurry. "Yes, sir," said the miller; "they're just afore, running like bells; don't ye hear 'm?" "Jump up," said Russell; "my horse shall carry us both as far as he can;" and he actually carried the miller behind him till the fox was killed. Mr. Russell would rather have one sportsman out with him than twenty fine gentlemen who put on the scarlet coat merely for the love of the fashion.—*Nimrod.*

FARM AND FIRESIDE.

—Poultry houses should be so cleaned that when entering them at night not the slightest odor should be detected.

—The potatoes from whole seed ripened nine days earlier than those from cut potatoes at the Ohio experimental station.—*Cleveland Leader.*

—When a cow holds up her milk, says the *Farm Journal*, tie her calf near by while milking, or give her something to eat. The idea is to divert her attention while being milked.

—Almond Cake: Three eggs, two cups sugar, one cup sour milk, one teaspoonful soda, one-half cup of butter, two and one-third cups flour. Bake in pie-tin.—*Toledo Blade.*

—Peach and plum pits should not be planted in the fall, as many of them will germinate if allowed to remain out all winter. It is better to keep them in doors until spring, then crack and plant very early.—*Troy Times.*

—White Cake: Two coffee cups of sugar; one coffee cup of butter; the whites of four eggs; one coffee cup of cold water; three and a half coffee cups of flour, with three teaspoons of baking powder. Beat the butter until light, add sugar and stir well, then add whites of eggs (not beaten) and beat well all together; add the cold water, then flour and baking powder.—*The Household.*

—An exchange says that rocky forest land had better be kept in woods until the rest of the farm is in the highest possible state of cultivation. There are millions of acres of poor land partly cultivated that ought never to have been cleared off. Of that which is plowed not one acre in 1,000 is made to produce half as much as it would produce if thoroughly tilled and wisely fertilized.

—So long as a stone is not too large to be turned in the furrow, or pass between the harrow-teeth, it is a benefit to the soil. It is merely a solid fragment which gradually weathers away and is constantly furnishing fertility as the rain and frost crumble it down. Hence to pick a field clear of these "incumbrances" is to deprive it of a source of constantly accruing plant-food—potash, lime, phosphoric acid and other valuable mineral matter.—*New York Tribune.*

—Raised Loaf Cake: One cup of butter, three and one-half cups of sugar, one cup of lard, seven cups of flour, one cup of yeast, two eggs, one pint of milk, one small pinch of soda, one-fourth pound of citron. Warm the milk, then add half the flour, and one cup of shortening, one cup of sugar and the cup of yeast. Let this stand three or four hours. Then take the remainder with spice and raisins, and mix all together. Let it stand in a warm place over night. Just before putting into the pans add the soda and citron.—*Boston Globe.*

—The *Country Gentleman* says: "Sometime between now and next spring every owner of a plum orchard or apricot tree should insert in the trunk, or if the tree is large, into each main limb, an iron plug to strike on with a heavy hammer for jarring down the curculios. The plugs may be easily and cheaply made by a blacksmith, by chopping up a round iron rod, say three-eighths of an inch in diameter and three inches long; and then set in holes bored in the tree an inch or two deep. A blow on one of these plugs will bring down every curculio, upon sheets to be spread under the trees.

PORK-MAKING.

The Secret of Making It Profitable—Some Good Advice.

The prevailing opinion expressed by Western New York farmers, at a recent meeting of the Farmers' Club at Rochester, was opposed to the old-time practice of wintering our shoats and butchering them a year or a year and a half old. The practice favored is to have pigs littered in the spring by old breeding sows, of improved breed, and butchered before the first of the next January. This practice is based on the belief that swine feeding pays best which keeps the animals growing rapidly from birth to butcher's block.

One member, who had practiced different method for some twenty years, explained his system. He planned to have a portion of the pigs littered early in the spring, in order to have some ready to kill at ten months. Others were littered in June, when cow's milk is plentiful on the farm and there is good pasture. The June litter he kept in thriving condition the first season and through the winter. The next summer he allowed them the run of pasture, with milk and slops, fattening in the autumn, when they would average in weight about four hundred pounds.

The secretary of the club, an advocate for the practice of having pigs littered in the spring, advised feeding the pigs for the first six months on clover, peas, middlings and skim milk and other feed in which the albuminoids predominate, the leading object during these months being the rapid making of muscle and bone rather than laying on of fat. A good clover-pasture with milk and mill-feed promotes rapid growth until midsummer, when gleanings of the wheat stubble, a crop of field peas and the like carries them on until the first of October, when the final fattening process begins. At that season, the secretary believed that no other food makes good solid pork faster than old corn-meal cooked. Whether it always pays to grind and cook the corn is another question.

The president's experience had led him to believe that pork can be made more rapidly on cooked barley-meal than on corn-meal. A member reported successful results with a feed of oats and barley mixed with corn-meal. His observation had been that old hogs thrive better on corn-meal alone, while younger animals require a change of food.

The members agreed that the state of the market is an important factor in deciding the most profitable time to butcher and sell. The opinion was, however, very generally expressed that it does not pay to hold the pigs very long after extreme cold weather begins. Unless the animals are warmly housed considerable loss of flesh occurs, for the fat-forming ingredients are expended in keeping up the vital heat.—*N. Y. World.*

Cheap Food.

We have heard of potato crops ten tons of sound roots to the acre, and if wheat at thirty to thirty-three shillings is only three farthings per pound, "the vegetable bread of potatoes" is yet much cheaper. On bread and potatoes the Englishman now could almost, if the diet would content him, rival the East Indian living upon rice; as regards cheapness, the rations costing three pence or two pounds of bread, and the balance laid out in potatoes and salt butter, would maintain health and strength. Cheapness then prevails in Europe, at least as regards the prime necessaries of food. Cheapness of meat is only at present dangled before the public in the promises of New Zealand and other mutton. Home-bred stock that come to market demand one shilling per pound for their cost, as against wheaten flour at a penny. Twelve hundred per cent is a wide difference between bread and meat! However, even at present prices the wheat and flour markets keep very dull.—*London Spectator.*

—There is much smuggling from Mexico into the United States.—*N. Y. Sun.*

Beef.

Beef is cut up and the parts are named as follows: The slaughtered ox is first "quartered," that is, cut the four parts after the hide has been removed, each quarter comprising a leg and that portion of the flesh immediately connected with it. The fore quarter is divided into the "rattle," the better part of the fore quarter, and the back; and the "chuck," the neck flesh of the animal, and the poorest beef, used frequently for stews and pie-meat, is cut from the back. The rattle is much better than the back on account of its not having the coarse tissue and toughness of that part, and is near the belly of the animal. The hind-quarter, which is sometimes very incorrectly called the "hind shoulder," is the mealiest portion of the flesh. It is divided into the round, furtherest down the leg, the rump just above it, and the loin or sirloin, extending from the hip to the rib and including and covering by a slightly coarser grade of meat, the precious tenderloin, the pride of luxury, and considered the finest bit of beef. The round is, of course, much less tender than the rump, being further down the limb, and the rump is yet less delicate than the loin.—*Stockman.*

One Cent.

Boys have now a new reason to save their pennies. At the sale of Professor Anthon's collection of coins some days since, a cent of the coinage of 1792 brought $77.50. This precious cent was coined under the direction of Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State, to whom Congress gave the matter in charge in 1791. It was debated for some time whether the United States should make its own coins or have them made abroad, and Mr. Jefferson being consulted, gave it as his opinion that coinage was "an attribute sovereignty" which ought to be delegated. Congress having adopted his view of the subject, he sent to Europe for workmen and set up a small mint at Philadelphia.

At that period no copper was mined in America, nor were our inexhaustible stores of this metal known to exist. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, had to import his copper, and this valuable cent was made of part of the first lot received. Any careful boy can begin a modest coin collection, which, in his old age, may be worth much more than its weight in gold.—*N. Y. Ledger.*

A Hardware Sto'.

Last spring while I was on my way to the "Mardi Gras" we stopped at a village restaurant for dinner. A gentleman desired to take a cup of tea into the train for a sick lady. "No!" yelled the proprietor, "you can't take no cups out o' yere."

"But it is for a lady who is too ill to come in."

"Don't make no difference," was the reply; "no cups kin go out o' yere."

"I'll pay you for one," persisted the gentleman, producing a dollar bill.

"We don't sell cups," was the sneering answer. "D'ye think we keep a hardware sto'?"

"Judging from this," said the man, who balanced one of the doughy sandwiches in his hand and looked at it critically, "I should suppose you did!"

The passengers set up a mighty shout of laughter and approval, but nevertheless the man did not get off with the cup of tea, and the invalid lady's thirst remained unquenched.—*Southern Manufacturer.*

Making it Even.

The Duke of Wellington got a letter once from a lady saying that she was soliciting subscriptions for a certain church in which she was interested, and had taken the liberty to put him down for £200, and hoped he would promptly send her a check for that amount. He forthwith replied that he was glad she thought so well of him; certainly he would respond to the call; but he, too, was interested in a certain church which needed subscriptions, and, counting upon his correspondent's well-known liberality, he had put her down for £200, "and so," he concluded, "no money need pass between us."—*Exchange.*

—A Crow who was bitterly complaining that the coming winter had deprived him of the opportunity of scratching for corn was overheard by the Rat, who said: "But you must remember that it is only after the farmer gets his corn in the crib that I have any show at all." "Winter is my enemy," put in the Hare, "because it leaves my tracks in the snow to be followed." "And only for that," added the Dog, "I'm afraid I should not taste of hare once a year." Moral—Dame Nature realized that she couldn't satisfy everybody and she didn't try to.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—There are now six different persons in Chicago in the business of making artificial dimples, and you can't walk a block in that city without some woman will dimple at you in the meltingest manner.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—It has been recently shown that flying fish do not fly at all, their wings and tail being employed merely to sustain their owner while he is in the air. The wings produce a curved compression in the water from twelve to fifteen inches apart, while the tail produces almost no effect save that of a propelling force. After the fish leaves the water both wings and tail are rigid, and so remain until the fish falls back by its own weight.—*Chicago Times.*

—Cat breeding has become an industry, as the skins can be used to line cloaks.

THE MARKETS.

CINCINNATI, December 22, 1884.

LIVE STOCK—Cattle-Common	$1 50	@ 2 50
Choice Butchers	4 00	@ 4 75
HOGS—Common	3 40	@ 3 90
Good packers	4 20	@ 4 40
SHEEP—Good to choice	3 50	@ 4 25
FLOUR—Family	3 10	@ 3 50
GRAIN—Wheat-Longberry		@ 75
No. 2 red	74	@ 75
Corn—No. 2 mixed		@ 41
Oats—No. 2 mixed		@ 28
Rye—No. 2		@ 54½
HAY—Timothy No. 1	10 50	@11 50
HEMP—Double dressed	9 00	@ 9 25
PROVISIONS—Pork—Mess	11 50	@11 75
Lard—Prime steam		@ 6 62½
BUTTER—Fancy Dairy	18	@ 20
Prime Creamery	25	@ 28
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES—		
Potatoes, per barrel	1 50	@ 1 60
Apples, prime, per barrel	1 75	@ 2 00
NEW YORK.		
FLOUR—State and Western	$3 30	@ 2 80
Good to Choice	3 60	@ 5 50
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2 Chicago		@ 82
No. 2 red		@ 81¼
Corn—No. 2 mixed	47	@ 55½
Oats—mixed	32	@ 34
PORK—Mess	12 25	@12 50
LARD—Western steam		@ 6 97½
CHICAGO.		
FLOUR—State and Western	$3 75	@ 4 50
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2 red		@ 73½
No. 2 Chicago Spring	70⅝	@ 71¼
Corn—No. 2	36⅝	@ 37¼
Oats—No. 2	24⅝	@ 24¾
Rye		@ 52
PORK—Mess	10 70	@10 75
LARD—Steam	6 55	@ 6 57½
BALTIMORE.		
FLOUR—Family	$3 50	@ 4 50
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2	78	@ 78¼
Corn—mixed	47⅛	@ 48
Oats—mixed	31	@ 32
PROVISIONS—Pork—Mess		@13 00
Lard—Refined		@ 8½
INDIANAPOLIS.		
Wheat—No. 2 red	$	@ 74
Corn—mixed		@ 35
Oats—mixed		@ 26
LOUISVILLE.		
Flour—A No. 1	$4 15	@ 4 35
GRAIN—Wheat—No. 2 red		@ 78
Corn—mixed		@ 39
Oats—mixed		@ 28¼
PORK—mess		@12 00
LARD—steam		@ 8⅛

A Faithful Preacher.

Rev. N. T. Allen, of Groton, is a Baptist minister of the old school. He is about sixty-six years of age, yet as vigorous as many who have not attained half that age. He performed a pretty good day's work Sunday. He left his home in the morning and walked to Upper Mystic, a distance of seven miles, where he preached in the Baptist church at 10:45. He participated in the Sunday-school exercises at twelve o'clock, and administered the Lord's Supper at one o'clock. He then rode three miles for dinner, and returned to the church and preached at seven o'clock in the evening. At the close of this meeting he started for his home on foot. His walking time was about five hours, two hours and a half each way. The severe rain storm of Saturday night caused the road to be very muddy and in some places badly washed. He arose this morning at four o'clock, as usual, and in fine condition to repeat the work of the previous day, if occasion required.—*New London Telegram.*

—The weather-table of the London *Times* shows that the great city had but five and a half hours of sunshine during the entire week ended November 20.

MR. I. CARPENTER, 463 Fourth avenue, New York, after running a gauntlet of eight years' rheumatism, used St. Jacobs Oil, the great pain reliever, by which he was entirely cured and has had no return of his complaint.

A BOSTON girl never calls an iceberg an "iceberg." Oh, no! She always speaks of it as "a floating aggregation of tangible frigidity."—*N. Y. Herald.*

Loss of Flesh and Strength,

with poor appetite, and perhaps slight cough in morning, or on first lying down at night, should be looked to in time. Persons afflicted with consumption are proverbially unconscious of their real state. Most cases commence with disordered liver, leading to bad digestion and imperfect assimilation of food—hence the emaciation, or wasting of the flesh. It is a form of scrofulous disease, and is curable by the use of that greatest of all blood-cleansing