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A SONG FOR OLD THINGS.

In vain men tell us that time can alter
Old loves or make old memories falter,
That with the old year the old year's life closes,
The old dew still falls on the old sweet flowers
The old sun revives the new fledged hours,
The old summer rears the new-born roses.

Much more a muse that bears upon her
Raiment and wreath and flower of honor,
Gathered long since and long since woven
Fades not or fails as fal the vernal
Blossoms that bear no fruit eternal,
By summer or winter charred or cloven.

No time cast down, no time uprises,
Such love, such memories and such praises,
As need no grace of sun or shower,
No saving screen from frost or thunder,
To tend the house around or under,
The imperishable and peerless flower.

Old thanks, old thoughts, old aspirations,
Outlive men's lives and lives of nations.
Dead, but for one thing which survives—
The inalienable and unpriced treasure,
The old joy of power, the old pride of pleasure,
That lives in the light above men's lives.

The Echo in Her Heart.

John Holt was in love; and as he was one of that class who never do things by halves, when he concluded to let the charms of Sarah Pentley rule his happiness, he meant that they should, come weal, come woe.

Sarah Pentley was the beauty of Rough Reef Beach, and she knew it. Her father kept the only shop in the district, and was the justice of the peace, and general authority for its people on all subjects, save fishing, physic and theology.

Sarah Pentley was like her father, brave, generous, and proud; and perhaps it was for this reason that, although John Holt was a good match, she refused him.

"I said 'perhaps,' but it might be perhaps she had not weighed the matter, or analyzed her own feelings. She had liked the young skipper, who for long years had supported his mother and sisters, and had still found time to study both books and nature, so that when he was twenty-five he was looked upon as an authority, and was loved and respected by all the people. He was trusted, too, and one of the finest vessels that belonged to the fishing fleet of Rough Reef Beach was under his charge, and many of the best fishermen preferred him for a commander.

Sarah Pently knew this, and knew that he had been very successful, and had money laid by; she knew, too, that he was a good companion, and many a pleasant stroll had they taken across the sands when the moonlight shimmered across the ripples and filled the air with a flood of glorious light.

But she had never thought of love in connection with him, and when John Holt had told her the Sunday eve before he sailed, that he loved her, she had been surprised, and refused him.

They had been rambling over the hills, and had come to a point from which the harbor, with its fleet of fishing schooners, could be seen. Most of them were moored close to the dock, but one, the finest looking of all, rode near the entrance, rising and falling with the swell, as if impatient to spread her white wings for flight.

"The Spray looks well, John, and you sail soon?"

"Yes, Sarah, I shall go on next Thursday."

"Do you expect a good season, John?"

"Yes."

"How long will you be gone?"

"I cannot say, I may stay away all summer, perhaps."

And his voice sank low.

"It will depend upon you whether I come home before fall or not."

"Upon me?"

"On you, yes. I may as well tell you now, Sarah, for my heart has long wished to show you its secret. I love you. For years, since we first gathered shells on the beach, I have loved you, and even my boyish dreams were full of visions of the time when you would be the queen of my home. For your sake I have studied, and sought to grow worthier of pure love and trust. For your sake I have toiled and saved, that the comforts you now enjoy might be yours always."

Again he stopped, and she said not a word; her hands were pressed tightly, her eyes downcast, and with one little foot she marked half circles in the grass.

The silence grew oppressive, still she neither raised her eyes nor spoke. Again he went on, but the hope that his voice had expressed when he began talking was all gone now.

"I have said that the matter of my coming home before autumn depended on you, and I have told you why; will you tell me whether I am to come or not, Miss Pentley?"

Now he was silent, his eyes wandering restlessly across the sea.

"John, you do not know how much it pains me to say that I do not love you, but I cannot say otherwise."

He turned toward her, the deep passion of his soul making him fierce, the great disappointment making him wild.

"Do you want to, or is the fishing skipper no match for the squire's daughter?"

"John!"

The pity and reproach in the word recalled him.

"Forgive me, I was wild."

Then he seized her hand in his, and pressed hot kisses upon it, held it for a moment, and then strode hastily away toward the harbor.

She gazed after him, deep sorrow in her eyes, then turned slowly down the road that led to the beach.

"Poor John," she murmured, softly.

The moon rose, and as the light shone across the waves, she clambered up a ledge that broke the beach, to look at the lighted sea.

When she reached its crest she saw, bearing out from the harbor, directly past her position, the white sails of a vessel.

She was surprised at this, for no vessel was expected to leave before the coming week. On came the light craft, the land wind sending her on so fast she seemed full of buoyant life. Soon the schooner was abreast of the ledge, and then Sarah Pentley saw that it was the Spray, and her heart told her why it was going so soon with no parting cheer to give it a God speed.

Somehow the scene grew cold and desolate after the Spray had been lost among the shadows, and with a sigh she turned away from it and sought her home.

There was much wonder when it was known that John Holt had sailed so soon, but none guessed the cause.

The old fishermen, who believed in him, shook their heads wisely, and muttered:

"Cute fellow, smelt the fish."

And the reports that came back during the summer seemed to confirm this, for the Spray was doing better than ever before.

Other crafts called at the harbor and stayed a few days, and such, previous to this, had been John Holt's custom; but the summer passed, and he came not. The season was over and the autumnal equinox at hand and still the Spray was out.

There came a day that will always be remembered at Rough Reef Beach—one of those days that take hold of time and acts, and become marks in the years—known as "the great flood," or "the September gale."

The sun had risen gray and lurid, breaking from the low hanging mist like a ball of hot steel. The air was hot and oppressive and the gulls came flying landward screaming discordantly.

Then the blue sky paled away to a grayishness, and the sun faded from sight. Soon the sea grew fretful, and the air was full of woe.

In the east a dark line gathered along the water and slowly up the sky growing blacker as it rose in height. Still no wind, no rain.

Then, under the low-lying blackness, a white line, growing broad, but rolling along the face of the sea, told that the storm had come.

Never before had the shock been so great or so sudden. Sweeping like demons filled with the power of wrath, the huge waves broke upon the reef and ran foaming up the beach. But there was no rain. The foam-whirl filled the air, but the clouds held firm.

The old men had gathered at Pentley's shop, while the younger ones were watching the moorings of the crafts in the harbor. All could see the ocean, tossed by the wind and raging for its prey.

Then a cry arose. Through the tossing crests, far out at sea, came the white line of a sail. Nearer, nearer—and the high ledge was thronged with anxious watchers who had hurried there; men from the shop and harbor, and women and children from the cottages, for a fear had seemed to fall upon them all and fill them with dread—the fear that the vessel in the mad fury yonder was the one that had lives dear to them—the Spray.

On she came, the foam flying over her and often hiding her from view; and still the stray sights given them had told the watchers that their fears were realized—it was the Spray.

There were white lips and prayers, but no tears. Death was a thing with which the dwellers of Rough Reef Beach were too well acquainted to call for such a motion until it came.

They knew that Holt was making for the harbor, and could he make it, he would be safe. But would he make it? Still the Spray came on. White faces watched her, but whitest of all was that of Sarah Pentley.

"Oh, John, John—I love you; I love you!"

So rang the echo in her heart; and if he should be lost, would it not ring so forever?

When she knew it was the Spray that was driving before the storm, and heard that it was a mere chance whether she would come in or not, then, with the shadow of death hanging low over her lover's head, her heart awakened to the knowledge that he was all to her.

"He shall not die—oh, God is too good!" she said. And so she waited and watched.

A few yards more—only a few yards more, and then all would be known.

"Oh, God!" There was despair in the cry, and death seemed to reach out its hand to take the crew of the little craft.

As she entered the channel that ran through the reef, a gust of wind seized the sails of the Spray and shook them, and before John Holt could shift the helm to meet the emergency, a huge roller dashed the little craft high on the reef and rolled over her.

Then it was that the cry arose—a cry that all but one mouth answered, and that mouth grew firm and set, and whispered rather than spoke:

"He shall not die."

A small boat—a mere shell to meet the mad shock of the sea—lay in the little cove formed by the ledge, and sheltered by its strength. Into this Sarah Pentley jumped, and before any one was aware of her intention, or could stop her, she had pushed out into the boiling foam at the cove's mouth.

Her father called to her, but she kept on.

"I love him, and will die with him, or save him," she answered, but the wind drowned her voice. Eager eyes watched her, eager hands were stretched out to save her, when a wave came roaring in—but it seemed that the fate of God was with her.

Slowly, but surely, she went on, the twirl of the sea sending her this way and that—and now other eyes than those on the ledge watched her.

Clinging to the fast breaking schooner John Holt and his companions saw the little boat tossing in the foam, yet steadily making way. Then Holt recognized the woman who was risking all for them, and shouted to her to go back. She did not hear.

They had done all to save themselves that they could. Lashed to a spare spar, the only hope after the sea had destroyed their boats, with such high floats as they could seize, the crew of the schooner were waiting the end. They remembered that death had always been king here, and hoped not for relief.

Then the boat came, but they knew that only one could get in it, and before it could return to them again the end would come.

"Quick, a long line," said Holt, excitedly. "If the boat can carry one ashore, they can draw us into the cove."

A piece of rope still clung to a belaying pin; this was soon severed from its hold and fastened to the spar, and when the boat reached the small spot of sea that was partially protected by the wrecking vessel, Holt shouted his wishes and hope.

Joy! she hears and understands, and as the rope is flung to her, grasps it firmly. The wind, too, helps her now, for it bears her along towards the rope.

Not a moment too soon, either, for just as the swirl encircled her boat the schooner broke up, and the spars and planks mingled with the yeasty foam.

Waves broke over them, fragments of the wreck dashed by them, still they felt they were going on towards safety, and on the beach strong hands were waiting to seize the line and bring them ashore.

Hands that were so eager that their owners waded out into the surf to be dashed back on the sands.

At last the boat, still forced on by its weary but undaunted mistress, rose on a heavy roller and came rushing up the cove, to be grasped and held firmly against the action of the foe by strong and nervous hands.

As the spar reached the shelter of the ledge, strong arms encircled the half dead forms lashed thereto, and bore them to the land.

Joy, joy, none was dead, though excitement and bruises had made John Holt senseless. But life came, and as he opened his eyes, their glance was met by one so fond, so loving, that he closed them again, thinking that he was dreaming or dead.

But they were not dead lips that whispered:

"John, am I forgiven and loved now?"

Then his arms clasped her form, and Sarah Pentley knew that love and forgiveness were hers.

Freaks of Accident.

Strange mischances, with fatal results, are happening daily all over the country. A Boston butcher ran against a knife that lay on a block, severed an artery, and bled to death. In New York a man, hastening by a meat stand, had his eye caught and torn out by a tenter-hook fastened to an awning-post. A Denver woman caught her foot in a frog, and could not extricate it before a train ran over her. A horse kicked a Michigan boy into a deep well, where he was drowned. A Vermont farmer sneezed while holding a straw in his mouth, drew it into his lungs, and choked to death. In Nashville a shoe flew off the foot of a kicking mule, and fractured the skull of a baby. While standing on his head on the top of a high fence-post, fell into a tub of boiling water, and was fatally scalded. An Oregon girl swallowed her engagement ring, and lived only a week afterwards. A stone, thrown by a playfellow, broke a glass from which a St. Louis boy was drinking, driving some of the pieces down his throat, and he died in a few days in great agony. Looking up to watch the flight of an arrow, a Nashville woman did not see it descending directly over her head, and the sharp metal point penetrated her brain through one of her eyes, killing her instantly. In Ohio a five-year-old boy went to feed the pigs; the pen was furnished with a sliding-door, moving up and down, which, as he poked his head in, suddenly fell on his neck, strangling him. A bachelor in Philadelphia met with a curious death; he held a button in his mouth while threading a needle, and accidentally swallowed it, and it so lodged in his throat as to result fatally. In Cincinnati recently a young man was leaning upon his gun, watching a game of baseball, when a foul ball so struck the hammer as to discharge the gun, shooting him in the forhead and killing him on the spot. A few days since a boy in Providence was playing with an umbrella handle, and stumbling over it it pierced his eye, causing death in a few hours.

Relics of De Soto.

When the chestnut tree quite three hundred years old was blown down on the banks of a little creek near a church called "South Carolina," within a mile of the village of Yorkville, in Pickens county, Alabama, and about seventeen miles southeast of Columbus, Miss., beneath the roots were found a pair of brass scales for weighing, with the brass weights having Spanish descriptions and numerals on them. Two three-pound cannon shot were found with the scales. The soil beneath the tree was unusually dry, as the little stream near by drained the spot. Hence these relics of Spanish adventures were well preserved. It does not follow, however, that because these articles were found there that De Soto ever visited that section of Alabama. He could have had little use for scales, and probably left them at some distant encampment, from whence they may have been brought by some curious red man who assigned little value to them and thus left them where he drank from the stream. Indians had no wagon or wagon ways, and yet when Western Alabama was first settled by white people, in 1830, and while the Choctaws still owned and occupied the country, it is written that there was a broad, deep wagon road following the course of the river some distance and deeply cut in the hill sides and into the river's bank. It crossed the Tombigbee at what is called the "Mounds," near the Alabama and Mississippi line. The Choctaws related that this road was cut by white men, who marched across the country, fighting and killing, long before their recollection. If this be the tradition, there is little doubt that De Soto made the road and crossed the Tombigbee at the place indicated by the Spanish scales and weights and that the old highway was certainly made by no race of modern Indians.

In Two Places.

One cold morning a couple of ragged urchins strolled into a restaurant and stood around the tables in an out-of-place sort of way, with their benumbed fingers buried deep in the depths of their trousers pockets.

"Well, boys, what's wanted?" inquired he of the white apron.

"What kind o' pie you got?"

"Peach, apple, mince, custard, lemon, squash."

"Call it squash, Tim," said the hungriest-looking boy to the other.

"I'll take a piece of squash," and a triangular quarter was passed over the counter.

"Now give a feller a show, Tim," and the great wistful eyes looked volumes of anxiety as Tim's mouth shut down over the point of the squashy triangle.

"What you givin' us? Didn't I always give you a show? Take a bite," and another mouth shut down on the pie, and, alternating bites, the two wagged their jaws in unison until it was all gone—all but one bite.

"Now don't be mean, Tim. You had the first bite; give me the last."

"I heard that Sunday-school teacher say last Sunday that the 'first shall be last,' and I b'leve he's right," and away went the last vestige of crust, and the two strolled out on the walk together, having placed one piece of squash pie where it would do the most good—in two places.

—The locomotives of the Erie use annually about 4,000 tons of sand.

A Student's Funeral at Heidelberg.

When, in the summer of 1870, the declaration of war came from the French, and academic lecture rooms were straightway transformed into hospital wards, Heidelberg students parted with many a formal ceremony, and clinked glasses with special fondness to the proud toast, "Auf Wiedersehen on the Boulevards of Paris!" And when, afterwards, while with the armies in that brief and bloody campaign, I saw many a familiar students form lying neglected in the trodden mud on hill-tops and in the beds and streams, there was but little time for ceremony, or room in the mind for pathos, as human carcasses were thrown into nameless pits, in spite of the memories that many of the dead brought vividly up of life at Berlin, and of that proud parting toast at Heidelberg. But the ceremonies that attend the burial of the student who dies amid the peaceful strife of science, and is laid beneath the classic firs that grow on the slopes of the Neckar, call the medieval past to their aid, and add to the sadness of the occasion by the chivalric forms that tradition commands. It was in the middle of his summer semester that the student had died far away from his home in Greece. No kindred were there to care for his remains. So, on his comrades fell the duty of laying his dust tenderly away according to the ancient student custom. It was at midnight that hundreds of us gathered on the Hauptgasse before the door of his simple lodgings. The students of the different corps were in full uniform—gay service caps, black swallow-tailed coats, white trousers, and high top-boots, the broad regalia of their orders swung over right shoulder and breast, and the little schlaeger blade drawn and glistening in the right hand. Each of the other students carried a blazing torch. The coffin covered with a broad pall was born on the shoulders of the dead man's best friends, and preceded by a band of music. Accompanied by the mournful notes of requiems, this imposing procession moved slowly out of the town, and ascended the mountain on the slope of which was "the acre of God." The gravediggers with uncovered heads waited leaning on their spades. In a great circle the students formed about the grave, and with the torches lightning up the dark depths of the "narrow cell" his comrades lowered the body down. Then, with the yellow torchlight playing fitfully on sombre faces, rich regalia and glistening steel, the night-wind soughing through the firs, and the stars looking down solemnly the while from on high, the prayers of the church were read by a professor, and those who knew the dead man best pronounced their brief sad eulogies. When the last word had been spoken, each student silently stepped forward from the circle to the edge of the grave, and with torch or sword reversed, while a dirge sounded over the hills, threw in a handful of earth until the coffin was hidden from sight. With a fierce blast of trumpets, the weird procession reformed among the trees, and with swinging torches and flashing swords, re-entered the gates of the town, and passed through curious crowds to a large court in front of some university buildings. Here the long line halted, and formed in a hollow square. The band struck up a wild and dashing air. The corps students posed themselves as in a combat, touched schlaegers, and then clashed the blades to the time of the music. At length, a shout was raised, the ringing of the steel ceased, and on a given signal all the torches were hurled high in air to fall in a blazing pile in the middle of the court. Around this fire, as of an auto-da-fe, the students then gathered and chatted as only students can, of life, as well as of death, until the embers all died out. With the flicker of the last brand the funeral was over, and the beer-drinking began. Over foaming mugs the traits and merits of the dead were freely discussed, anecdotes ruled the hour, and visions of Walhalla lighted many a student to his short and narrow feather bed.

A Backwoods Adventure.

"Rattlesnake Pete" is one of the features of Western Pennsylvania. Recently when talking of Pike county forty years ago, he said the woods thereabouts were wild and covered with a thick underbrush, and many kinds of reptiles and animals abounded. The species known as the catamount existed in larger numbers than any other. You know the catamount is more like the panther than anything else, being larger and more ferocious than a wild cat. One little village had been built on the edge of one of the longest stretches of woodland in the county, so that it only took a few minutes to bring you into the dense thickets. It was in the winter of 1838 that I am to tell you of. I was then about 18 years old, and as rugged and strong as most of the young men of 20 are in these times. All through the autumn the catamount and the black snake had bothered the men cutting timber for home use. Several of the villagers had been badly hurt, and one old man was killed by the tricky animal. The boys always helped in hauling the logs and pieces of timber, driving the buck wagons from the woods to the houses where it was to be dumped. After old Uncle Simeon was killed the women became badly scared and made the men go armed, and wouldn't let us youngsters go with the teams. No more trouble occurred, however, until the winter set in. Everything was quiet then, and the fright caused by the accidents of the fall had passed away. One day a terrific snow-storm set in. The flakes came down so thick that we couldn't see from our windows across the road to Sam Brigg's house. By dark it had become three feet deep and we could hardly go to the barn to feed the stock. About 7 o'clock it stopped snowing, and began to blow very hard. It grew very cold also. We heaped great logs on the fire, and had the blaze roaring up the chimney. The old man was resting quietly in the corner, smoking his pipe, and seemed not to care about what was going on, when suddenly we heard a long, deep growl coming from the woods. The old man knew what that meant, and so did some of my older brothers. The catamounts, maddened by hunger, and prevented by the storm from getting anything to eat, were coming in a body to the village. In a minute all were astir. Two of the boys started for the barn to see that the door was fast, so that the catamounts could not destroy the cattle. The rest of us were told to fasten the windows and hunt up the guns which were about the house somewhere. I went to close a window, and then I could see the dark pack rushing as fast as they could through the snow. The sky had cleared and the stars were out, so that I could see the folks at Brigg's and down the street were preparing for the hungry animals. I didn't get those blinds shut any too quick, either for the head of the gang were within a few yards of the house. Just as I was leaving the room the old man came rushing through the hall, saying, "Jim and Jake have been headed off between here and the barn by the pack, and all the wild cats are on 'em." You bet there was lively movin' around then. The old man and Bill, an older brother, took the guns and went up stairs to the bedroom windows looking out on the yard. We could hear the boys yelling for help amid the growls of the delighted animals. I put for an upper window and there was a fearful sight. Jim had drawn his jackknife and was keeping the cats at bay, but poor Jake was helpless. A big fellow had him down, and Jake had his hands on the rascal's throat with an awful grip. Four or five more of the gang were trying to get a show at Jake, too. He kicked right and left and fought like a tiger. Jim had his hands full, even though he did have a knife. They got behind him and would jump on him. He gradually worked his way toward the house, however, and sister Sue, a brave girl, with nerves like a soldier, was waiting to open the door and let him in. The old man fired from the window first, and one of the pack fell dead. Neither Bill nor the guv'ner dared shoot at the animals right around Jake for fear of shooting him. It was awful, I tell you, friends. Bill put a charge in another of the fierce brutes, and he kneeled over. By that time some of the pack were devouring the first catamount that the old man shot. But there were so many of them that even the two dead ones only drew away a few of the gang. Jim had put two of them out of the way, and was working his way fast toward safety, but he was terribly weak from the wounds the cats had given him. He was perfectly cool, though, and he shouted once to Bill: "Kill another blackguard, and then enough of 'em will be busy eatin' to give me time." Bill cracked away, and down went a catamount close to Jim. Two or three of the beasts jumped on the wounded members of the pack, and Jim made a dash for the door. Sue had it unfastened, and the minute he reached the steps she threw it open and he rushed in, but, by George! one of the hungry rascals sprang in with him. Then I tell you there was fun. She had a big meat-knife in her hand and she stabbed the brute, but it only exasperated him. It went for her right away, and in a moment there was a cut down her pretty cheek that left a scar she always carried afterward. Jim turned as quick as a flash and buried his jack-knife deep in the brute's throat. It was a stunner, but before the animal expired he gave Jim a dig in the right hand that was sore for a good many weeks. Meanwhile Jake was struggling out in the yard. How he held out as he did, with a half-dozen bloodthirsty beasts about him, is more than I could ever understand. When I stopped watching Jim, and looked again to where Jake was, he was all torn and bloody. You would't have known him, so disfigured by the catamounts was he. The only thing that saved him was the fact that some of the neighbors, hearing the noise of the guns, had come out to lend assistance. The instant they came near the house the animals scented them, and all but two left Jake. No sooner had they gone than Jim rushed out of the house, followed by Sue. I told you she was a brave girl, didn't I? Instead of making a big fuss over the cut in her face, she never thought of herself, but only of Jake. The two catamounts left Jake right away when they saw Jim and Sue, and started for them. While one of the rascals was midway between Jake and Sue, the old man put enough shot in him to end his life. Jim got the first dive at the other one, and stabbed him in the neck. Sue was by his side, and put the old butcher-knife behind one of his ears. That settled the business. Poor Jake was nearly dead; indeed, they picked him up unconscious. He lived for about a month, but the strain had been too great, and he died from the effects of the fight. The rest of the pack were killed by the neighbors, although they caused considerable trouble.

A Proverb Criticised.

Among the many proverbs that apparently have a great deal of wisdom, but which need a little analysis before accepting, is that which declares that we should not "put off until to-morrow that which can be done today." Now this proverb is erroneous in philosophy, and, if strictly followed, would often lead to a great deal of mischief. While nothing should be delayed beyond the proper hour for its doings, nothing, on the other hand, should be performed or executed until the proper hours arrives. If, in obedience to the instruction of the proverb quoted, we pursue the plan of doing everything to-day that can be done to day, we shall soon discover that we do a great many things needlessly, and a great many things wrongly. To-morrow often throws a new light upon a thing; to-morrow may develop new circumstances, bring in new conditions, alter essentially all the bearings, and hence require the "doing" to be entirely different; and time also settles many matters, so that, if a thing is left until to-morrow, it may not be necessary to do it at all. A general never fights a battle so long as he can postpone it. A lawyer never brings a suit to trial so long as he can hope for new developements or additional facts. Wise men in all things never delay a moment when the crisis. "Do nothing to-day that can postpone until to-morrow," is the cunning of policy, and the craft of the diplomatists; but "do everything to-day that ought to be done to-day," is the true wisdom of life, and to this expression the proverb should be amended.

Didn't Cut it Off.

Nobody expects that a dry goods clerk can keep his mind on every little detail of the business day in and day out without a break. That they can't do it was witnessed in a Woodward avenue store, Detroit, when a woman inquired for bed-ticking. "Certainly, three different grades," replied the clerk, as he pulled down the stuff. She gave each grade a long and close inspection and finally said: "Does this tan-color wear well?" "Eh? wear well!" repeated the clerk, his eyes on a customer at the other end of the store. "Yes, we warrant this piece, and you see for yourself that it is a perfect match for your complexion! How much shall I cut off?" That clerk may never know why that customer rose with a bound and walked out doors on a bee line, but if she ever meets him at a church festival she'll do her best to make it dreary for him.

—The United States sent last year to Europe 1,560,000.

Postal Cards.

The thrifty city of Holyoke, on the Connecticut river, and on the line of the railroad bearing the name of that sluggish stream, is now the scene of production of the millions of postal cards which are annually consumed in the country. The manufactory is an unpretentious edifice, and utterly insignificant in dimensions and otherwise, when compared with the towering paper and other mills which surround it. The business is carried on by the American Phototype Company of New York, who have a contract for a year from next July. Originally, the manufacturing was done in New York, but the papery atmosphere of Holyoke was probably more congenial to their calling, and a short time since the whole business was transferred to that point. The interior of the manufactory is seemingly as inconsequential as it is outwardly, but the firmness with which general or special visitors are denied admission seems to impress one with the fact that the concern is of more than ordinary account. The government is represented on the premises by a special agent or superintendent, who sees to it that all the cards printed are properly turned over to him, while all the other business is under the direction of the contractors. About forty hands are employed altogether, and, during working hours, they are as industriously kept from all intercourse with the outside world as if they were under the care of Warden Chamberlin of Concord. The cardboard is manufactured in the immediate vicinity by the Parsons Paper Company, and is furnished in packages of 3,000 sheets each. The work of transforming one of these packages into postal cards, counted, packed and ready for shipment is only momentary when the concern is driven to its full capacity, as is at present the case. Three of Hoe's super-royal presses are kept in operation both day and night, and each sheet bears the impression of exactly forty cards, a register attached to each press keeping a faithful record of each sheet printed. Having become properly seasoned or dried, the sheets are slit up by machinery into strips of ten cards each, and then in immediate succession a sort of rotary hopper, with ten compartments, receives the cards as fast as cut, and when each compartment contains twenty-five cards, the hopper revolves and empties them on a table. Here they are received by girls, who quickly detect and throw out all damaged or imperfect specimens. Boxing is next in order and then the cards are ready for shipment to any desired part of the country. They are placed in seamless pasteboard boxes, each box containing twenty packs or 500 cards. Lots of less than 2,000 are forwarded in these boxes, strongly wrapped in heavy paper, and large quantities are sent in strong, iron-bound wooden cases. As before intimated every process of manufacture is industriously guarded by the vigilant agent of the government. The mechanism of the registers on the presses is secured by padlocks, to which none but this agent has a key. They are examined at night and the number of sheets printed is noted. Again, in the morning, they are examined to see that they have not been tampered with before the day's work commences. A strict record is kept of all damaged or imperfect cards, also of all blank cardboard given out, and as all has to be accounted for, to the smallest fraction, undetected pilfering is rendered simply impossible. In forwarding the cards every package or box is registered and hence loss in this respect is positively guarded against. In fact, it is true that not a single card has ever been lost in the factory or in transit since their introduction into the postal system of the country.

The growing popularity of the postal card as a means of correspondence is something wonderful. The entire number manufactured and used during the first year of their introduction was 100,000,500, and during the year which has just closed, the aggregate number sent out was 246,063,060. This latter number is an increase over the number issued in 1878 of 36,879,060. It would probably be an error to attribute this marked increase in the postal card service to the late or current business boom, for it would seem that in periods of depression the public would be more likely to avail itself of cheap postage rather than in more prosperous times. The true explanation, evidently, is the growing favor which the card finds in the community as it becomes more familiar, as is manifested by the steadiness of the increased demand during the half-dozen years it has been before the community. The orders from different post offices differ in amount very greatly, of course, and they do not in any degree represent the population or general business done at the several points. It may be stated, as an interesting fact, that New York has lately taken nearly one-tenth of all the cards issued, consuming upward of half a million a week. All the large cities use more than the actual business of the post office indicates, but this discrepancy is accounted for from the fact that many country manufacturers and traders have their advertising circulars printed on the backs of postal cards, and the city printers who do the work buy their cards in the city where the printing office is located. Many small post offices surrounding large cities like Philada. and New York also purchase from the nearest metropolitan point, instead of applying through the proper channel of the Post Office Department. The proper way is for a postmaster to send his order to Washington, which in turn is sent to Holyoke, and from this point the cards are forwarded direct to their destination. The capacity of the concern is about two million per day, though until lately not more than a million has been the average. It is intended to keep about twenty-five million cards on hand, and for this purpose a special fireproof vault has been provided. Beside the increased demand for the domestic cards, there has also come a sudden call for the new international cards. Upward of two million have been furnished during the brief period of their introduction. While it may be true that England has taken the lead in the postal card blessing in point of priority of date, it is questionable if the system has been so generally adopted by all classes of the community. This inference is drawn from the presence of a couple of commissioners of the French Government at the Holyoke manufactory a short time since, who were sent over specially to investigate the working of the postal card branch of the mail service in the United States previous to its adoption in France.

—Rapid rivers flow seven miles per hour.

BRIEFS.

—During the past year 16,000 persons left British India for British colonies.

—The British Government will give $3,750,000 for Irish amelioration this year.

—The Prince of Wales lays the corner stone of the Cathedral of Truro in April.

—Manbouquet, the celebrated French steeplechaser, was sold recently for $8,000.

—When an English peer is made a Knight of the Garter his robes cost about $500.

—The salaries paid to federal officeholders id the whole country amount to $31,252,107.

—In Amsterdam there are 22,000 Jews engaged in cutting, polishing and setting diamonds.

—Mr. W. B. Astor owns a narrow-gauge railroad in Florida which is doing a good business.

—Mississippi was the banner cotton State last year, having raised 75,000 bales more than Texas.

—The Baptist theological seminaries tn the United States have 450 young men studying for the ministry.

—Nearly 49 per cent. of the colored children of Tennessee were last year enrolled in the public schools.

—Cents have begun to appear in San Francisco. Hitherto five-cent pieces have been the least coin received.

—Th United States government pays srlaries to 98,000 persons, of whom only 236 this year come from Georgia.

—The late A. E. Borie, of Philadelphia, left a bequest of $10,000 to Gen. Grant, of whom he has long been a near and intimate friend.

—Keen, the English bicyclist, offers to wager $1,000 against $4,000 that he will beat the best American trotting record for one mile.

—France has just been able, ten years after the event, to figure up the cost to her of the Franco-German war. It was $3,000,000,000.

—A young man at Canton, Ohio, has sued his own mother for $10,000 for slander. She circulated a report that he was drunken and thievish.

—The salt in the ocean is estimated by Schaf haul at 4,051,342 cubic geographical miles, or about four times more than the mass of the Alps.

—The German Government has recently re-christened no less than 680 places in Alsace-Lorraine, giving them German names in the place of French.

—The grape islands of Lake Erie have 4,000 acres of vines, and the yield in 1879 was 16,000,000 pounds. The wine production was 1,526,400 gallons.

—The French Assembly refused to gradt full and complete amnesty to all Communists who were arrested and convicted in 1869-70 by a vote of 115 to 313.

—During the past year Massachusetts has instructed 311,558 public schools. The teachers numbered 8,749. There were 216 high schools, having 19,311 pupils.

—Thirty thousand eggs of the Atlantic salmon have been placed in a hatching house at Bloomsburg, Pa., where there are already 500,000 California salmon.

—More cotton is passing through the looms and spindles of New England than at any time since the beginning of the business. The English consumption is about 32,000 bales a week.

—The number of slave vessels captured by British cruisers in the years 1874-78 was 152, of which 115 were condemned and 37 restored to their owners. The number of slaves captured was 2,185.

—King Cetywayo is said to be a man of simple and abstemious habits. He does not drink to any excess and does not smoke, his reason for not doing so being that "it would spoil the color of his teeth."

—The Hawaiian Legislature has appropriated fifty thousand dollars to build a palace for the king, whose home has hitherto consisted of a number of wooden cottages enclosed by a high stone wall.

—Mr. Peter Sprague, of Boston, is said to be the oldest member of Congress now living. He was a Representative from Maine from 1824 to 1829, when he was chosen Senator, and acted in that capacity until 1835.

—Mr. J. C. Flood has just bestowed a pleasant little amount of pin-money upon his daughter, Miss Jennie Flood; he has registered $2,500,000 in United States bonds in her name. This gift provides for her an income of $100,000 a year.

—Joseph Brandt, the famous chief of the Mohawks, the half-breed savage who led the Six Nations as British allies in the Revolutionary War, is to have a monument costing $30,000 erected to his memory in Brantford, Canada, where he died in 1817.

—The total value of the imports for the fiscal year of 1879 amounted to $466,073,775, of which $314,115,362 were imported into New York. The total domestic exports for the same period amounted to $717,093,777, of which $338,817,546 were exported from New York.

—Hat-making was first begun in Danbury, Conn., in 1780, the factory there employing three workmen and turning out three hats a day. There are now employed 1,800 persons, and they make 17,400 hats a day. The payroll is $23,000 each week. In 1780 it was under $20 a week.

—The New-York Methodist Book Concern has a net capital of $1,080,563. The net profits for the year were $71,155. The sales of publications amounted to $825,034, against $912,726 the previous year. The Western Book Concern, at Cincinnati, has a net capital of $464,178, the profits for the year being $27,807. The sales fell off $85,873 from the previous year.

—The production of beet root sugar in Europe, according to the statistics furnished by Herr Licht of Magdeburg was 1,380,000 tons for 1879, against 1,574,154 tons 1878. This amount is divided as follows among the various States of Europe: Germany, 410,000 tons; France, 300,000; Austro-Hungary, 365,000; Russia, 225,000; Belgium, Holland, Italy, &c., 80,000. In France the diminution in the production of this article was 182,000 tons.