

THE SWEETEST LIVES.

The sweetest lives are those to duty wed,
Whose deeds both great and small
Are close-knit strands of an unbroken
thread,
Where love ennobles all.
The world may sound no trumpets, ring no
bells,
The book of Life the shining record tells.
Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes
After its own self-working. A child's kiss
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee
glad;
A poor man served by thee shall make thee
rich;
A sick man helped by thee shall make thee
strong;
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense
Of service which thou renderest.
—Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

A STARTLING DREAM.



SEVERAL years ago I resided in a wild, mountainous and rather lonely region of Virginia. There was a railroad but a few rods in front of my door, and a station and village about a mile to the west. The nearest station to the east was about 10 miles distant. I moved to the place with my young wife late in the autumn and about the first of the following March I was attacked with typhoid fever and was ill for about a month; but thanks to a naturally strong constitution and the careful nursing of a loving and intelligent wife I slowly recovered.

As soon as I got strong enough to sit up and walk a little I told my wife she had better take the cars and go and visit her brother, who lived about 50 miles east of us. She had been taking care of me so faithfully through my illness, both by day and night, that I feared her health and strength would fail her if she did not rest a while. I knew she had been very anxious to go, and I felt sure that her brother and his family would be very glad to see her and would try to make her visit a pleasant one. She hesitated about leaving me, fearing I might need her care; but after waiting a few days, and seeing that I continued to gain my health and strength, she decided to follow my advice. Accordingly, one pleasant morning about the middle of April, after doing everything she could for my comfort, and bidding me to be careful about taking cold or walking too far, she started, intending to be gone a fortnight.

One day I exercised a little beyond my strength, and felt quite tired at night, and lay awake for a long time. At last I fell into an uneasy slumber, and dreamed a very curious and startling dream. I seemed to have gone forward into the future a couple of days, and instead of Wednesday, the 24th, it seemed to be Friday, the 26th. It seemed in my dream that a heavy rain had been falling most of the day and all the day before, but the evening was clear and pleasant and not very dark, though the moon was not shining. I seemed to be walking the railroad toward the east. I first passed through a wood about half a mile wide; then for about a mile through fields containing a couple of farmhouses, one inhabited and the other deserted. I then entered another wood; and after walking about a mile and a half, I came to a stream swollen by the rain, which had weakened the railroad bridges so much that the passenger train, in attempting to cross, had broken it down, and the bridge and cars, completely wrecked, were lying on both sides of the stream, except portions that were floating down. Some of the passengers lay dead or dying among the ruins, some were floating in the water, and a few were clinging to trees and bushes on the bank. It was a fearful and heart-rending sight.

The next day early in the morning it commenced raining, and continued to rain through the day and following night. I felt very lonely and uneasy all day, which feeling was increased by receiving a letter from my wife saying that she intended to come home Friday night by the express train. I retired late, feeling much worried on account of my fearful dream. And to add to this fear, presentiment, or whatever you may call it, the dream was repeated, and even more distinct and vivid than the first time.

When I arose in the morning the rain was still falling. This was Friday, and therefore was the day on which my wife was to start for home. There were two passenger trains from the East each day—one at 9 o'clock in the forenoon and the other at 9 in the evening. This last was the express train and the one on which my wife was coming.

Toward the middle of the afternoon the rain ceased falling and the clouds slowly cleared away. The dream had made such an impression on my mind that I resolved to attempt to find the stream I had seen so plainly in my dreams, and if it appeared at all dangerous to attempt to stop the train before reaching it. Accordingly, soon after the rain was over, I got ready and started. I had never before had occasion to visit the station in this direction, and was therefore entirely unacquainted with this part of the country. But I found everything just as it appeared in my dream. Immediately after starting I passed through the wood I had seen in my dream, and then entered the open field and found the two farm houses, one inhabited and the other deserted. In fact everything was as natural as if I had really been this way before. I walked slowly, and late in the afternoon I came to the stream, which flowed rapidly and seemed much swollen. But the bridge, instead of being broken down and mingled with the

broken cars and mangled passengers, was still standing; and though its timber looked quite old and weather-beaten there seemed to be little danger of its breaking down beneath the weight of a passing train. There was a heavy freight train due from the West about 6 o'clock, and I resolved to wait at least until it came, and if it passed over in safety there could be, I thought, but little danger of accident to the lighter passenger train.

In due time it came thundering along, and passed safely over the bridge. But, though it might have been owing to my excited imagination, it seemed to me that the bridge bent and shook beneath the weight of the train in a manner highly suggestive of danger. At all events, I resolved to wait a while longer and see if the stream, which was still rising, would have any effect upon the bridge. I took with me a lantern also a thick blanket to protect me from the damp night air.

Shortly after sunset, as I was sitting a few rods from the stream, I heard a loud splash, and hurrying to the bridge, I saw that a portion of the bank on the opposite side had been broken away, and also that the action of the water, or some other cause, had weakened the foundation of the bridge in such a manner that a portion of the line was bent and lowered enough to make it impossible for a train to cross. I immediately crossed the bridge, resolved to stop the train if possible before it reached the bridge and certain destruction.

I went on in the direction from which the train was to come, and soon found a good place which commanded a view of the line for a considerable distance. I lit my lantern, wrapped my blanket closely around me, and sat down to my wearisome watch of two hours. The night was clear, but not very dark, though no moon was shining. I suffered nothing from cold, as it was remarkably warm, even for the climate of Virginia, and I succeeded in keeping awake, though the task was a difficult one.

Slowly the moments passed by; but at last I saw by my watch that the time had nearly expired, and a few moments would decide the fate of the train and its human weight. Soon I saw a light far away and very small at first, but rapidly growing larger and brighter. I arose, trembling with excitement, and commenced swinging the lantern above my head, and as the train drew near I doubled my exertion and shouted as loudly as I could.

Onward came the train at a rapid speed. It was a time of terrible suspense to me. Should the engineer fail to see my signal or not see it in time to stop the train before going a few rods past me I knew that no human power could save it. On it came, and just as I gave up my exertions and stepped from the line my frantic signals were observed, arousing the sleepy brakemen like an electric shock, who flew to their stations.

The train was quickly stopped, and I then informed the engineer and conductor of the danger ahead, and while the frightened passengers left the carriages and gathered around me. Many a brave man grew pale when he learned what a fearful death he had so narrowly escaped.

Among the passengers I found my wife, not mangled and lifeless, but alive and well, though somewhat frightened, and a good deal surprised at seeing me. The conductor gave me a seat next my wife, and then had the train backed to the station it had just left, from which telegrams were sent to warn all other trains of the danger.

In the morning my wife and I took the stage home.

Famous Dwarfs.

The English dwarf, Sir Geoffery Hudson, was doubtless, the most widely known of any human curiosity of either ancient or modern times, Lucia Zarate alone excepted. Born of parents of the normal size, in Rutlandshire, in 1619, at birth his height did not exceed five inches. He did not begin to walk until after the end of his third year, his height at that time being 8 1/2 inches. When 7 years of age he was taken into the family of the Duke of Buckingham, having between the age of 6 and 7 added but four inches to his stature. At the age of 30 he was only 18 inches tall when fully equipped with his high heeled shoes, which were then so fashionable. Now comes the most remarkable part of the story. At the age of 31, a time when most human beings are supposed to have fully matured, he suddenly began to grow at a surprising rate, his growth being so rapid that in the short space of four years he shot up to the height of 3 feet 9 inches, a clear gain of 6 1/2 inches for each year. How or why this remarkable change was brought about was a problem which the Royal Society of Surgeons was never able to solve. Hudson lived to be 68 years old.

John Bornwalski was another of the old-time dwarfs of distinction. He was born in 1639, near Chalex, Polish Russia. He was one inch less in height at birth than Hudson was, and weighed but eleven ounces. On his twenty-first birthday he was two feet two inches in height, and very robust. He went to England and married a woman of the regulation size, and lived to the advanced age of 98 years.

A Woman's Paradise.

The ideal spot, in the opinion of many of our American women, is the Oasis of Ghardaia, in the Sahara Desert. There the women have succeeded in emancipating themselves to a remarkable degree. When they marry they drew up their own marriage contract, and if the man in any way breaks it the woman is immediately free and will have no more to say to him. The Ghardaians are Mohammedans, and by the law of the prophet, a man may have four wives. The women, however, do not allow more than one, and polygamy is practically banished. They have also a peculiar objection to drinking and smoking, and in many contracts the husband is told that if he falls into the habit of "consuming liquors or using tobacco" he will be divorced.

FARM, FIELD AND GARDEN.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR THE FARMER.

A Corn Meal Experiment—The Science of Dairy Breeding—Medical Uses of Eggs—Plowing With Horses.

A Corn Meal Experiment.
"I have but one lamp by which to guide my feet," said Patrick Henry on a notable occasion, "and that is the lamp of experience." So many others could say besides the eloquent Virginian. Sometimes it is our own experience. Sometimes that of others, that height of folly to shut our eyes to the light because it is shed by some other luminary than our own feeble rush-light.

It is an unsettled question, for example, among a large number of farmers, whether it pays or not to mix grain feed to dairy cows with wet cut fodder. But it is unsettled because they are careless and indifferent, or unwilling to listen to the teachings of experience. Here is the difficulty with many farmers—the reason why they are not more progressive and successful. They hobble along in the old ways and refuse to let the "lamp of experience" shed its clear rays over their pathway to light them on to better and more profitable methods.

Here is a case in point. A writer for the Country Gentleman relates that more than twenty years ago he tried a simple experiment to determine the effect of feeding finely ground corn meal to cows, separate from the hay. In order to make the trial a thorough one, he took ten cows, and fed them for thirty days with four quarts of corn meal dry, in one feed at evening, following with clover hay, and began to note the results. After feeding for three days, he found that some of the yellow corn meal passed into the droppings, so as to be plainly visible to the naked eye. At intervals during the thirty days portions of the droppings were examined under a microscope, and it was found that particles of meal were distributed through them. The hay fed was the best clover, and the milk was carefully weighed daily, and the butter product noted.

At the end of the thirty days he began to mix the four quarts of meal with a bushel of cut and moistened clover hay, and continued this for thirty days also. After the third day no meal could be discovered with a magnifier in the droppings, showing that perfect assimilation of the food was taking place. And gradually the milk and butter, especially the latter, increased, so that at the end of the second thirty days, on comparing the results in butter, the increase was found to be a little over 16 per cent.

This is one of many similar experiences which have been made known to the general public through the press and otherwise, and yet there are farmers who declare that it makes no difference, practically, whether the meal is fed dry or moist, mixed with wet hay. The assertion is probably due to ignorance; but here, at least, it is untrue that "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

The Science of Dairy Breeding.

The science of breeding has been applied to our dairy breeds, says the Western Agriculturist, and we have high-record families from close breeding of the best milking animals.

The breeders of Holland and Jersey have bred for the dairy for a hundred years, but have not looked to the high records as have our breeders who have imported these cattle, and with their established dairy breeds been able by breeding together the best high-record animals that have astonished the world and inbred these high-record characteristics to such an extent that they reproduce the high-record qualities to a remarkable degree.

Prof. Nathrost, of Sweden, is occupied with the question how to augment the richness of the milk, without diminishing the quantity. He totally objects to crossing breeds of milk cows to effect that end. He has tried the union of the Jerseys and the Dutch of Friesian races, but the result was illusory. Next he studied the question of alimentation, and naturally noted that rich rations tended to rich milk, but they did not at all increase the secretion in the case of cows yielding rich milk. Ultimately he decided to analyze the percentage of fat in the milk yield by each cow of Dutch breed. He found much variation under this head. But he selected the best butter animals, and, breeding from them, has now a most satisfactory shed of dairy stock. There is nothing new in the principle; patience, time and careful attention will develop and increase good points, perhaps, in every animal.

Poultry Points.

Darting about hither and thither through the short grass we saw 1,700 young chickens. Just think of that! The little things are mostly hatched in incubators, just enough hens being used as sitters so as to provide a natural "brooder" for each flock of twenty-five to fifty chicks. This for the late spring season. Earlier in the season Mr. Thompson uses artificial brooders, with which he has only fair success, owing to the fact that there is not yet a good natural, common sense brooder on the market. He has five incubators of 500 eggs capacity each, which is ample for the most extensive poultry concern, and he finds no difficulty in hatching hundreds and thousands of chickens.

But, live everybody else, he experiences a deal of trouble in raising the birds to a marketable age, which fact leads us to the conclusion that what the poultry fraternity needs now is a first-class brooder, made on both scientific and common sense principles, and we have reason to believe that one will be produced at an early date. Mr. Thompson's yards for laying stock consist of about two acres each with very large and commodious hen-houses. A part of each yard is sown to oats for green food—a most excellent idea. The laying stock are simply ordinary barnyard fowls, as well as the young chicks, for the purpose is to raise for the city market, not the fancy trade.—Tennessee Farmer.

Medical Uses of Eggs.

For burns and scalds there is nothing more soothing than the white of an egg, which may be poured over the wound. It is softer as a varnish for a burn than collodion, and being always on hand can be applied immediately. It is also more cooling than the "sweet oil and cotton" which was formerly supposed to be the surest application to allay the smarting pain. It is the contact with the air which gives the extreme discomfort experienced from ordinary accidents of this kind; and anything which excludes air and prevents inflammation is the thing at once to be applied. The egg is also considered one of the very best remedies for dysentery. Beaten up lightly, with or without sugar, and swallowed in a gulp, it tends, by its emollient qualities, to lessen the inflammation of the stomach and intestines, and by forming a transient coating on these organs to enable nature to assume her healthful sway over the diseased body. Two, or at the most three, eggs per day would be all that would be required in ordinary cases; since the egg is not merely a medicine, but food as well, the lighter the diet otherwise, and the quieter the patient is kept, the more certain and rapid is the recovery.—Stockman and Farmer.

Sheep and Weeds.

A correspondent of the New York Tribune in speaking of the condition of affairs in a certain county 25 years ago, when its butter was the fashion and it maintained 400,000 sheep, aptly describes one cause for the existence of so many noxious weeds. He says: "But the dogs and other discouragements have decimated the sheep about nine times. The pastures and meadows have become dotted with white and yellow daisies, rag weeds, golden rod, plantain, yarrow and other bitter weeds, the consumption of which by cows gives the butter a bitter taste. The sheep formerly consumed the weeds and kept up the fertility of the soil; now as fertility goes out weeds come in, and the farmers are left in bad condition. As much of the land is rough and not arable, the only suggested remedy is to restore the flocks and keep the weeds from seeding by cutting them with scythes until the sheep can regain the mastery."

Plowing With Balking Horses.

It has fallen to my lot to handle several troublesome horses. For a horse that rears and plunges or one that lets go on the bit, turns half round and starts right against the other horse, I know of no treatment so effectual as to buckle a strap with a ring in it around the outside front foot just below the fetlock. To this ring attach a strong rope or strap and back to the driver. On the first indication of trouble take his foot away and hold it until you have his complete attention. In the meantime keep him moving on three legs. Watch his temper. When he forgets his determination to balk let him have his foot. Caress and speak kindly to him. Very seldom is a whip required.—Correspondent National Stockman.

Some Pointers.

Sheep will thrive better with a variety of feed in the pasture as well as when on dry feed, and a pasture seeded with a variety of grasses will give the best results.

There is no remedy against sheep killing dogs as safe as that of penning the sheep close to the house every night. It may be some trouble, but in many localities it will prove good economy.

The great value of a pure bred sire is found in his ability to transmit the characteristics of his breed to his offspring. This ability is to be found only in breeds that have long been established and as a general rule the longer any breed has been bred for any special purpose the more certainly will a pure bred sire of that breed transmit those qualities to his offspring.

Ohio annually produces 54,000,000 pounds of butter, only 7,000,000 of which are made in creameries. Many of the creameries still use the old cream-gathering plan. If the separator system can do in Ohio what it has done elsewhere, it is safe to say that the same amount of milk now used for butter making would yield over 65,000,000 pounds.

The margin of profits in all kinds of stock raising is not large enough to make it profitable to produce scrub animals on the average farm. When there is profit in thus raising scrubs there is a much greater profit in raising grades. To raise grades, however, a pure bred sire is essential. A grand sire is often the equal of the pure bred in appearance, but there is altogether too much uncertainty about the character of his offspring.

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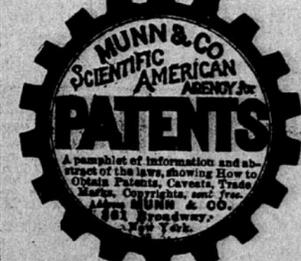
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