

A FANCY.

Once, wandering o'er untrodden fields
Far from the bustle of the town,
Bound by the spell which fancy yields,
I climbed a hill and looking down,
Saw, in the valley far beneath,
A darksome wood, where oak trees tall
Swayed in the south wind's gentle breath
As throbbing hoarsons rise and fall.

But when I reached the vale, alas
And on the very border stood,
A mighty hedge I could not pass
Grew all about the tempting wood.
I sought within the golden ray
Of buttercups, the rippling thrill
Of brooks and fountains in their play
With birth-songs seemed the wood to fill.

And, as I listened, on the wind
There came a voice, as one who sings:
"Oh, mortal, leave the world behind,
And scale the hedge on fancy's wings.
Behold, thou standest on the edge,
Of that enchanted fairland,
Thy doubts have raised the mighty hedge,
'Twill vanish now at thy command."

I gazed as one who doubts his dream.
I saw the thorny hedge grow less;
And fainter grew the mystic gleam;
The hedge passed into nothingness,
The mist of even-tide arose.
Within a barren vale I stood.
The day was sinking to its close—
'There was no dim enchanted wood.
—Flavel Scott Mines in Harper's Weekly.

JOHN WALKER'S PROPOSAL.

"Dear me, I know he is just ready to say it, and I can't see why he doesn't say it." And pretty Mary Branwood puckered up her lips into the sweetest of all pouts, and plied her needle more rapidly than ever. "It does seem to me very strange," she added after a brief pause, "that a great big man should be so timid about saying he loved a girl. Dear me, it's enough to aggravate a girl into taking advantage of—"

And Miss Mary blushed rosily and finished the sentence with a hysterical laugh.

Mary Branwood was just at this moment thinking of John Walker who for the past two years had been her escort upon every possible occasion. For a long time each had looked upon the other with expressive eyes, and, though the gossips of that part of Harlem looked upon the ending of their courtship as a settled matter, John had not asked the all-important question. Mary's womanly intuition prompted the thought that he had been trying to voice the love he so often displayed, but his natural bashfulness seemed an insurmountable barrier.

So Miss Mary sat that February afternoon in her chair, briskly rocking to and fro. The afternoon was nearly gone and the girl was impatiently waiting for 8 o'clock, when the bashful John would arrive to take her to the class in vocal music at the church. Her heart beat faster as the moments sped. Her rosy cheeks flushed more deeply as her mind dwelt upon the possible form of a question that she felt must soon be asked. She knew there would be nothing romantic about John's asking her, for she was sure he would do so in a blundering way. The thing that troubled her most was that after he really did muster up sufficient courage, her long knowledge of his purpose would prevent her showing a proper amount of surprise and embarrassment. She knew she would blush, but she hoped it would be so deep a blush that John could not fail to see it.

She started suddenly and her face flushed with a feeling that there was a tinge of immodesty and hypocrisy in her train of thoughts. She felt guilty of being immodest in thinking of proposing herself and of hypocrisy in hoping she would blush as though she had not expected the question. Her thoughts annoyed her, and failing to drive them away as she sat sewing, she laid down her work and busied herself cleaning up the room.

When both hands of the clock reached 8 the light ring of the door bell told her of John's arrival. As he entered it could be seen that though his youthful face was suffused with blushes there was an unmistakable air of manliness about him. When his brown eyes looked into Mary's she felt so strong and confident that her half-uttered thoughts during the afternoon of taking advantage of the season to render a little assistance came to her, and a moment later she was oppressed with the thought if he had asked her then she really would not have blushed. Then she tried to drive away the thought with a mighty effort as her old feeling of immodesty and hypocrisy came to her, and the crimson flush covered her face as she saw that John was trying to say something.

A few minutes later the two were carefully walking along the icy sidewalk in the direction of the church. They discussed the weather and everything in connection with the singing school until they reached the church and then they both joined heartily in the exercises. Mary sang exceedingly well. John was equally successful until they sang the strain:

"We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,
Then it suddenly dawned upon him how easy it would be to say, "Mary, let us share our mutual woes," and he couldn't dismiss it from his mind all the evening. Every now and then, to his great embarrassment, he got out of tune. To make matters worse the professor noticed it each time, and in a kindly tone, offered a suggestion which increased John's confusion. There was no one in the class brighter than John, when 9:30 came and he and Mary stepped out into the moonlight to go home. They picked their way along the sidewalk slowly, cautiously, and in silence. John did not speak for two reasons. He was oppressed with the thought that he had been particularly stupid during the whole evening, and he was repeating the sentence, "Mary, let us share our mutual woes," so that when they stood beneath the light in the parlor he could put his arm around her and say it without blundering. Mary was silent with expecta-

How brief a sentence would have made them supremely happy!

John's absent mindedness served to distract his attention from the icy walk more than he should have allowed, and no less than a half a dozen times Mary's feet slipped, but each time she found herself borne up by her sturdy lover. Each slip was accompanied with a little shriek, and when she was again safer her soft laugh was music to him.

A group of boys pulling a sled turned the corner ahead and dashed past them. Mary turned her head to glance after them. Her foot slipped, a little shriek, and she was down. But she wasn't alone. In falling she had managed to knock John's feet from under him, and he had fallen to. Each scrambled to rise quickly and their heads came together with a sound bump.

John was in the throes of mortification upon his awkwardness, when Mary said naively as he helped her to her feet:

"We seem to be sharing our mutual woes."

He was amazed. The very sentence he had been saving for under the gaslight before he could take advantage of his present opportunity, however, Mary seemed to realize that she had been immodest, and she walked on, as if determined that he should reap no advantage from her remark. John made several efforts to recall the opportunity, but was baffled every time. Then he determined to wait until they stood beneath the gaslight, but when they reached the parlor the light seemed to burn more brightly than ever before, and his courage departed. Once he made an effort, but the first word that passed his lips was "woes," and the consciousness that he was blundering caused him to blush and pause before trying again. But a sweet "What were you going to say?" completed his embarrassment, and he answered "Nothing," and in despair prepared to go.

A moment later, as they stood at the parlor door exchanging the last words, and as John's hand was on the knob, Mary turned her blue eyes to him and said with a laugh:

"You'll be sure to get home without falling, for you'll have no one to drag you down."

John's face crimsoned. He was about to protest she hadn't dragged him down, when he thought of his lost opportunity after they had fallen. He had a feeling that the sentence he had been trying to say all evening would be singularly unfortunate now, but he was determined not to lose another chance. Despite that feeling and in sheer desperation he gasped:

"Mary, let us share our mutual woes always."

Mary looked puzzled. For a moment she didn't grasp the purport of the misquoted sentence. When it dawned upon her a flood of crimson passed over her face, her eyes fell, and she whispered, "Yes."

And John, with his newly acquired courage, put his arms around her and drew her to his breast. Then John was at peace, and Mary was perfectly happy. The question had been asked and answered, and she had fittingly blushed, besides waiving the privilege of leap year.

The Easiest Way the Best.

A two hundred and fifty pounds colored woman got into the Fifth avenue stage and insisted on riding for nothing. Expostulation did no good. So the driver called a policeman to put her out.

"So you won't pay your fare?" said the policeman, looking at her from head to foot.

"No, I'll die first. They should have given me a transfer."

"But I will be obliged to put you out if you don't pay your fare," said the policeman, rolling up his sleeves.

"You jes' try it!" said the old lady, with glaring eyes.

The policeman took another look at the giantess, thought a moment, and then quietly dropped a nickel in the box. "I guess that is the easiest way to adjust this case," he said, as he went whistling along on his beat. —Eli Perkins.

Insanity Due to Flour.

The organization of the Old Stone Miller's association at Detroit, with the avowed purpose of educating the public mind to the dangers to health attending the use of roller flour and the superiority of old stone flour throws some doubt upon the statement that "the world do move." The association charges patent flour with being the cause of the rapid increase of insanity and kindred diseases, as well as the startling fact that the human race are fast losing their teeth and dentists are multiplying by hundreds in every part of the country. The news association has already started a healthful influence in the inquiry and investigation which the discussion of the subject will involve, even if the result should be its own dismunture. —New York Telegram.

One on Zach Chandler.

Henry Cabot Lodge recently related an amusing scene that occurred in the United States senate. Some proposition was under discussion extremely distasteful to old Zach Chandler. The great Michiganander waxed eloquent. He said that the passage of the bill would be a disgrace to the government. It would humiliate every conscientious American citizen. As for himself, if it became a law he should feel like going to the south west and living forever among the Comanches. This brought Senator Wigfall to his feet. With stately dignity the Texan responded: "I really hope, Mr. President, that this proposition will not pass the senate. The Comanches are among my constituents, and they are already sufficiently contaminated with the civilization of the white man."

AGRICULTURAL TOPICS.

INFORMATION ABOUT MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE FARM.

Diseases of Fowls—Adulterated Cheese—Why the Dairy Does Not Pay—Canadian Wheat Growing—The Philosophy of the Gizzard.

Diseases of Fowls.

Says a correspondent in the Michigan Poultry breeder:

From a reading of the many poultry papers, and a consideration of the numerous advertisements of "roup pills," "cholera cures," "egg foods" and other nostrums, one might suppose that one of the necessities of the fowls was a hospital and an apothecary shop. But there is where we are apt to go wrong.

The doctoring of the sick fowls, especially when you do not know what ails them is generally a hopeless task: It is far better to keep them well than to try to cure after they get sick. An ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure. A few simple remedies, generally such as are useful about the house any way or generally kept on hand, are all the case requires. Spirits of turpentine, kerosene, sulphur, sulphate zinc, camphor carbonic acid, and insect powders are about all that are needed. For gags, for instance, a few drops of camphor on a bread pill taken in time will cure; so what is the use of buying anything else for the purpose? For roop, camphor in drinking water is a good preventive, sulphic of zinc for syringing the nostrils and turpentine for swabbing out the throat or wind pipe are equal to any known remedies.

For scaly legs, a very common disease, particularly for old fowls, sulphur and lard or kerosene, applied freely to the affected part, are both "sure cures."

For scabs, very prevalent during the summer months, after picking off the scab, apply an ointment made of soap, one teaspoonful, carbolic acid five drops. It is a dead shot.

For lice and mites, sulphur and lard or a dusting with the pyrethrum insect powder is all sufficient. A sprinkling with a 1 per cent solution of sulphuric acid will drive these pests away from the premises.

For cholera the best known remedy is a sharp hatchet. The great preventive is a thorough sprinkling of yards, houses, nests, etc., with a 1 per cent solution of sulphuric acid.

Bumble foot requires an operation. Diarrhea may be controlled by soaking oak bark in the drinking water.

Other diseases are generally obscure and should not be treated with medicines. Confinement and a change of diet is about the best that can be done in such cases.

A proper understanding of the fowl business will relieve it of the complication with which it has been invested by writers on the subject. The whole thing is simple enough and rests upon a few fundamental principles. Cleanliness, comfort and proper feeding, in general terms, cover the ground. All minor features must conform to these, but may vary to suit the circumstances of each case.

Canadian Wheat Growing.

Writing of wheat growing in Canada a writer in the Ohio Farmer has this to say:

Of course one system will not apply to all soils and latitudes with equal success, but some real system should be the motto of every agriculturist. My own is as follows: First, plow the ground in the fall and let it lie as left by the plow until the first of July, then plow again from six to seven inches deep. I plow deep in order to get a soil that will stand hardship, if necessary; and one that is not easily exhausted. Then harrow down solid, use the roller freely, as much time is saved and much good done by its use. It makes your soil firm and solid and makes it stand the dry weather much better. Work the surface of your soil thoroughly with cultivator and harrow, and in every case after it is worked with these implements follow with the roller. If there be Canada thistles in the ground use your cultivator most and endeavor to do the cultivating on dry hot days and follow immediately with the roller, for by so doing you kill the thistles and pulverize your soil. Continue this until the last week in August, then plow from three to four inches deep and follow with harrow and roller. Make the ground very solid and firm; then prepare your seed bed from one and a two half inches deep, and by having solid ground below this depth the roots of the plant take firm hold on the solid soil and do not heave out so easily as if the soil were loose. Judging from my own experience this system is a good one and will give good satisfaction. —Frank H. Walker, Waterford, Ont.

The Philosophy of the Gizzard.

A fowl's gizzard, where so many lost articles turn up, is a curious trap as well as a necessary vital organ of the fowl, says a contemporary. Diamonds, pearls, coin, buttons, tacks, orange peel and about everything else, save dynamite, have been found in the gizzards of fowls. A study of the organ is interesting. Experiments have demonstrated that what may be called the gastric juice in fowls has not sufficient power to dissolve their food without the aid of the grinding action of the gizzard. Before the food is prepared for digestion, therefore, the grains must be subjected to a trit-

urating process, and such as are not sufficiently bruised in this manner before passing into the gizzard, are there reduced to the proper state by its natural action. The action of the gizzard is, in this respect, mechanical, this organ serving as a mill to grind the feed to pieces, and then by means of its powerful muscles, pressing it gradually into the intestines in the form of a pulp. The power of this organ is said to be sufficient to pulverize hollow globules of glass in a very short time, and solid masses of the same substance in a few weeks. The rapidity of this process seems to be proportionate generally to the size of the bird. A chicken, for example, breaks up such substances as are received into its stomach less rapidly than the capon, while a goose performs the same operations more than either. Needles and even lancets given to turkeys have been broken in pieces and voided without any apparent injury to the stomach. The reason, undoubtedly, is that the larger species of birds have thicker and more powerful organs of digestion.—Farmers' Review.

Adulterated Cheese.

It is claimed that the sale of skim cheese has grown to large proportions on this coast, but we dare say that there are few persons who deal in them, let alone the consumers, who are aware how they are made. On this coast, skim cheese is manufactured of emulsion of refined lard and skim milk. At the East, a large proportion is made of emulsion of refined lard and potatoes, no milk being used. How the emulsion of refined lard is prepared is a secret, but it cannot be very expensive, for skim cheese sell in our market, in jobbing lots, at around five cents a pound, while at the East they are sold for still less money. The manufacturer and also the dealer in oleomargarine and butterine are liable by law to severe punishment if they sell either without proper notice to purchasers, yet cheese made chiefly of hog fat or cotton-seed oil is sold to unsuspecting persons as cheese made from milk. Its consumption in quantity undermines health, even if it does not entail death, yet the person or persons who are instrumental in this health-destroying business go unpunished. Organized farmers, who did so much to have laws passed defining oleomargarine and visiting with severe punishment those who manufacture and also those who deal in it without proper safeguard for the general public, would do well to have similar laws passed about skim cheese.—Pacific Rural Press.

Why the Dairy Does Not Pay.

One of the prime reasons why the dairy does not pay better, is that there is not an equalized production of dairy produce, and the surplus now comes when it is the most difficult season to carry it an unchanged condition, so that there is a constant effort on the part of the sellers to force this butter and cheese upon the market, to the demoralization of prices. The answer often made is that there are no winter factories near us. The factory closes its doors the 15th of November. Why did it close its doors? Was there a supply of milk in sight for five months to come? Had the farmers tried to have a supply of milk to keep the factory open? In these days of demand for fresh made dairy produce the year round, there is no factory man so stupid as to shut up his factory with 3,000 pounds of milk to be had daily for the winter, when this means a profitable income to him through the winter. As a rule the farmer is about the only man who can afford to stop business and forego income for five or six months every year, and especially when dairy produce is selling at double the prices that the same goods bring in the summer. These are facts worth looking up and acting upon.—Practical Farmer.

Profit in Stock.

According to the German experiments, food equal to two per cent of the weight of an animal must first go to sustain life before any gain can be made; thus for a 100 pound animal two pounds would be fed without profit, for a 200 pound animal four pounds, and for a 300 pound animal six pounds. There is the most profit in smaller pigs and quicker returns. It is possible to put any amount of feed into a hog and get no return for it. As an exchange says: "Swine have an immense power for the consumption of food, and can use up grain remarkably fast without making any commensurate return, if the feeding is not done with judgment. On the other hand, under proper conditions, they can turn the grain to flesh with as handsome a margin for profit as can any stock on the farm." A rapid and constant growth are necessary to avoid loss and secure the greatest profit.

Some Pointers.

As to whether it is best to sell sheep early with the wool on, or later with the wool off, can only be determined by the prices.

Wool can not be grown to the best advantage from the backs of poor sheep any more than good crops of grain can be grown on a thin, rundown soil.

The English farmer turns his sheep into the turnip field to gather the crop for themselves. He thus saves the labor of handling them, and at the same time gets the land well manured.

It takes a certain quantity of food per 100 pounds of cow to keep her alive. Above that what she eats goes to milk or flesh. The 300-pound cow pays better than the one that weighs 1,400 pounds.

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