THE AMADOR LEDGER.

Established November 1, 1855. JACKSON, AMADOR COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1901. Five Cents Per Copy.

IF LOVE BE ONE.

The skies are black, the winds are bold,
The road is rough and long,
But what are clouds and stony ways
When hearts are full of song?
And two there be who walk life's path
Unheeding wind or weather,
And minding but your merry sprite
Who binds their hearts together.
All ways are smooth, all days are bright,
With him for guide and sun,
And three are always company,
If Love be one!

The road is smooth, the wind is soft,
The sky is clear o'erhead,
But what are pleasant ways and days
To those whose hearts are dead;
And what is song that fills the ears,
But can no farther go;
And what is light that eyes can see,
But souls can never know?
Ah, two there be that walk life's path
As though they walked alone,
For two are never company
If Love be gone!

—D. McIntyre Henderson in Harper's Magazine.

NAN'S METAMORPHOSIS.

A Story of a Spelling Match.

By Adelbert F. Caldwell.

She was such a forlorn looking figure as she shuffled along the frozen river road in the late November sunshine.

"I believe I never saw such an aimless, shiftless family in my life," declared Judge Hilton emphatically as he and his daughter Mildred detected the thinly clad figure before them. "If anything, she's as bad as the rest, though when her mother died I imagined the responsibility of caring for the family would have a beneficial influence on Nan. Instead I actually believe it's had the opposite effect. Just look at that torn dress and ragged shawl! If a girl had any spunk, she'd never be seen on a thoroughfare as public as this is in such a slatternly condition."

"But think, father," and Mildred looked up considerately, "how hard she must be obliged to work even 'to exist' the family, as Uncle Joe used to say. I believe she has a load of evergreen now to sell for winter decorations. It isn't an easy lot by any means the poor girl has." And Mildred tucked the thick robe more snugly about her.

Nan Hascall lived in the old abandoned mill down by the falls. 'Twas all the shelter Job Hascall could get after his wife's death, for rents were not easily obtained when it was known that the family's one source of income was cut off.

Mrs. Hascall had somehow succeeded as by almost a miracle, frail as she was, in providing food and shelter for the growing family of ten.

Job was forever lounging about the postoffice steps in summer, and his winter watch tower was the settee in the west window of the small variety store near the tavern.

"P'rhaps next week I'll be able to get a job somewheres," he would say in the early spring days, as in a shamefaced manner he went by his wife at the washtub, bent on his accustomed loitering ground, and when the first frost came in the fall he would brace himself to declare: "I may get a chance loggin 'fore winter's gone. Wouldn't wash all the time. Better let some few things go."

But to let anything "go" was impossible and keep the roof over their heads and shoes on the many pairs of feet.

The morning after Mrs. Hascall's burial Job said to Nan: "Do the best you can, child. 'Tis all we can do, even the best of us, and p'rhaps somethin will turn up."

However, nothing had, save the rent bill, and as there was nothing with which to meet it they were obliged to move into the tumble down mill.

"I guess we can live here awhile," concluded Job, "if we can get 'nough to eat and somethin to wear. No matter if we don't have the best."

After her mother's death the struggle for existence rested almost wholly on Nan. How she managed to get along was a six months' mystery. After that the people ceased to wonder, and the Hascalls lived only in their own thoughts.

"Who do you imagine will get the scholarship and money for expenses at the seminary?" asked Mildred as they were going up the half mile hill before reaching home.

"I haven't an idea! Yes, I have too. I shouldn't say that." And Judge Hilton looked out of the carriage thoughtfully. "Either Ralph Holman or Ethel Maynard will get it. They're by all odds the best spellers in town."

"I don't know," deliberated Mildred. "When Nan was in school, she had the reputation of being able to spell any word given her. No one ever got above her. To spell well seemed to be her one ambition. She never recited correctly in geography. Were she asked where Russia is it might be the longest river in Maine or the capital of Ireland for anything she could tell, and she never was accused of saying the multiplication table accurately."

"But she will not go," laughed Judge Hilton.

"No; I don't suppose she will, but if she should she'd give them a pretty hard push—and might win. Of course no partiality could be shown in such a contest. I wish she'd go," impulsively.

And at that very moment Nan herself was meditating on the same subject.

"I'd like to go, just to show them I'm not all fool. Don't care nothin for the prize. What would I want of a scholarship?" And Nan smiled grimly at the thought of such a thing. "But I can spell, if I don't know anything else."

A sudden, defiant glance shot from her deep, angry eyes.

"I'll go if I don't want it, just 'cause I—I hate them—the whole kit, George Lewis, Ethel Maynard, Ralph Holman and all 'cept Mildred. She's the only one that's ever treated me decent. Guess they'll be surprised when they see me there." Nan snapped off a twig by the roadside. "And I'll beat them too."

After that, wherever Nan was—gathering evergreen, going after her weekly washing or cooking their scanty meals—a disreputable looking spelling book was her furtively hidden companion, from which, when no one was noticing, she selected for constant review the words of foreign derivation and those which she herself designated as having been thrown together in the dark.

"I can spell all the common ones without looking at them. J-u-d-g-m-e-n-t," she spelled. "Leave out the 'e' before 'ment.' Separate looks easy, but some'll spell it with an 'e' every time."

In early November Dr. Randall, a genial, retired practitioner, a man who had won the distinction of being the philanthropist of the village, had offered tuition and all legitimate expenses for one year at Douglass seminary to any young man or woman who should spell all others down in an old fashioned contest. This was to be held at the high school building about the middle of December. It made no difference whether the contestants attended school or not, the only requirement being that they couldn't be over 21 and must reside in town.

That Ethel Maynard or Ralph Holman or perhaps George Lewis would get it was the foregone conclusion in the minds of nearly all the inhabitants of the village.

"Just you wait. Perhaps you'll be mistaken," was Nan's soliloquy after hearing the matter thus prematurely settled. "I don't care for the old tuition; wouldn't have it anyway, but I'll show you I can do something," and she nodded her head defiantly to an imaginary, unsympathetic audience.

"All ready?" asked Dr. Randall the evening of the contest, glancing at the eager faces about him. "I think so," he added. "Ethel Maynard and Ralph Holman may be captains and choose."

Amid intense excitement long lines of spellers were soon in their places.

"Any one else like to spell who hasn't been drawn?" And Dr. Randall looked over his gold bowed spectacles inquiringly. "I'll just wait a moment."

There was a slight stir back in the corner, and Nan Hascall slowly arose.

"She here—Nan Hascall!" and a titter ran round the room.

Nan's face flushed with indignation.

Mildred caught her eye and smiled approval.

"Your turn to choose, Mr. Holman," said Dr. Randall.

"Did Miss Maynard choose last? Very well. Nan Hascall!"

"Spell your best," whispered Mildred, and she pressed Nan's hand as the girl hurried by, her look of anger changed almost to a smile by Mildred's sympathy.

"I'll give you an easy word first." And "daguerreotype" was given out.

"If that's easy, I don't know what he calls a hard one." But Ralph spelled it correctly.

"Idiosyncrasies" followed. Three missed on "parallel," and Nan spelled it.

"One of the easy ones," she whispered.

Word after word was given out until only four spellers remained on the floor, the two captains, George Lewis and Nan Hascall.

Mildred was never more anxious. "I do hope"— She was too interested to finish her sentence.

For ten minutes each spelled accurately every word that came to him.

"Neophyte."

George hesitated, then spelled it with an i.

"N-e-o-p-h-y-t-e," spelled Nan calmly.

There was hardly a breath in the room, so great was the suppressed excitement.

During the next five minutes Ralph took his seat, beaten.

"Well, well!" It was Judge Hilton's ejaculation of surprise.

"Metamorphosis."

Ethel began, hesitated, looked up in consternation, spelled it—wrong.

"Miss Hascall, metamorphosis."

"M-e-t-a-m-o-r-p-h-o-s-i-s," confidently.

As she finished Nan was greeted with a round of applause such as had never before emanated from a Welchville audience. Again and again as it began to die out it was increased with greater intensity.

Mildred slipped on to the floor and gently drew Nan to a seat.

"I knew you'd win," she whispered. "I'm proud"—

"Of me?" interrupted Nan passionately. "Then—then I'll take the prize—and—and be somebody!"

"Your mother was always right smart at spelling." 'Twas Job Hascall's husky congratulation as he clumsily patted Nan's yellow braid.

"I decided 'twould be indeed a metamorphosis when I saw your look of anxiety and knew you cared," confessed Nan the day of her graduation. "If it hadn't been for that—oh, Mildred, I shudder to think!"—Forward.

Hen Fish In China.

According to the science column of a German weekly paper, the hens of China lead busy lives. When not engaged in hatching out a brood of their own kind, they are put to the additional and novel task of hatching fish eggs. Chinese cheap labor collects the spawn of fish from the water's edge, puts it in an empty eggshell, which is then hermetically sealed with wax and placed under the unsuspecting and conscientious hen. In a few days the eggshell is removed, and the spawn which has been warmed into life is emptied into a shallow pool. Here the fish that soon develop are nursed until strong enough to be turned into a lake or stream.

Not Adventurous Enough.

Dicky—I hain't goin to be an express messenger when I'm growed up after all.

Johnnie—Wot's eatin you? You always said you was.

Dicky—I don't keer. I was talkin to an express messenger today who run on cars for 30 years an has never once been in a wreck or held up by train robbers.—Express Gazette.

His Ambition Realized.

Blobbs—When he was a little boy, he was always singing "I Want to Be an Angel."

Slobbs—And he died young, I suppose.

Blobbs—No; but he's had his wish gratified. He's backing Barnstormer's Colossal Aggregation of International Stars.—Philadelphia Record.

The Commercial Instinct.

Mamma—Tommy, do stop that noise. If you'll only be good, I'll give you a penny.

Tommy—No; I want a nickel.

Mamma—Why, you little rascal, you were quite satisfied to be good yesterday for a penny.

Tommy—I know, but that was a bargain day.—Philadelphia Press.

ASPIRATION.

I envy not the sun his lavish light;
But, oh, to be the one pale orb of night,
In silence and alone communing with mine own!
I envy not the rain that freshens all
The parching hill and plain; but, oh, the small
Night dewdrop now to be, my noonday flower, for thee!

—John B. Tabb in Harper's Magazine.

Their First Victory

An Exciting Race Among College Men. :: :: :: ::

As the freshmen sat in their shell that beautiful May afternoon they felt within themselves that their time had come at last. The warmth of the setting sun as it slowly approached the hilltops which guard Cayuga on the west, the deep blue of the lake and the breath of spring in the soft southern breeze seemed all to foretell some good fortune. Then, too, as the crews rowed up the lake the first year men had pulled together beautifully, their oars had struck the water in perfect unison, with never a break from bow to stroke. It was coming, and they knew it, for they had struck their stride, as the runners say.

A blast from the whistle of the coach's launch drew their attention to the varsity and the sophomore crews which had proceeded a mile farther up the lake. From this point the two senior crews were to race for three miles, picking up the freshmen at the mile mark. As the freshmen watched them the distant shells turned slowly and took their positions. A moment they lay motionless; then, as a jet of white steam shot up from the launch, 16 broad oar blades flashed in the sun, and the race was on.

It looked to the eager freshmen as if the sophomore crew had leaped to the front with the first stroke, the heavier varsity being unable to catch the water as quickly as had their nimble rivals, and as the two shells came racing over the glassy surface of the lake it was evident that the second year men were increasing their advantage.

"Look at 'em gain! Look at 'em gain!" cried Crowell up in bow seat. Crowell always became excited whenever he watched others racing, but as soon as he got in a race himself he was the steadiest man in the boat.

"That's all right," said Bruce, the sturdy stroke; "the sophs may jump 'em at the start, but you wait until that varsity gets down to work."

And almost before he had uttered them his words were proved true, for the class crew ceased to gain on their seniors. For a time the two shells pulled at almost equal speed, the white launch speeding along close behind the second, the coach up in the bow directing the oarsmen through his great aluminium megaphone. Though the freshmen could not hear him they knew that he was upbraiding the varsity for allowing a class crew to get ahead of them. And soon his reproaches had their effect, for the sophomores were seen to be slowly losing their lead as the older men began to put their hearts into the work. Slowly but surely the second crew crawled up until the length and a half of open water that had separated it from its fleeing rival was reduced to less than a foot, and then the coach's voice came ringing over the water:

"Get ready there, freshmen!"

The little cockswain ceased craning his neck over his shoulder and, grasping the rudder lines firmly, shouted:

"Ready al-l-l!"

In response the eight sunbrowned boys before him settled themselves into their seats and, leaning far forward, dipped their oar blades into the water.

"Eyes in the boat," cautioned the cockswain, and they waited while their opponents came flying toward them. They heard the panting of the launch's engine and then the sound of the rushing shells cleaving the still water and the "schuh" of the oars in the rowlocks as 16 pairs of arms shot out on the recover. Then the "old man's" voice again:

"Are you ready, freshmen? Then go!"

And with one giant heave they were off.

Bruce kept his eye steadily fixed on the water just beyond the port gunwale as it slipped past, still swirling and dimpling from the blows of the stout blades behind him. Quickly and yet with the utmost care he pulled stroke after stroke; a sharp catch and a powerful heave, then out shot his hands, and his shoulders followed on the recover, but as his seat neared the end of the slide he slowed it down that there might be no checking of the boat. And the seven men behind him were doing likewise, for once as he caught the water he felt the frail shell rise beneath him and quiver like a living thing. A thrill of exultation passed through every man in the crew. They knew then that the victory was theirs. For the first time they had felt the shell live, and that spelled victory.

And now the little cockswain found his voice.

"Steady, boys; steady!" he cried. "Keep your eyes on the stroke—catch—catch—catch!"

Then, with a note of triumph in his voice, he shouted:

"We're gaining, boys; we're gaining. Keep her up."

By this time Bruce's breath was coming fast, and the great drops of sweat poured off his face. For an instant he ventured to glance away from his patch of water, and out of the corner of his eye he saw the other boats now racing along on even terms and not half a length ahead. He was recalled by the voice of the cockswain:

"I'm going to give you ten, fellows, and when I get through you've got to be even with them. Ready now—one, two, three—good work, boys—four, five—we're gaining—six, seven—No. 2, don't clip your stroke—eight, nine, ten! We're up to them! Now ten more! One, two, three"—

But the other crews were pulling their hardest, and between strokes Bruce could hear the voices of their cockswains as they, too, counted tens. At the end the three were still even, and the question seemed to be one of endurance. The "old man" in the launch behind was shouting encouragement to the freshmen, for their burst of speed surprised and delighted him.

"Go it, freshmen!" he called.

And "go it" they did. His words put them on their mettle, and again the boat quivered as eight broad backs heaved simultaneously. Inch by inch and stroke by stroke they crept ahead. Again Bruce glanced at the other crews and saw the varsity stroke laboring desperately to make up what had been lost, and farther back he saw the sophomore crew now permanently in third place. A great sob of joy shook him; then his eyes went back to that bright patch of water, and his oar blade bit more fiercely as it struck the surface of the lake. The little cockswain was fairly beside himself. He shouted aloud in his joy.

"It's half over, boys," he cried as they flashed by the old windmill on the shore. "Just keep it up, and we've got 'em dead. Stroke—stroke—stroke!"

Yes, but could they keep it up? Already Bruce's wrists were beginning to grow numb, and his legs shook on the slow recover.

And still a mile to go!

His heart thumped and pounded, and the hot breath came gasping through his open lips. He could hear No. 7 groan at every stroke, but there was no thought of quitting. Death rather than that.

"But will we never reach the half mile?" he wondered.

Even as the thought entered his head the cockswain called:

"Only half a mile more, and we're a length ahead."

Oh, luckless boat! Scarcely had the words left his lips when No. 3 caught a crab. The starboard side of the shell sank almost to the water's edge as the unfortunate oarsman tried to drag his blade out by main force. At once the speed was checked, and the other boats drew up rapidly. But Bruce kept his head and never let the stroke vary a fraction of a second. The cockswain, too, remained cool. His calm voice in this moment of consternation reassured the rowers, who quickly responded to his monotonous "Stroke—stroke—stroke" as Bruce's blade caught the water. In a moment all were rowing again as evenly as before the accident, but the varsity was almost abreast of them. The danger of defeat after victory had seemed so sure made the freshmen almost mad. They tugged at the sweeps as if they would break them in twain. Men animated by such a spirit could not be beaten, and soon they were forging to the front again. As they entered on the last quarter mile they were more than half a length to the good and still gaining slowly. But the strain was beginning to tell. Bruce's arms were numb to the elbows, his breath came in quick pants and a haze seemed to have settled over [illegible] which dulled the pain in his aching muscles, but made his work only mechanical. Forward and backward, forward and backward, his body swayed, while the shrill voice of the cockswain sounded faint and far away.

"If I could only stop for an instant," he thought; "only a stroke." And then he fell to thinking of what he would give if he could rest for one stroke—$5, yes, $10, even a week from his summer vacation, and he dreamed of how he would lie on the cool grass under the trees during that vacation, too blissfully lazy to move—and all the while his weary body swayed backward and forward, backward and forward, without ceasing. He was aroused by that strident voice, now grown strangely hoarse. How he hated it! It was shouting:

"Only a hundred yards more, fellows! Now give her ten—one, two, three"—

And as the tired crew responded to the appeal their light boat again leaped forward. When the ten was over, there was open water between them and the varsity, while the sophomores had dropped four lengths behind. Still that little torment in the stern was not satisfied.

"I'm going to count till we cross the line," he announced, and then began those terrible numbers once more:

"One, two, three, four"— But with "23" he stopped and then called:

"Let her run!"

Thank God, it was over! Eight pairs of weary hands dropped the oars at which they had been tugging over those two long miles, and eight weary bodies slouched down into their seats, too tired to sit erect.

Bruce leaned over the gunwale and plunged his arms into the cold, clear water. Perfectly content was he as, filled with the joy of triumph, he gazed over the fast darkening bosom of the lake and up the hill to where, here and there, a light already twinkled on the campus. And as he gazed softly, sweetly, from the tower the chimes pealed forth "The Evening Song."—New York Sun.

They Got Through.

Abraham Lincoln was a captain of Illinois volunteers in the Black Hawk war. Mr. Norman Hapgood in his "Life of Lincoln" relates that during this campaign Lincoln once had his company marching in a column 20 men wide when he was suddenly confronted with a high fence with an open gate, through which only one man could pass at a time. He had no idea of the proper way to get his men into single file, so he halted the company and said:

"This company is dismissed, but it will come together immediately after getting through that gate!"

Tripped Up.

Mrs. Newrich—That Mrs. Hyart is a stuck up thing. I know just as much about music as she does. She needn't act funny.

Mrs. Browne—Why, what has she done?

Mrs. Newrich—Oh, she tried to trip me up today—asked me if I'd ever heard somebody's "Songs Without Words."—Philadelphia Press.

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The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors is held on the first Monday of each month. Fred B. LeMoin, Chairman.

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The Bigness of the Ocean.

Some people gratefully reflect that we owe the clouds and the tides and the winds to the "Mother and Maker of men," but these are less numerous than the folks who "would like to know" what we should do for soles and cod and mackerel if there were no ocean. Yet think only how big it is! If you divide the whole globe's area into 11 parts, the sea covers eight of those, with an average depth of 2,000 fathoms. Try to imagine 12,000 feet of solid, perpendicular sea water lying upon eight-elevenths of the entire planet!

A patient mathematician has been at the pains to inform us that this bulk of brine would weigh one and a half million million millions of tons. For the most part this vast body of water—thus set down in figures as 1,500,000,000,000,000,000 tons—is of the same composition everywhere, and as everybody knows, carries great quantities of ocean salt.

But that same salt is itself singularly complex. Not only are there in it chlorides and sulphates of sodium, potash, magnesium and lime, which are familiar to many, but it contains also silica, boron, bromide, iodine, fluoric acid and the oxides of nickel, cobalt, manganese, zinc, silver, lead, copper, aluminium, barium and strontium. Arsenic and gold are also found in it, along with those rare metals lithium, rubidium and cœsium.—London Telegraph.

The Prince and the Captain.

The admiral commanding the British Mediterranean squadron some 20 years ago, writes a correspondent, gave a dinner to the captains of the fleet at Malta. By 6:45 most of the captains had reached the flagship, been received on the deck by the admiral and ushered below. Next the Duke of Edinburgh arrived. The admiral received him, and, keeping him in conversation, continued to pace the deck. All subsequent arrivals were duly ushered below to the saloon, but still the admiral kept the duke on deck. At last it occurred to the duke that the dinner hour had been passed, and he ventured to inquire if his host was waiting for anybody.

"Yes," replied the admiral, "I am waiting for the captain of the ——."

Instantly the duke took the hint, called for a boat and made posthaste for his own ship. He alone among the captains of the fleet had turned up in mufti, forgetting or not knowing, that the dinner was official. On his return to the flagship in the quickest time on record and in full uniform the gallant but inflexible admiral was still pacing the deck, and deprecating his royal highness' profuse apologies conducted him to dinner. I believe, concludes my correspondent, the admiral was Sir Michael Culme Seymour.—M. A. P.

Mexico's Rainy Season.

What they call the rainy season in Mexico comes only in the form of showers, which fall in the afternoon. These showers usually occur every day, but sometimes there will be two or three days of perfectly clear weather. There is no steady downpour, however, as in most tropical countries, and in Mexico the rainy season is regarded as the finest season of the year.

Serving the Public.

Wunn—But if you insist that the man who works for the public good without hope of gaining gratitude is a crank, what do you call the man that expects gratitude?

Futher—Him? Oh, he's just a plain fool.—Indianapolis Press.

In the manufacture of a pocketknife in France 22 workmen are employed for the handle and blade, 18 for a table knife, 9 for scissors and 6 for razors.

In Japan it would be thought as rude to neglect to offer tea to a visitor on his arrival as not to speak to him.

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AFTER RAIN.

The country road at lonely close of day
Has rest awhile from the long stress of rain;
Dripping and bowed, the green walls of the lane
Reflect no glistening light; no colors gay
Has dying summer left; the sky is gray,
As though the weeping had not eased the pain;
The autumn is not yet, and all in vain
Seems summer's life—a blossom cast away!
The air is hushed, save in the emerald shade
The rain still drops and stirs each fretting leaf
To soft insistence of its little grief;
The hopeless calm all thought of life denies;
But, hark, and now through silence, unafraid,
A robin ripples to the chilly skies.

—Helen Hay in Harper's Magazine.

Knew They Were Americans.

A compliment and a slur in the same breath are in a letter I received from a Washington girl in Paris.

"We were dining at Joseph's the other night," she writes, "when a delightfully dressed woman sitting at a table near with a party of three sent one of the men with her to ask father if we were not Americans. She seemed to be saying 'I told you so' to her friends, and as we came out she stopped me in the corridor to explain her odd proceeding. She was politeness itself.

"'Mademoiselle will pardon me,' she said with the most charming accent, 'but it was a wager. I have wagered my husband that we shall see 50 Americans this evening. It is now 35 we have seen, and Mme. B., who is with us, would not believe you were Americans. Mais, I was sure—sure!'

"'Why were you so sure of it?' I asked.

"Madame flashed a dazzling smile at me.

"'Oh!' she said, 'the Americans have always the voices of the worst and the manners at table of the very, very best. I was sure!'"—Washington Post.

DR. PIERCE'S Golden Medical Discovery

"I had suffered from indigestion, and only those who have suffered from it know what it really is," writes Mrs. M. J. Fagan, of 1613 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, N. Y. "I had severe attacks of headache and dizziness with cold hands and feet; everything I ate distressed me, bowels were constipated, and I was growing very thin and nervous. I cannot half express the bad feelings I had when I commenced taking Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. I took nine bottles of the 'Discovery' and several bottles of the 'Pellets.' I commenced feeling better with the first bottle, and kept on improving. Now I am so greatly improved in health my friends often speak of it. I most heartily recommend those medicines to all suffering as I was."

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