

"A POCKETFUL OF SUNSHINE."

"A pocketful of sunshine
Is better far than gold;
It drowns the daily sorrows
Of the young and of the old;
It fills the world with pleasure,
In field, in lane and street,
And brightens every prospect
Of the mortals that we meet.

"A pocketful of sunshine
Can make the world akin,
And lift a load of sorrow
From the burdened backs of sin;
Diffusing light and knowledge,
Through thorny paths of life;
It glides with silver lining
The storm clouds of strife."
—Ladies' Home Journal.

A TANGLED SKEIN.

By C. F. Case.

THE west bound train from Fargo was, as usual, an hour late. An hour late was, according to general report, the regular time of that train.

Eden village, as its imaginative early settlers had named it, was a dining station on the road, and as Landlord Stevens, of the hotel, thus gathered in shekels enough to keep him at the level of good nature, his patrons always found him a pleasant and social individual.

A young man who had registered as Doctor Lawrence of Fargo, was a guest of the hotel, and after the meal was finished and the train had pulled out for the Missouri River, he inquired of the landlord if he could direct him to the house of Mr. Elvidge.

"Old man Elvidge's place is about a half mile straight south of the village," the landlord said. "You can't miss the house, for it's the only one out there. The old man owns the whole south half of the section, and wants no neighbors."

"You don't flatter him."
"You're not a relative? No? Well, every one here who knows old Elvidge knows he's just that style of a man. He's honest, and when you say that you've said about all you can that's good of him without lying. He worried his wife to death, and he can't keep help long at the ranch. About five years ago he adopted an orphan daughter of a brother of his, and seems to have taken a fancy to her. She's now about twenty. Elvidge has done considerable for Miss Mary, to everybody's wonder. She has just returned from Fargo, where she took a seminary course. But she has to do just as her uncle tells her or she'd be stepped on hard. The old man hasn't a friend in the world, except his girl. You don't know him?"

"No; I never saw him," said Lawrence; "but you have been so candid in painting the old man that I don't mind saying I know his niece. I met her in Fargo. In fact I am engaged to her."
"So? God bless you both then," the landlord replied. "And I may add, too, God help you!"

Doctor Lawrence easily found the Elvidge ranch, and was warmly welcomed by Mary, who, very likely expected him.

Mr. Elvidge did not show himself till supper time. He gave Doctor Lawrence a cool reception, suspecting his mission and not approving of it; he had other plans for his niece's future.

"Mr. Elvidge," said Lawrence, when an opportunity offered, "I don't know whether your niece has given you any information regarding the matter or not, but I have been hoping for some time to become your nephew-in-law, and would be much pleased to gain your consent to our marriage. I have a practice that is reasonably prosperous, and the prospects for the future are promising."

"When I sent Mary away to school," Mr. Elvidge said, "I did not expect to lose her, and I cannot consent to this sudden upsetting of my plans. I will consult with her later, and write you my decision."

Doctor Lawrence shortly after took the train for Fargo.

Mr. Elvidge held a long and serious session that evening with his niece. He was very much disappointed in her. To fall in love without her uncle's counsel was not only childish and silly, but a wrong and ungrateful act. The idea of love was a relic of babyhood, and the adult who allowed it to interfere with business was a fool. Dr. Lawrence was very likely a fortune hunter. What had he to offer? Nothing.

Now Mr. Workman—a sensible and appropriate name, by the way—had for some months before asked for her hand, and had received encouragement from the uncle. Mr. Workman was old enough to have a seasoned mind, and he owned a half section adjoining the Elvidge ranch. The union of these two farms had been the uncle's dream for a long time. He would never give his consent to Mary's marriage with any one but Mr. Workman, and she need not hope to change this decision.

To talk of her lack of love or even respect for Mr. Workman, and her affection for Doctor Lawrence, Mary knew would be useless and she remained silent. Any other course would have added fuel to the fire.

Doctor Lawrence received two letters during the week. One from Mr. Elvidge, peremptorily declining his offer for Mary's hand, and one from Mary herself, assuring him that she would be true to her plighted word, but begging him to wait patiently for awhile, as she was unwilling to defy her uncle, to whom she owed much. By-and-by she might win him over and all would be well. And with this assurance Lawrence was obliged to be content.

Time went by, and winter came with its cold and snows. Simon Elvidge, now past seventy, fell ill, and for once encountered a foe stronger than his will, died, having bequeathed to his niece his entire estate, which should remain in her possession so long as she was unmarried or the wife or widow of Richard Workman, who was appointed administrator. In the event of her marriage to any other than the said Richard Workman, the estate would go to the heirs of Susan Hartley, a sister of the testator's deceased wife.

The hopes created in Richard Workman by this will was quickly dissipated by Mary's emphatic refusal to entertain his suit, and he declined to act. The judge of probate entertained the popular prejudice against the provisions of the will, and appointed Dr. Lawrence, whom Mary had summoned to the funeral, administrator. The doctor hesitated some time over the propriety of accepting the charge, but finally yielded to Mary's wishes that he should assume it.

A year passed and there being no sufficient reason why it should not be so, Mary and the doctor were married, thus, as she supposed, sacrificing wealth for love. There had never been a moment since the will was read that she had entertained a thought of retaining the estate with the conditions imposed.

But now a new difficulty arose. The heirs of Susan Hartley could not be found. Doctor Lawrence tried his best to trace them, for he had pride, and while Mary, the adopted child of Simon Elvidge, would inherit the property in the absence of Susan Hartley's heirs, such inheritance would cause public comment. He employed an attorney in St. Paul who had won some celebrity in untangling legal tangles, and instructed him to reach the bottom of the case at any reasonable expense.

Two years passed. Dr. Lawrence and his wife were happy and contented in their home in Fargo, caring comparatively little about the Elvidge estate. They felt sure that it would be lost to them, and had no desire to keep any one out of his rights.

The attorney in charge of the case had been in occasional correspondence with them, but gave little information of what he had accomplished. One day he visited Fargo, and had a personal interview with Doctor Lawrence. "Doctor," he said, "I want to make a full report of my findings in the case of the Susan Hartley heirs. You know we ascertained that Susan Hartley, then a widow with two small children, left St. Paul, where her husband died after a long illness that exhausted their little wealth, for New York City, where she followed the occupation of nurse for a time. Then we lost the trail. By accident I found, a few months later, that she was engaged as a nurse to a wealthy woman, an invalid, who had been advised by her physician to make a European trip. The engagement was so good a one that Mrs. Hartley felt that she must not decline it. She made arrangements with the managers of a public home to care for her children during the few months she expected to be away. The party left on the steamer Gironde for a French port. The Gironde was wrecked in a storm on the voyage, and all on board except three or four of the crew, were drowned. The older of the children, a little girl, died soon after in an epidemic of scarlet fever. The younger, a boy, attracted the attention of a gentleman who adopted the child. "Impertinence is an acquired habit of mine, you know, and I am sure you will excuse my asking a few questions of you about your early life. A Doctor Jerome Lawrence came to Minneapolis from New York several years ago, and died about ten years later. Are you his son?"

"I always supposed so," Doctor Lawrence replied, "till after his death. He was a widower, but married again when I was twelve years of age. My step-mother and I never got along well together, and soon after my father's death I left home to seek my own fortune. She was much incensed, as she found me useful, and said I need never ask nor expect anything from her, for I was not a son of Doctor Lawrence, as I had been allowed to think, but only a boy he had taken from an asylum through charity. She claimed to have proof of this, but refused to show it to me. In wrath I left home and came West; and I have never tried to prove nor disprove the assertions of my step-mother."

"Doctor Lawrence," the attorney said, "your story supplies the last link in the chain of descent from Susan Hartley. You are the lost heir to the Elvidge estate, and I heartily congratulate you on your success in finding yourself. I traced the line to your step-mother, Mrs. Lawrence, and I persuaded her to show me the proof she refused to show you. It consisted of a document written by Doctor Law-

rence before his death and properly attested, stating that he had legally adopted a son of Susan Hartley. The rest was easy, but I wanted you to tell your own story. The chain is now perfect, and I am out of the case. My fees will not be light; but as the estate is near the half million figure, I know you will not regret the expense I have made to get this mystery untangled."

What Doctor Lawrence said, or how Mary expressed her satisfaction at the strange transference of her once expected estate to her husband, is not worth space to describe; but the event was properly celebrated, and everybody who knew them rejoiced with them over their good fortune.—Waverley Magazine.

THE WONDERFUL CORK TREE.

It Grows Another Bark When Stripped—Good Again in Twelve Years.

It kills most trees to strip off their bark or even to girdle them with an axe or knife. This is not the case, however, with the cork tree, which, when deprived of its thick, soft bark, known in commerce as cork wood, proceeds to wrap itself in another covering. It is a slow process and requires ten to twelve years to complete it. Every year a layer of cork is formed around the tree and the whole of these annual layers, representing ten or twelve years' growth, forms the material for corks. We cannot grow cork wood ourselves and so large quantities are brought into the country. As manufactured cork is durable while cork wood is on the free list, most of the stoppers for our bottle come into the country in the form of cork wood and the corks are made here.

As it takes so long for the bark to be restored after it is stripped off, the cork is comparatively valuable only once in ten or twelve years. We all know that cork is used for a variety of purposes, as in life preservers, covering for pipes in steam machines and so on, but about nine-tenths of all the cork wood sold is made into bottle stoppers.

The cork tree grows only in the Mediterranean countries and in Portugal. The latter country is the largest source of supply, for its cork forests cover an area twice as great as that in Spain, a third greater than in Algeria and more than three times as large as in France. There is such a thing as overdoing the cork business. In the island of Sardinia, for example, the cork forests, formerly very extensive and beautiful, have been almost entirely destroyed.

Most of the corks that come to us in bottled French wine are from the forests of Algeria. In Italy the forests form large groups only in the central part of the peninsula. It is a curious fact that Portugal, which produces nearly twice as much cork as any other country, consumes comparatively little of it. Spain manufactures and exports a large quantity of cork wood products, but the production tends to decrease on account of wasteful methods of treating the forests.—New York Sun.

WISE WORDS.

Temptations are instructions.

Praise the sea, but keep on land.

The world promises comforts, and pays sorrows.

A gift is power; to use it rightly is greater power.

Poverty makes some humble, but more malignant.

They who await no gift from chance have conquered fate.

Kind thoughts are wings which bear us on to kinder deeds.

In order to appreciate fiction one must first appreciate fact.

To forget is easy; to forgive how hard! Unless we love the culprit.

Keep your head cool, your heart warm, conscience pure; these are life's riches.

There is a sort of wit so weighted with wisdom that laughter is hushed in wonder.

The day that presents no opportunity to improve oneself or benefit another is a black-letter day.

Time is the scribbener of Life; whenever he charges up a physical sin to our account Life docks us an hour or more of our existence.

Do what you can, give what you have. Only stop not with feelings; carry your charity into deeds; do and give what costs you something.

Fortune Telling.

Many and various have always been the means of fortune telling. In Georgian days fortune-telling fans were very popular. A number of predictions were printed on the fan leaf, and the person who wished to have his fortune told almost closed the fan and then put his first finger on one of the folded compartments. The fan was at once opened and the sentence thus selected read aloud. These fans are now very rare. Many were beautifully painted and printed on vellum, and formed a not unusual gift from a lover to his sweetheart. Among the old-fashioned poor in primitive villages in England, this way of fortune telling by inserting a slip of paper haphazard into the Bible and taking the first or last verse of the chapter on the right hand side is still practiced.

HOW THE CHINESE GET RAIN.

secular Practices in Vegas in the Celestial Kingdom.

It is one of the peculiarities of the Chinese that, while they have developed elaborate philosophies, none of them have led to any confidence in the uniformity of nature. Neither the people nor their rulers have any fixed opinion as to the causes of rainfall. The plan in some provinces when the need of rain is felt is to borrow a god from a neighboring district and petition him for the desired result. If his answer is satisfactory, he is returned to his home with every mark of honor; otherwise he may be put out in the sun, as a hint to wake up and do his duty. A bunch of willow is usually thrust into his hand, as willow is sensitive to moisture.

Another plan in extensive use is the building of special temples in which are wells containing several iron tablets. When there is a scarcity of rain a messenger starts out with a tablet, marked with the date of the journey and the name of the district making the petition. Arriving at another city he pays a sum of money and is allowed to draw a new tablet, throwing in his own by way of exchange. On the return journey he is supposed to eat only bran and travel at top speed day and night. Sometimes he passes through districts as greatly in need of rain as his own. Then the people in these places waylay him and temporarily borrowing his tablet, get the rain intended for another place.

Prayers are usually made in the fifth and sixth months when the rainfall is always due, and when a limit of ten days is set for their effective operation. Under such conditions rain usually falls during the prescribed time. When the prayers are in progress the umbrellas, among other objects, comes under the ban. In some provinces foreigners have been mobbed for carrying this harmless article at that time.

WISE WORDS.

Delight depends on denial.

Sincerity begets confidence.

Empty lamps give no light.

Moral sincerity is the salt of life.

Principles are better than precepts.

Our worst flatterers are in the mirror.

A cripple is better than a perfect statue.

They who love melancholy live in misery.

Perfect liberty is manifest in delight in duty.

Those who apprehend the right never arrest it.

The aimless man is often accused of amiability.

It is easy to be liberal with what you do not own.

You can give reproof only where you have given love.

The love of home is the beginning of true patriotism.

The web of true religion is woven through the heart.

We can bear pain without when there is peace within.

Our lamps do but cast shadows when the true light is shining.

You cannot scatter sunshine out of a face like a vinegar cruet.

The best way to bring others to our ideals is to get there ourselves.

You can never be ruined by others if your riches are those of righteousness.—Ram's Horn.

The Judge Attempts to Get a Cook.

The wife of one of the members of the local judiciary has considerable difficulty in keeping servants, and the other day she dismissed three in a bunch. The Judge was rather annoyed at the consequent lack of service in his household, and announced that thereafter he himself would engage the servants, and then perhaps things would go more smoothly. So he cut out a number of advertisements from the "situations wanted" column of a newspaper, and started out in his cab to visit the various addresses. His first stop was in front of a little house in a narrow street, from which a cock had advertised. He saw her and was favorably impressed. "I am looking for a good cook," he said. "Sure, an' don't Oi know it!" exclaimed the cook. "Oi only left your house yesterday!" The Judge made a hasty and undignified retreat, and decided to allow his wife to continue in her direction in the household affairs.—Philadelphia Record.

Standardizing Metals.

The standardizing of metals is a question that is likely to be taken up by English engineers, as the result of the recent address of Sir John Wolfe-Barry, the President of the Institution of Engineers. At present every railroad has its own section for rails and almost every engineer has his own specifications for steel, the result being a large waste of time and needless expense in manufacture. It is pointed out that some engineers actually appear to pick out the best features of a number of tests of good steel and endeavor to combine them into a single specification, the result being very often a steel with conflicting properties.



A Snowflake Fairy.

Each snowflake is a tiny star adrift,
And many sparkling snowflakes do we see,
When with our dear old skull we catch the swift
And solid snowball hurtling fancy free.
—Judge.

Stimulating Contributions.

Mrs. Von Blumer—"The minister preached the most touching sermon I ever heard."

Von Blumer—"How much did he raise?"—Judge.

Some Are Worth Cultivating.

He—"What do you think about the microbes in kisses theory?"

She (cheerfully)—"I've heard that we couldn't get along without certain kinds of microbes."—Puck.

A Bad Sign.

Jiffer—"I don't believe that Stubbs writes his poems at all."

Juff—"You don't?"

Jiffer—"No; he never offers to recite them."—Detroit Free Press.

The Two Seasons.

She—"You men claim to be the salt of the earth?"

He (mildly)—"But, my dear, we have never denied your claim to being the pepper!"—San Francisco Bulletin.

Decided to Stay.

"Oh, George, what do you think happened to-day?"

"Did you find a \$20 gold piece?"

"Better than that! Our new cook has sent for her trunk."—Detroit Free Press.

The Vulnerable Point.

Percy—"I've made Pauline sorry that she threw me over."

Guy—"In what way?"

Percy—"Why, I'm attentive now to a girl five years younger than she is."—Detroit Free Press.

The Coming Visitor.

Edgar—"Alice, my mother is rather brusque in speech and manner."

Allee—"Oh, well, I don't care how she treats me, but I do wish you would caution her about being careful how she treats cook."—Detroit Free Press.

A Brilliant Conception.



Johnnie's idea of how a man plays by ear.—Puck.

'Twould Be Too Many Cooks.

Mrs. Hiram Offen—"And do you think you could do the cooking for the family with a little help from me?"

Applicant—"No, ma'am, I do not?"

Mrs. Hiram Offen—"You don't?"

Applicant—"No, ma'am, but O'm sure Oi could do it without any help from you."—Philadelphia Press.

Non-Committal.

"Do you think the world is growing worse or better?"

"I shouldn't venture an opinion," said the man who makes no pretensions to being a philosopher. "One's impressions on that point are likely to depend largely on the kind of society he happens to get into."—Washington Star.

The Reapportionment.

"I suppose you realize that you are now at a critical period in your career," said the friend.

"I do," answered the new member of Congress. "I am kept awake wondering which of the old, old stories the people who get up anecdotes are going to make me the hero of."—Washington Star.

Literary Subjects.

"Whom did you discuss at your literary club this afternoon, dear?" asked the husband in the evening.

"Let me see," murmured his wife, "Oh, yes, I remember now! Why, we discussed that woman who recently moved into the house across the street from us and Longfellow."—Ohio State Journal.

A Proficiency of Language.

"I am afraid," said the eminent Chinaman, "that our people are very much misunderstood."

"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne; "whenever I hear two Chinese in conversation I am reminded of the celebrated remark that language was given for the concealment of thought."—Washington Star.