

Acts.

To good to speak in kindly guise,
And gentle words we can;
Fair speech should lead the human mind,
And love link man to man.
But stop not at the gentle words;
Let words with language dwell;
The one who gilds, or starving birds
Should scatter crumbs as well;
The money that is warm and true
Must lead to helping hand,
For those that talk, yet fall to do,
But "build upon the sand."

A BICYCLE ELOPEMENT.

BY H. C. DOBSON.

I loved my wheel to distraction.
Edith loved her wheel, also, to distraction. Consequently the attraction of this distraction united our souls in single thoughts and caused our hearts to palpitate on the unit plan.

Of course we were "engaged" and looking forward to a honeymoon of all wheel and no who and in the meantime enjoying almost daily bicycle trips through the lovely country about our rural town.

No earthly sweetness could surpass those blissful rides.

The fragrant flowers nodded, the tall trees bowed, the breezes whispered and the wild birds sang their most glorious serenade to us as we two trifle doves on wheels passed before them.

Dame Nature in her gayest dress smiled every time she saw us, and so did a good many other folks, no doubt, but as we were too much "engaged" to level their levity, they smiled in vain.

It was no wonder that Edith and I became romantic and sentimental when to the purest joy of courting was added the next best delight of cycling. Such a combination was indeed calculated to make love's young dream too bright to last.

There seemed no obstacle between us and perfect happiness except the consent of Edith's parents to our union. I naturally felt timid about asking for it and wanted Edith, who was much better acquainted with them, to speak first. But she insisted that it was my place to make the opening address, and utterly refused to do anything in the matter beyond vigorously seconding the motion.

"Well, dear Edith," I said, during one of our cycling trips, "you might at least tell me the surest way of making your father like me before I come to the point. How would it do to start a little political discussion to begin with—taking his side, of course, and at- or gradually drawing him into an excitement—then while he's mad at the other fellows, offer to become his constitution and vote against the fascals with him?"

"I hardly think that would work," said Edith soberly, "for as no one knows how pa is at present, he has been a Republican and a Democrat and a Prohibitionist and a Magwump. I heard lately he was on a fence—whatever that means. If you didn't strike him just right, you know we would be really ruined."

"Suppose I talked bicycles to him—don't you think that would arouse an enthusiasm and make him want me to be his companion in the glorious sport?"

"O, not for the world," Edith cried, "Pa once took a header and the sea is on his nose yet. He utterly detects that superior joy."

"Then Edith," I said sadly, "I'll have to come out flatfooted and ask him to bless us. If he won't—"

"He shan't," bravely answered Edith, "only don't mention politics nor cycling."

Assuming a boldness that I did not feel, that very night I sought a business interview with my father in the parlor of his home.

As he entered the room I, nervous for the awful ordeal, rose and, with my best bow, wished him a "good evening."

"Good evening! Take a seat, sir," he said in a rather a too dignified tone for my comfort. "I understand you want to see me on very important business."

"Yes, sir," I, trembling, replied. "I am here to ask you for, for—"

"For what, young man?" He spoke pretending not to notice my blushes.

"For your daughter's hand." The old gentleman gazed at me in evident surprise at my temerity.

"My daughter's hand," he slowly repeated, "which hand, might I ask, do you want?"

"Why, both, sir," I stammered. "I love her to distraction and—"

with your salary to support a wife? Do you know that my daughter's dress alone cost, last year, five hundred dollars?"

The old gentleman thought he had me there, but he didn't.

"Yes, sir," I answered meekly, "I advised her to get them."

"Ah, ha! I see. That accounts for the young lady's extravagance. In time of prosperity you were preparing for adversity—at my expense. Thought the old man a good goose to pluck, did you? Well, my noble youth, while I admire your foresight and business capabilities I must confess you are altogether too smart to be my son-in-law. I distinctly and decidedly have the pleasure of informing you that I intend to keep my daughter's hands. Put if mine can be of any assistance in helping you down the steps—here they are."

That ended the unfortunate interview.

It was a long, long week before I saw Edith and her woful face was a picture of distress. Mine was more so. "Edith," I groaned as we dejectedly rode along on wheels, "how can we live without each other?"

"We can't and we won't," she bravely exclaimed, "pa is just too horrid for anything. I'm mad enough to elope."

"Hurrah!" I shouted, "I'm with you—rain or shine. Let's elope on our bicycles. Never was done before. Strictly original. Patent applied for. We'll be famous the world over, and your pa will be proud of us."

"Yes—but," thoughtfully spoke Edith when she recovered from the shock, how can we manage to take my five-year stock of dresses. You won't be able to buy me any till you're in the firm you said."

"Easy," I answered. "You can smuggle them in the Luna, wearing one at a time under your every day dress, and place them in a trunk I'll have hidden in the hay. Then I'll put wheels on the trunk and we'll tow it behind when we elope. What a team we'll make!"

"And what a capital contriver you are," cried her dear, innocent girl; "but you'd have to pull the hardest though."

"Never fear," I laughed, "only name the happy night."

At the appointed time I stood in the shadow made by the full moon under Edith's window. As the clock struck midnight Edith poked her sweet face out and whistled softly. Quickly I raised a ladder to her casement, and with a Romeo's ardor helped my fair Juliet to the ground where our glittering, iron sled stood waiting impatiently to be off. The loaded trunk on well greased wheels was down by the gate ready to hitch on behind us and the minister in the next town was waiting according to arrangement to tie the ten dollar knot when we arrived.

Although Edith said that both her pa and ma were soundly snoring when she left her room I know it wasn't safe to linger so, wasting no time in saying "good byes" to the old homestead, up we leaped on our gallant steeds and away we flew down the carriage drive to the front gate almost forgetting the invaluable trunk in our mad haste to escape. Stopping and slipping its rope harness about my waist and working like a steam engine to haul it over the smooth, well-maintained road we fled in the direction of my friend, the parson.

Our brave cycles needed no whip and spur to make them go. They seemed to feel the awful responsibility thrust upon them and did their level best.

Still the trunk handicapped mine to such an extent that soon I wished I hadn't urged Edith to become so many new dresses, but it was too late to repent.

On we went with a long ten miles between us and victory, and a short one mile between us and Edith's pa, who might wake up at any moment to pursue and capture the trunk and—Horror! a clatter of advancing hoofs from behind told us the threatened danger had arrived. On the straight moonlighted road not a half mile off a man on horseback—Edith's furious pa without a doubt—was in full chase.

"Fy! Love! Fy!" I cried to my frightened sweetheart, as I leaped from my wheel and pushed the heavy trunk into a roadside thicket. "Fy for your life!" I shrieked when I gained her side again, "we must get to the minister's—"

How we flew. Our wheels never touched the ground; they bounded through the air; like lightning, like sky rockets they whizzed. At the same time our pursuer—Edith's pa to a certainty—was near enough to yell for us to stop and gaining, for it was up hill before us.

But we reached the hill top ere he caught us, and away we flashed like a pair of cannon balls fired from a dynamite gun and followed by a tornado.

One mile, two miles, three miles we raced, pursued and pursued, neither losing nor gaining, as in silence we all streaked past woods and fields and scattered farmhouses lining the dreary way.

'Twas the greatest test of speed and endurance ever known between horse and bicycle. All records were broken and—hurrah! The wheel kept ahead as usual.

At the sixth mile the horse began faltering behind in spite of its rider's efforts. At the seventh mile Edith's pa was out of sight.

Two miles more of the cycle's lightning speed and we reached our temporary haven of safety, the minister's where its sleepy owner was sitting up and praying for our safe arrival.

In we rushed and in ten minutes our matrimonial knot was firmly tied. Then we went out on the piazza to look for "pa."

He soon came along on his tired horse and seeing our wheel at the parson's gate stopped to find out what it meant.

Edith, aided by me and the parson, told him and the sensible old gentleman not only gave us his blessing but afterwards traded his horse for a wheel.

It is needless to say that he now lives to distraction and thanks his dutiful son-in-law for the same.—[Chicago Sun.]

New "Siamese" Twins.

That strange freak of nature known as "the Siamese twins" has, it appears, been repeated in Orissa. The "Orissa twins" are described as two little Urlyta girls of about five summers old. When first heard of they were leaving by steamer for this country on their way to the World's Fair at Chicago, though they will first be exhibited here. They are, it is stated, firmly joined together, and if one is fed both are satisfied. When they were in early infancy at Hoopara, in the interior of Orissa, the native villagers looked upon them as the incarnation of the devil, and their parents were boycotted by their caste people.

The story is that the father's first impulse was to separate them by cutting the sac which joins them together, and the mark made in the attempt is still visible. A wealthy tinsmith of the district, however, intervened. Kotter Naisik, the father of the twins, is reported to be now steadily growing rich. The Siamese twins, Chang and Eng, were, it will be remembered, of the male sex. They were born in 1811 and died in America within two hours of each other, in January, 1874.—[London News.]

Great Haul of White Elephants.

New happy hunting grounds have been found by Mr. Savi, the renowned superintendent of the elephant khedi at Dacca, with the result that he has brought down this season the enormous number of 200 of these unwieldy animals from the heart of the Goro Hills. It is probable that they had never before seen a human being, and they were certainly unaware of the arts by which elephants are caught; for hitherto this large tract of country had not been hunted, owing to the difficulty of making a road by which to get out the new captives. It had become important that the old hunting districts should have a rest. Now that the Goro Hills are brought within reach by Mr. Savi's enterprise, it is thought the risk of exhaustion in the old haunts will be minimized.

The Mandarin Tongue.

The most widely spread language in China is the Mandarin. It is used in one form or another in fourteen or fifteen of the nineteen provinces composing China. There are also Northern and Southern Mandarin tongues. The best Northern Mandarin dialect is spoken in Peking, while the best Southern Mandarin is spoken in Nankin. A third marked form of the same tongue is used in West China, especially in Tsen-Kiang. People who speak the various Mandarin dialects, however, can understand one another readily. If we estimate the population of China at 350,000,000 of people, at least 300,000,000 use the Mandarin tongue. All persons, from whatever part of China, who desire to enter political or official life, learn this tongue.

It is estimated that 3,000,000 theatre tickets are issued in the country every week at fifty cents each. The total sum expended every year for this form of amusement would amount to \$91,000,000.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

Take a lot of good nature and plenty of fun
And stir them up often together,
Then once in a while add a sweet, sunny smile—
'Twill make brightness in dreariest weather.
—[Youth's Companion.]

A FISHERMAN'S STRANGE PET.

An Astoria fisherman has a tame sea lion which follows his boat as a dog trots after his master. He brought up a baby sea lion in a net one day during the fishing season, and the helpless little creature, excited so plaintively that he took it ashore and cared for it. All through the winter he fed it and it became greatly attached to him. This season the sea lion has accompanied him very frequently. It swims astern of the boat and takes a lively interest in the fishing. When the net is hauled in the queer pet comes alongside and barks in its strange way until it gets an allowance of fish.—[New York Advertiser.]

ANIMAL AFFECTIONS.

Julia May is in love. She is only three years old. The object of her affection is Duck, a large setter dog. These facts will not appear so surprising when it is stated that Julia is a filly, and one of the speediest that ever speared over a Western track. Julia's parents, the mighty Springbok and the peerless Easter Plow, were burned to death in the Megibben stock barn, near Cynthia, Ky. Julia was saved and brought to Latonia with the stable. The filly was a "cuck" as a two-year-old, but despite the assiduous attention of her trainers she seems going back in form at present. This is due to her astonishing fondness for Duck, the setter.

Julia will not eat unless Duck is perched on the manger. She cannot be induced to gallop unless Duck accompanies her, and she refuses genuine distress when the dog is out of her sight. Mr. Megibben is puzzled and is thinking of killing Duck and sending Julia back to the farm mill she recovers from her strange attachment.—[New York Recorder.]

A JEALOUS COW.

A few years ago I had a quitchmilch cow, "Rose," which was fond of Thomas, the stableman, and also showed an aversion to eggs. One morning I had just begun to dress when I heard my puppy barking in the cow shed. The next minute I heard a roar of unmistakable fear and anguish—a human cry. I dashed down stairs, and at the same moment arrived my son, preschool, in hand.

There lay Thomas on his face in a dry gutter by the side of the road to the cow-house and the cow butting angrily at him. We drove off the cow and poor Thomas scuffled across the road, slipped through a wire fence, stood up and drew breath.

"Well, Thomas," said I, "what's the matter with Rose?"

"Well, sir," said Thomas, "I heard the pup bark and, indeed, him, and I was just coming out of the cowhouse with the pup in my arms, when Rose came round the corner. She knocked me down and would have killed me."

Thomas had, indeed, had a narrow escape; his trousers were ripped up from end to end, and red marks all along his legs showed where Rose's horns had grazed along them.

"Well," said I, "you'd better not milk her this morning, since she's in such a fury."

"Oh! I'll milk her fright enough, sir, by and by; just give her a little time to settle down," said Thomas. It's only jealousy of that 'ere pup, sir. She couldn't abide seeing me a-fondling of it."

In about twenty minutes Thomas called me down to see the milk. The cow had stood quiet enough to be milked. But the milk was deeply tinged with blood, and in half an hour a copious red precipitate had settled to the bottom of the pail. Till then I had doubted the jealousy theory. After that I believed.—[London Spectator.]

He Was Really Fishing.

Friend—Who is your husband?
Hostess—He is off on a trout fishing trip.

"Oh, yes, I've heard such stories before. How do you know he is really fishing?"

"I have proof. He sent me some fish."

"Fish! Fish can be bought in market."

"Those weren't! They were such miserable little bits of ones no market would sell them."—[New York Weekly.]

A LOST CABLE.

How It Was Fished Up From the Atlantic's Bottom.

A Marvelous Triumph of Engineering Skill.

At a dinner given the late Cyrus W. Field by the New York Chamber of Commerce, on November 15, 1866, he told about the recovery of the Atlantic cable which was lost in the ocean's bed, in these words:

"After landing the cable safely at Newfoundland, we had another task—to return to mid-ocean and recover that lost in the expedition of last year. This achievement has, perhaps, excited more surprise than the other."

It was the triumph of the highest nautical and engineering skill. We had four ships, and on board of them some of the best seamen in England—men who knew the ocean as a hunter knows every trail in the forest. There was Capt. Moriarty, who was in the Agamemnon in 1857-8.

"He was in the Great Eastern last year, and saw the cable when it broke; and he and Capt. Anderson at once took their observations so exact that they could go right to the spot. After fending it, they marked the line of the cable by a row of buoys, for fogs would come down and shut out sun and stars, so that no man could take an observation. These buoys were anchored a few miles apart. They were numbered, and each had a flag-staff on it, so that it could be seen by day, and a lantern by night. Thus having taken our bearings, we stood off three or four miles, so as to come abreast of the buoys, and then, casting over the grapnel, drifted slowly down upon it, dragging the bottom of the ocean as we went. At first it was a little awkward to fish in such deep water, but our men got used to it, and soon could cast a grapnel almost as straight as an old whaler throws a harpoon."

"Our fishing line was of formidable size. It was made of rope, twisted with wires of steel, so as to bear a strain of thirty tons. It took about two hours for the grapnel to reach bottom, but we could tell when it struck. I often went to the bow and sat on the ropes, and could feel by the quiver that the grapnel was dragging on the bottom two miles under us. But it was a very slow business. We had storms and calms and fogs and squalls."

"Still we worked on day after day. Once, on the 17th day of August, we got the cable up, and had it in full sight for five minutes—a long, slinky monster, fresh from the jaws of the ocean's bed; but our men began to cheer so wildly that it seemed to be frightened, and suddenly broke away and went down."

"This accident kept us at work two weeks longer; but finally, on the last night of August, we caught it. We had cast the grapnel thirty times. It was a little before midnight on Friday night that we hooked the cable, and it was a little after midnight Sunday morning when we got it on board. What was the anxiety of those twenty-six hours! The strain on every man's life was like the strain on the cable itself. When finally it appeared, it was midnight; the lights of the ship and in the boats around our bows, as they flashed in the faces of the men, showed them eagerly watching for the cable to appear on the water."

"At length it was brought to the surface. All who were allowed to approach crowded forward to see it. Yet not a word was spoken; only the voices of the officers in command were heard giving orders. All fell as if life and death hung on the issue. It was only when it was brought over the bow and on the deck that men dared to breathe. Even then they hardly believed their eyes. Some crept towards it to feel of it, to be sure it was there. Then we carried it along to the electrician's room to see if our long-sought treasure was alive or dead."

"A few minutes of suspense, and a flash told of the lightning current again set free. Then did the feeling long pent up burst forth. Some turned away their heads and wept, others broke into cheers, and the cry ran from man to man, and was heard down in the engine rooms, deck below deck, and from the boats on the water, and the other ships, while the rockets lighted up the darkness of the sea."

"Then with thankful hearts we turned our faces again to the west. But soon the wind rose, and for thirty-six hours we were exposed to all the dangers of a storm on the Atlantic. Yet, in the very height and fury of the gale, as I sat in the electrician's

room, a flash of light came up from the deep, which having crossed to Newfoundland, came back to me, in mid-ocean, telling that those so dear to me, whom I had left on the banks of the Hudson, were well and following us with their wishes and their prayers.

"This was like a whisper of God from the sea, bidding me keep heart and hope. The Great Eastern bore herself proudly through the storm as if she knew that the vital cord which was to join the two hemispheres lying at her stern, and so on Saturday, the 7th of September, we brought our second cable safely to the shore."

Firemen's Nerves.

A training-school system for firemen is one of the interesting features of the fire-lighting department of Chicago.

New firemen are inflated and add ones skilled in the dangers and necessities of their calling at the engineering schools where look and ladder companies are stationed. At these places what is known as the "pomper drill" is gone through, says the Tribune, and here, too, the various devices designed to ensure the safety of human life are tested. And at these places also the nerve of a new man is given a thorough trial.

To the lay observer the pomper drill is a thrilling sight. It strains one to see a 200-pound man run up the wall of a five-story building by no other means than a skeleton ladder, twelve feet long—a device that appears to be unable to bear the weight of an average youth. Yet this is done, and done so quickly as to take one's breath away.

Attached to each engine-house is a three-story tower with window ledges on the sides. The pomper ladder is curved at one end, and the new fireman is taught how to rest this on the first-story ledge so that it will not slip while he is climbing. After he has reached the first ledge he draws up the ladder and hangs it from the ledge above. Then he climbs again, repeating the process until the roof is reached. The ladder having no safe grasp on the ledges, is likely to slip unless skillfully managed. The fireman's weight must hold the ladder securely in place. A slight shifting of his weight to one side would raise one of the curved prongs resting on the ledge, and, this slipping, ladder and fireman would fall. It was by an accident of this kind that a fireman lost his life a few days ago at the engine-house on Pacific avenue.

The object of perfecting firemen in this drill is to make them skilful in scaling buildings to the roof where time is a valuable consideration. An expert fireman can get to the top of a building long before a truck ladder is in place.

Another drill is that with the steel net, a device for catching anyone jumping from a building. The firemen are taught how to hold the net, and tests are made by having persons jump from short elevations. In this drill a system of signals is used to secure prompt and uniform movement on the part of the men. This is to enable them to move together at a captain's signal as to catch a falling body.

The Universal Mosquito.

"I have been as far south as Patagonia, and as far north as Iceland," said Capt. Frank Powers, now at the Academy, and I have yet to find a country that is not infested by mosquitoes. It is the general opinion that these pests are confined to warm countries, but that is a mistake. In the short summers of Iceland they fairly swarm, and a man may get all the bites he can take out of it in the Straits of Magellan if he goes there at the proper time. Mexico was a terra incognita to the mosquito until a few years ago, but he is plentiful enough there now. It is said that they were imported, with much other undesirable stock, from the United States. If that be true I do not wonder at the dislike with which the descendants of the Montezumas regard the Americans."—[St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

His Only Enemy.

When Jones was at college he was a most excellent fellow, and only had one enemy—soap. He was called Dirty Jones. One day the gang, Brown, went into his room, and demonstrating with him on the untidy, slovenly and dirty state of everything, said:

"Upon my word, Dirty, it's too bad; the only clean thing in the room is your towel!"—[London Tid-Bits.]

In America, as in France, the average size of families has been steadily decreasing for the last half century. The average is now 4.94, when in 1850 it was 5.30.

"The Land of Little People."

Yes, the land of little people is a lovelier land than ours. With its mine of new-found treasures, mossy glades and fairy fountains, Earth, her robe of choicest beauty spreads to woo the tender feet, and the angels whispering round them thrill the air with accents sweet.

Mourning brings no pang of sorrow, troubles lightly pass away. Hope's horizon is tomorrow, and the sky is bright today.

Every moment has its blessing, sweeter thoughts and falser flowers. Yes, the land of little people is a lovelier land than ours.

But from over the silent river comes to us a purer glow— Pure even than the sunbeams that the little people know, and the soft smile of the heaven's stars upon the weary ear.

Sweeter than the angels whisper that the little people hear, and the wanders, overstriven, humbled as a little child, knows the fact is all forgiven, and his God is reconciled.

When around his faltering footsteps comes the blessing of the dove, from the fairest world of aye, from the home of truth and love. —[C. Wolfe, in New York Advertiser.]

HUMOROUS.

Nothing tires the soul of a man more than a shoe peg.

Many a woman who cannot drive a nail or a horse can drive a man.

A row of pins amounts to a great deal to the man who sits down on them.

Bob—I don't see how you can stand that fellow Blinkington. Claire—I can't; I sit down on him.

Charlie Thawggin's How dare you? "You said you'd be a sister to me, didn't you?" "Yes." "Well I always kiss my sister whenever I feel like it."

"There's only one good thing about a clam," remarked young Freddy, as he dextrously removed a handful of gravel from his mouth, "he never loses his sand."

Mrs. Youngwife (at breakfast)—There is no bread on the table, Nora. Nora—Sure, there's none in the house. Mrs. Youngwife (severely)—Then make some toast.

She always used to shake my head with a touch as light as a feather. Last night I laid I loved her and she shook me altogether.

Smith (with effusion)—Hello, Brown, is that you? I heard you were drowned! Brown (with sadness)—No it was my brother, Smith (thoughtlessly)—What a pity!

Miss Drop—Why I wonder what is the matter with my eye? Do they seem to have a filmy appearance? Mr. Swiftright—Just about as usual, my dear. They'll be well again in a minute.

"I have just gained your mother's consent, Clara, dear." "But, Mr. Swift, I am so young. I—really—"

"I don't think it will make any difference, as I am to be your step-father."

He had brought her a chair, then a fan, then a box, and as he went after her (shawl, her friend remarked): "You seem to think a great deal of Mr. Summers." "Yes," was the reply, "I like him for his fetching ways."

A Swell Chinese Dinner.

General Wong, commander of the Chinese troops in the neighborhood of Canton, has been entertaining the foreign consuls, the commissioner and deputy commissioners of customs, the chairman of the municipal council, and others in the Swatow Guildhall. The bill of fare was as follows: Bird's-nest soup, pigeon's eggs, sharks' fins, fried quail, stewed pigeons, mushrooms (shredded), meatcakes and chicken soups, roast chicken (roasted), white fungus, boiled mutton and onions, chicken, walnuts and mushrooms, roast mutton, dolphins' mouths, sucking pig and roast duck with garlic, cucumber and patties, crabapple tea and cakes, congee with ducks' eggs and salt turnips, boiled rice and a variety of sweets. In the matter of liquids, a variety of other best samshus were served, together with foreign wines, including champagne.

Ice Water Without Ice.

Here is a way to get ice-cold water in places where there is no ice. Wrap a soft—say porous—log, one of those common carbon things—in flannel—wet flannel; wrap it all around, leaving no place exposed to the air; place it, filled with water, in an open window—exposed to all the air there is.

Keep the flannel wet. In an hour the contents of the jug will be almost as cool as if they had been iced.

The Methodists of this country publish 147 papers, the Roman Catholics 127, Baptists 120, Presbyterians 53, Protestant Episcopalians 47.