

Patience.

Were there no night we could not read the stars,
The heavens would turn into a blinding glare;
From its best seen through the prison bars,
And rough seas make the haven passing fair.

We cannot measure joys but by their loss;
When blessings fade away, we see them then;
Our richest clusters grow around the cross,
And in the night-time angles sing to men.

The seed must first be buried deep in earth,
Before the lily opens to the sky;
So "light is sown," and gladness has its birth
In the dark depths where we can only cry.

"Life out of death" is heaven's unwritten law;
Nay, it is written in a myriad forms;
The victor's palm grows on the fields of war,
And strength and beauty are the fruit of storms.

Come then, my soul, be brave to do and bear;
Thy life is bruised that it may be more sweet
The cross will soon be left, the crown we'll wear—
Nay, we will cast it at our Savior's feet.

And up among the glories never told,
Sweeter than music of the marriage bell,
Our hands will strike the vibrant harps of gold
To the glad song, "He doeth all things well."

[Sunday Magazine.]

The Hole in the Floor.

The life-object of Seth Grovner and Susan, his wife, was to amass property. It had been their aim since their wedded existence, which now counted fifteen years, and was still cherished as the dearest wish of their hearts. No change was made except it would hasten the desired consummation of this long-nurtured hope; no outlay was ventured upon unless it promised existence in the hoarding of money. Not a day's respite had the one from unceasing application to business; not an hour passed that the other was not planning some new way to save dollars and cents.

In such an atmosphere of eager grasp for property, it would be strange had their children escaped the infection. Their little faces brightened at the sight of a penny, not that it would procure sweetmeats, but because it would add another to their store of coins; and the small hand grasped it with as instinctive and keen a pleasure as an aged miser clutches his gold. The oft-repeated parental injunction "A penny saved is a penny earned" fell upon the childish ears, but childish wisdom applied the maxim; the confectioner and fruit-vender were rarely called upon by the young Grovners—the seed was taking root.

Mr. and Mrs. Grovner had nothing to give away. Poverty was rudely repulsed; misfortune, in the garb of despondency, met with rebuke instead of sympathy; sorrow, in the persons of mourning widows and fatherless children, vainly sought words of consolation and a helping hand; the kindly voice of pity, and the whisperings of charity, were unheard by ears inaccessible save to the hints of frugality, the suggestions of economy, or the promptings of prudence. Ah, little do the unfortunate gain from those making haste to be rich!

Reading, the cheapest of luxuries, Mr. Grovner thought too expensive to be encouraged. Books cost money, and newspapers couldn't be had for nothing, even if there wasn't any postage on them. When he was rich he would have a library worth showing. His wife had no social intercourse with her friends and neighbors, visits took time, and if she attended parties, she would be expected to give them. That would not do; so she remained at home, mind and body absorbed in the one paramount idea. Did either feel a lingering desire to listen to the notes of some lauded singer, or the eloquence of a distinguished lecturer, the price of tickets of admission softened disappointment and made the sacrifice seem less.

The Grovner children were never permitted to leave the dusty, crowded city for a day in the woods with their companions. The fare back and forth was not to be disregarded; and an excursion of this nature was inevitably attended with more or less torn clothes. Money was always the mother's inducement; a promise of three or four cents each made the little men bear the privation heroically. Ah, nature is a better teacher than a mother whose idol is gold! One opens the heart to kindly influence, makes it more susceptible to genial impressions, quickens brotherly love, and brings the creature nearer the Creator; the other blunts the sensibilities, clogs the springs of benevolence, clogs the aspiring spirit, making it insensible to a loftier sentiment than the love of gain. Are there no other Mrs. Grovners?

None of the family attended church, for pew-rent was an item, and a minister's tax not an unimportant consideration. If preaching and good example cost nothing, they would have availed themselves of their benefits, but as it was, parents and children were "a law unto themselves." Their living was of the plainest possible kind, and quantity was studied as closely as quality. None of the Grovners were afflicted with gout or dyspepsia if their palates were never regaled by dainty dishes.

Mr. Seth and Mrs. Susan were threatened with a dire calamity, in the shape of a visit from an elderly relative who had troubled them but once since their marriage. A letter had been received, avowing his intention to become better acquainted with his nephew and niece. They knew little about him, save that he was a childless old man, rather odd in his ways, and burdened with but a small portion of this world's goods. Yet this much was certain: his stay with them would be attended with great inconvenience, and expensive—and the last reflection was the most annoying of all.

His appearance was not an event of rejoicing on the part of the host and hostess; the respectable-looking old gentleman missed the hearty welcome he had promised himself. They were polite, but not cordial, attentive, but cold and distant, meeting his familiar advances with that indifferent reserve so chilling and discouraging. The children had been sent off to bed as soon as tea was over, and the three sat stiffly about the cold stove, Mrs. Grovner glancing now and then to the clock on the mantelpiece.

"Perhaps your uncle would like to retire," she observed to Mr. Seth.

Conversation had flagged for some minutes; it was hard doing all the talking, and Uncle Abel approved the suggestion, though it was scarcely eight o'clock.

"I must confess to fatigue," he said. "I'm not young as I was once, and exertion tires me. I've been accustomed to sleeping in a warm room. If it won't be too much trouble, I'd like a fire kindled for me; old blood feels the chilly nights," he added, apologetically.

Mr. Seth said, "Oh, no!" and Mrs. Susan said, "Certainly not!" but any body could see that their thoughts widely diverged from their words.

The fire was made, and the nephew took a small hand-lamp to light Uncle Abel to his chamber.

"I should prefer this," said the latter, taking a larger one from the shelf near him, "if you have no objections. It holds more oil. I see, and sometimes, when I am restless and can't sleep, I read to induce drowsiness. It won't incommode you very much, I hope?"

Seth said, "No, indeed!" and Susan, "Not in the least!" but mentally their replies were different. Uncle Abel and the largest lamp went up stairs; husband and wife closed the doors for a connubial conference.

"Well!" said the niece.

"What do you think?" said the nephew.

"An assuming old fox!" she exclaimed.

"A confounded bore!" he ejaculated.

"An extra fire, Seth!"

"A lamp to read by, Susan!"

"Meat for dinner!"

"And coffee for breakfast!"

"Will he stay long, do you think?"

"Two or three months, judging from the size and weight of his trunk."

"A pretty bill of expense, truly! And not a dollar to pay his board!"

"Fuel and light, and what he'll eat and drink will put us back a whole year in our calculations. This comes of having relations! I wish I hadn't one in the world! And to think he's nothing but a great uncle!"

This interesting conversation was prolonged some time; but enough has been given a show the feelings of Mr. and Mrs. Grovner in regard to Uncle Abel.

Morning did not mend the measures of the couple, yet the worthy old gentleman was urbane and smiling, seeming not to notice the frigid atmosphere that prevailed. He tried in vain to make the acquaintance of the children, but parental oversight prevented the object in view. It was recollected that they, with a certain class designated as "fools," were said to "tell the truth," and that, in this instance, was not to be spoken.

Uncle Abel's sight was impaired, but he was not so blind that he could not detect dissatisfaction, though in a measure cloaked. His tarry was short at the Grovner mansion; in a week he took leave of his nephew and niece, to their unbounded satisfaction.

"We have done well," they said, "to get rid of him so easily. He might have staid a month."

And Uncle Abel was forgotten in the great struggle to make a fortune.

One year afterward, they heard of his decease by means of the following significant letter, which was found among his private papers, and forwarded to them after his death:

"Nephew and Niece:—When a childless old man crosses your threshold, yearning for love and sympathy, and that care which youth should voluntarily accord to old age, treat him not coldly, begrudge him not the food he eats, the fire that warms him, nor the light that enables him to beguile a lonely midnight hour. And moreover do not forget the hole in the floor. That this advice may benefit you, is the wish of your

"UNCLE ABEL."

"The hole in the floor." What did it mean? Light slowly began to creep into the bewildered brains of Mr. and Mrs. Grovner, revealing a startling truth in every line of the singular epistle before them. They looked at each other in blank dismay in the consciousness that their hypocrisy and littleness had been exposed. A place had been cut in the floor for the admission of a pipe from the stove in the room below. Being early in the season, this pipe had not been adjusted for the winter, and the space was consequently open.

Uncle Abel occupied that chamber and had no difficulty in overhearing every word that had been uttered beneath him by Seth and Mrs. Susan. The hole in the floor had betrayed them. How unfortunate they should have forgotten it! The secret of his short visit was understood. Both were much discomposed that their petty meanness had been brought to light, but were consoled by reflecting that nothing antagonistic to their interest would come of it.

But ah! a great many improbable things transpire in this world. Who would have imagined that Uncle Abel was worth his thousands? Who would suppose that he was in possession of a fortune, called by the initiated "independent." The "assuming old fox" had shown his cunning. Seth and Susan had overreached themselves. In striving to save a penny they had lost a great many pounds. They were Uncle Abel's only surviving relatives, and he had intended making them his heirs.

But alas! the hole in the floor! he had

willed his money to a charitable institution, bequeathing them only the knowledge of their parsimony and self-abasement. Irretrievable mistake—irreparably error! The important object of their lives defeated by a hole in the floor, when set upon the verge of realization.

Drifting Down: A Barcarolle.

Drifting down in the grey-green twilight,
O, the scent of the new-mown hay!
Soft drip the oars in the mystic sky light,
O, the charm of the dying day!
While fading flecks of bright opalescence,
But faintly dapple a saffron sky,
The stream flows on with superb quiescence,
The breeze is hushed to the softest sigh.
Drifting down in the sweet still weather,
O, the fragrance of fair July!
Love, my love, when we drift together,
O, how fleetly the moments fly!

Drifting down on the dear old river,
O, the music that interweaves!
The ripples run and the sedges shiver,
O, the song of the lazy leaves!
And far-off sounds—for the night so clear is—
Awake the echoes of bygone times;
The muffled roar of the distant weir is
Cheered by the clang of the distant chimes.
Drifting down in the cloudless weather,
O, how short is the summer day!
Love, my love, when we drift together,
O, how quickly we drift away!

Drifting down as the night advances,
O, the calm of the starlit skies!
Eyelids droop o'er the half-shy glances,
O, the light in those blue-grey eyes!
A winsome maiden is sweetly singing
A dreamy song in a minor key;
Her clear low voice and its tones are bringing
A mingled melody back to me.
Drifting down in the clear calm weather,
O, how sweet is the maiden's song!
Love, my love, when we drift together,
O, how quickly we drift along!

Fainting Tramps.

"It is all very well to say that tramps are wretches who deserve no help, but I don't believe it. The tramp is a man, or a woman, as the case may be. He is poor, and it stands to reason that he is often hungry and more or less naked. Now I am not going to turn any naked, hungry wretch from my door without feeding him, and if every body would do the same the world would be all the better for it."

These were, in substance, words recently spoken by Mr. Elisha Hawkins, who had just moved into Mooseville, N. Y., and rented Dr. Hallett's new house near the Methodist meeting house. Mr. Hawkins had come from a region in the Northern part of the State where the tramp has not yet penetrated, and he knew nothing of the real character of that pest. Why he took up his residence in Mooseville need not be here set forth, though it might be mentioned that he held a mortgage on Dr. Hallett's house, and had bought it in at a ridiculously low figure under a foreclosure sale. That he was a kind-hearted, unsophisticated old gentleman, was evident to every one who met him, and the Mooseville people were glad that the house, which had so long lacked a tenant, was at last occupied by one who promised to be a respected citizen.

On the second night after Mr. Hawkins had made use of the language herein above quoted, his front-door bell was suddenly rung. It was about nine o'clock in the evening, and Mr. Hawkins was dozing in his chair while his wife was "going over the wash" and laying aside such garments as needed repairing. Mr. Hawkins first wondered to some extent who could be at the front door, and finally decided that if he answered the ring he might perhaps find out. He accordingly took up the lamp and went to the door, whence he hurriedly returned and called his wife to come and help him bring in a poor woman who was either dead or in a faint. Mrs. Hawkins promptly answered the appeal, and with the help of her husband, lifted up a thin and thin-clad woman, who was lying on the front piazza, and carried her to the sitting-room sofa. The woman was pale and unconscious, though a strong, ruddy tint showed that life still lingered in the extremity of her nose. A glass of wine forced between her lips, and her hands and arms were tenderly rubbed. Under these ministrations she gradually regained consciousness just in time to grasp a bottle that was slipping from her pocket, with view of smashing itself on the floor.

The stranger, after wildly calling her "husband," "father," "precious baby," and some more miscellaneous relatives, asked where she was, and why she had not been allowed to die. She then explained that she was a poor but honest woman, whose husband was dead, and whose only child was lying at the point of death at East Venice, the next station on the Mooseville railroad. She was on her way to see her child die, and, having no money, was compelled to walk. She had already walked for fifteen consecutive days, during which time she had eaten nothing but two apples and a raw turnip. The bottle in her pocket contained, as she was told, either whisky or brandy, and had been given to her by a good doctor when she started on her tramp, but her temperance principles did not allow her to taste it, although she had kept it as the gift of a good, kind friend. Imagining that she was about to die, she had rung Mr. Hawkins's front-door bell, in order to ask leave to die on his piazza, but his kindness had so revived her that she felt strong enough to reach East Venice if some one would only give her fifty cents wherewith to pay her car fare. Mr. Hawkins and his wife were deeply touched. They gave the woman an excellent supper and a good bed. In the morning Mrs. Hawkins gave her a supply of clothing, and Mr. Hawkins gave her five dollars. Her gratitude was profuse, and as she departed to take the train to her dying child's bedside, Mr. Hawkins felt that all that he had said in behalf of tramps was fully justified. During the day he mentioned the matter to a few

acquaintances, and repeated his declaration that he would never turn a distressed tramp from his door.

That night the front-door bell rang at about 10:30, and Mr. Hawkins got out of bed and went down stairs in a sleepy but still a benevolent frame of mind. He found three tramps—two of them women and the other a man—lying unconscious on his piazza. He dragged them into the hall, revived them with wine, and having listened to their pitiful stories concerning their dying children in the next town, fed them and sent them away. He did not, however, give them any money, for although he believed their stories, he felt that the volume of tramps was becoming rather too large for his purse. Still he returned to his bed feeling that he had done his duty, and that his quiet conscience stood in need of a good deal of sleep. Between 10:30 and 12:15 seven more tramps rang the front-door bell, and were found by Mr. Hawkins lying in seven distinct dead faints on the piazza. Five he revived, and then lost his temper. The last two tramps had to revive themselves, and the three additional ones that fainted on the piazza between six and eight the next morning did not receive even a mouthful of cold breakfast.

A great change was noticed in Mr. Hawkins when he appeared at Whitman's store early in the day, and bought half a gross of large carpet-tacks and ten yards of oil-cloth. He wore a stern and determined look, and when Mr. Whitman said that all the tramps in the State had heard about the poor woman whom he had helped, and were on their way to see him, Mr. Hawkins used an expression that would have sounded better in his wife's mouth had she applied it to dilapidated stockings. Going home with his purchases, Mr. Hawkins was met by Stebbins, the stage-driver, who told him that he had passed more than fifty tramps on their way from Utica to Mooseville. Mr. Hawkins made no reply, but, as Mr. Stebbins afterwards said, "looked blacker-thunder."

Just after dark Mr. Hawkins' front piazza was carefully laid with oil-cloth, through which six dozen of carpet tacks had been thrust with their points upward. When he had completed the work he smiled grimly, and remarked to Mrs. Hawkins—who had clasped her hands and said, "O, father! it will hurt 'em"—"Serve 'em right by gosh!" At nine o'clock Mr. Hawkins went to bed and waited to hear the first summons of the bell. It came at 9:35, and was almost instantly followed, first by a wild yell, mingled with profane expressions, and then by a sound of rapidly-retreating footsteps. In the course of the night this phenomenon was repeated twenty-three times. There was a great variety in the oaths which ascended to Mr. Hawkins' window, though they all expressed very nearly the same degree of surprise and indignation. There was a good deal of blood and a large amount of rags on the piazza in the morning, but not a single unconscious tramp lay awaiting resuscitation. For the next week an occasional tramp tried to faint on the piazza, but never failed to abandon that intention, and to go away in an unchristian frame of mind.

As for Mr. Hawkins, he has laid in several large dogs, there is no man in Mooseville who is more firmly convinced that tramps never, under any circumstances, deserve charity.

The Lion and the Zebra.

Returning rather late one dark night to encampment, I was suddenly startled by sounds of the most painful description, not unlike the stifled groanings of a person who is on the point of drowning. It at once struck me that the lions had surprised some unfortunate native whilst lying in ambush near the water for wild animals that came there to drink. Whilst listening in anxious suspense to the wailings in question—which gradually became more and more faint—there reached me from another quarter a confused sound of human voices and of hurried footsteps. This only tended to confirm my first impression; but from the impenetrable darkness I could not ascertain anything with certainty. Being unable, however, to endure the suspense any longer, and regardless of the danger to which I exposed myself, I caught up my fowling-piece, which happened to be loaded with ball, and set out in the direction whence the wailing—now fast dying away—proceeded.

I had not gone very far, however, before I fell in with a number of the natives, who were hastening in the same direction as myself.

My road, for the most part, lay through a dense tamarisk coppice, and it was surprising to me how I ever managed to thread the labyrinth. The hope of saving human life, however, enabled me to overcome all obstacles. I might have been three or four minutes in the brake, when, on coming to a small opening, I suddenly encountered, and all but stumbled over, a large black mass lying at my feet; while, close to my ear, I heard the twang of a bow-string and the whizzing of an arrow. At the same moment, and within a very few paces of where I stood, I was started by the terrific roar of a lion, which seemed to shake the ground beneath me. This was immediately followed by a savage and exulting cry of triumph from a number of natives.

Having recovered from my surprise, I found that the dark object that had nearly upset me was one of the natives stooping over a dead zebra, which the lion had just killed, and then learned, for the first time, to my great astonishment as well as relief, that the wailings which had caused me so much uneasiness, and which I imagined were those of a dying man, proceeded from this poor animal.

The designs of the natives, who from the first, I take it, well knew what they

were about, was simply to possess themselves of the zebra, in which they had fully succeeded. Whilst some busied themselves in lightning a fire, the rest joined in a sort of war-dance round the carcass, accompanied by the most wild and fantastic gestures, totally disregarding the proximity of the lion, which had only retreated a few paces. As the fire began to blaze, indeed, we could distinctly see him pacing to and fro amongst the bushes on the edge of the river's bank.

He, moreover, forcibly reminded us of his presence by lacerating a small dog belonging to one of the party, which had incautiously approached him too closely. By a slight touch of his murderous paw he ripped up its body from head to foot; but, notwithstanding its entrails dragged on the ground, the poor creature managed to crawl to our fire, where it breathed its last in the course of a few seconds. It was a most touching sight to see the faithful animal wagging its tail in recognition of its master, who was trying to replace the intestines and to stop the flow of blood.

The savage features of the natives, which received an unnaturally wild character as the glare of the half-blazing fire fell full upon them: the dying dog, with his wild master stooping despondingly over him; the mutilated carcass of the zebra; and the presence of the lion within a few paces of us, presented one of the most striking scenes it was ever my fortune to witness.

Expecting every moment that the lion would make a dash at us, I stood prepared to receive him. More than once, indeed, I levelled my gun at him, and was on the point of pulling the trigger; but being now sufficiently acquainted with the character of the animal to know that, if I did not shoot him on the spot, the attempt would probably prove the death signal to one or other of us, I refrained from firing.

Contrary to my expectations, however, he allowed us to cut up and carry away the entire zebra without molesting us in any way. During the process, the natives occasionally hurled huge burning brands at the beast; but these instead of driving him to a distance had only the effect of making him more savage.

Similar attempts to deprive the lion of his prey are of frequent occurrence in the interior of Africa. Indeed, it is no unusual thing to find a number of natives residing near such pools of water as are frequented by antelopes, and other wild animals, and their constant attendant, the lion, subsisting altogether in this way, or on carcasses which the lion has not had time to devour before the return of the day, when it is his habit to retire to his lair.

But it is not always that the attempt to deprive the lion of his prey succeeds as well as in the instance just mentioned. Generally speaking, indeed, if he be famishing with hunger, he turns upon his assailants, and many a man has thus lost his life. One often meets with individuals either mutilated, or bearing dreadful scars, the result of wounds received in such encounters.

Teazles.

One of the strangest things connected with the fine woolen cloth manufacture is the use of the common *teazle*, which as yet no invention has superseded, and which is to be seen growing in the fields in many districts in the West, yielding the farmer a very fair profit. After the cloth has been woven and scoured, to remove the oil which has been added to it in the spinning, it is *fulled*, a process which consists in beating it by heavy hammers for a considerable time; then it is scoured again, and then *teazled*. This is accomplished by means of a cylinder, which revolves upon the cloth with these teazles attached to it. By this means all the loose woolly particles are raised up so that they can be clean cut off, and thus make easily a very fine glossy finish. So effective is the teazle for its purpose that, though several inventions have been tried in its stead—among others, a peculiar contrivance of wire fixed into a leather band—none of them have been found in the least to approach it. Nature here asserts her superiority to science. England produced only about one-third of the teazles needed for the cloth manufacture, the others being imported from the continent. These foreign teazles are said by the manufacturers to be by far the best.—*Good Words.*

A Wonderful Curiosity.

One of Peoria's prominent lawyers went home the other day to dinner, and found that his little boy had had his head clipped in accordance with the prevailing style. Affecting not to notice it, he began to speak of a wonderful curiosity on exhibition in Washington City, in the shape of a living creature with a form something like that of a human being. Its head was as round as a pumpkin, its ears stuck out like clam-shells on a cocoa-nut, its nose projected like a figure four from what seemed to be its face; it walked upright, and its head was covered with a growth of bristles about one-sixteenth of an inch in length, and for want of a better name the creature had been called the "What Is It?" And, placing his hand on the boy's head, the father said, "Why, here it is now. Here's the very thing I've been talking about."

The boy replied, as he buttered a piece of biscuit, "They've got a blamed sight worse-looking thing right here in Peoria."

"What kind of a thing is it?" said the lawyer.

"It is the father of the 'What Is It?'" retorted the lad.

The subject was dropped.

The annual meeting of the National Agricultural Congress will take place on the 27th day of August, this year at New Haven, Conn.