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## DOLICE FAR NIENTE.

A little time of silence in the heat,  
A little time of indolent delight,  
A little slumber at her gentle feet  
Who brings enchantment and excess of light;  
A little languid dreaming in the sun,  
And, ah, how simply happiness is won!

Long have we toil'd in dusty city ways,  
To snare the flying form that will not turn  
And bless us, all our bitter, strenuous days;  
Long have we borne with hearts that throb and yearn,  
The sting of sorrow. Ev'ry human woe  
Has stricken us, and yet we did not know.

We did not know what happy dreamers guess,  
That only when the busy hands are still,  
And thought contents itself in idleness,  
Is she subservient to our grasping will.  
Then, 'twixt a slumber and a sigh, man hears  
The merry haunting music of the years.

A little time shut in with flow'rs and leaves,  
A little space to watch the clouds go by,  
Drifting in depths of blue, and sadness leaves  
The heart as fresh and radiant as the sky.  
And she who scord'd us when we could but weep,  
Visits our hearts when they are prone to sleep.

—Pail Mail Gazette.



MRS. PONTIFF lived in a land of dreams—that beautiful isle of anywhere. Her lines were cast in places that admitted of an almost total exemption from the sordid affairs of domesticity. When, as it occasionally chanced, plain, practical Mr. Pontiff requested from her some service demanding action, the look of gentle, surprised reproach she turned upon him, made him feel that he was a thing of clay. Her eyes, like old folks' memories, excelled in sights at long range. With ears, eyes and thoughts for a way she was a combination of amiability, absent mindedness and visionary abstraction.

One morning Mr. Pontiff received a telegram from an en route sister.

"She will have to be met, Helen," he said depressively.

"We will meet but we will miss her," murmured Sonny Pontiff.

"Her train arrives at 12:50, don't forget, Helen."

"She can remember that, because if it is ten to one if she catches it," argued Sonny.

"I'll telephone up to you when it is time to start," said the head of the family, ignoring the interpositions of his daughter.

"It's such a beautiful day, I think I will walk to the station," said Mrs. Pontiff sweetly.

"I fear you will forget your destination," said her husband anxiously.

"Oh, Henry, I am not quite as bad as that," faintly protested Mrs. Pontiff. "You really exaggerate my failing."

"Helen," rebuked Mr. Pontiff earnestly, "I couldn't do that. When I recall the time you alighted from the street car and left little Sonny to take five round trips before you remembered his existence, I do not feel as if there was anything you could fasten in your memory."

Mrs. Pontiff sighed. "That was some years ago. There are times now when I wish I could forget Sonny for that length of time."

"Her forgetting me 'wasn't just so remarkable as her squandering eight cent dollars on a pair of slippers to wear to the charity ball and then forgetting to take off her rubbers," chided Mr. Pontiff.

"Now, who is it, Helen, you are going to meet?" asked Mr. Pontiff warningly, as he started for the office.

"Your sister," she replied triumphantly.

"And what time does her train arrive?"

"One-ten," she said, hesitatingly, while Sonny laughed in his delight.

"Oh, Helen, 12:50," prompted Mr. Pontiff.

"Now, Sonny surely said one-ten." "Never pay the slightest attention to what Sonny says."

"How perfectly foolish to build the widest bridge in the country across the narrowest river in the world!"

"Well, then, don't you see," laughed Sonny, "that it is then the shortest bridge in the world, so it is as broad as it is long."

"You are getting into deep waters, Sonny," interposed Mr. Pontiff. "You remind me of a man who was President of a street car line that was only a mile long. He was posing at a national meeting of the Street Car Association as a magnate. He made a speech, and in one of his most impressive pauses some one sneered: 'Sit down! Your road's only a mile long.' True," he said, "true, my road is only a mile long, but it is just as wide as any road in the world."

The day was one of those indescribable links between late spring and early summer. There were delightful promises in the air of coming beauties, and Mrs. Pontiff, as she made her way stationward, felt at peace with all mankind, even unto her coming sister-in-law.

She walked on in dreamy forgetfulness of all about her save the liquid sky, the soft air and the delicate breeze until she came to the river. Must she cross on that single narrow beam extending from shore to shore? She looked helplessly about her. It was the noon hour and no one was in speaking distance save a solitary laborer on the opposite bank. See could never get her courage to walk that plank. Then she recalled what Sonny had said about people using this temporary foot bridge.

"I ought to be ashamed," she reasoned, "to be afraid to do what probably thousands of people do daily. I suppose every man, woman and child in Elkton have tripped across this river on this plank. I am always the last one in town to do anything."

Encouraged by these self-suggestions, she put one slender, unsteady foot on the beam. Then another tremulous step and she poised on the brink.

"Oh, I can't!" she wailed.

Then she remembered Henry's tales of how his pioneer mother, in her early days, went to a Western wilderness to live and used to cross the river on stringers.

Reinforced by this colonial recollection, she took a few steps. Then the effect of the stimulating reflections passed away and left her weak, helpless and scared dimway across the sluggish, mild stream, which now seemed to her a roaring cataract. "How could I have ever said it was the narrowest river in the world?" she thought.

She was now utterly paralyzed from terror and unable to take another step. There was only one thing she could do, and she did it strenuously. She screamed. The lone laborer working on the opposite side turned, and saw her.

"Well, wouldn't that get you!" he ejaculated, and then called out:

"Hold on there! I'm a-coming," and he hastened toward her.

Never in the world had anything looked more beautiful to her than the sight of this stogy, red-faced, blue-ovalled, black-piped laborer approaching her with a step of ease and air of security. When he reached her he turned about.

"Put your arms around me," he said, "shut your eyes and hang on tight." She obeyed these instructions so implicitly that the laborer felt as if he had an electric rheumatic belt about his waist.

Mrs. Pontiff had always been conscious of an instinctive shrinking from the "common people," but she followed this plebeian coarse-garbed toiler blindly and willingly.

"Here we be!" he announced cheerfully, and Mrs. Pontiff opened her frightened eyes to find herself once more on the beloved terra firma. With a hysterical laugh she sank down on a pile of lumber.

"Say, was you doing it on a bet?" asked her rescuer, curiously.

"What!" she exclaimed, staring at him.

"Well, I heard Kit Dooligan and one or two women say how they were a-going to be the first to walk the plank, and the fellows about town have been giving them dares and putting up money on them, and I thought maybe you society folks was doing the same. You're a winner, though. The first but me to cross that ere plank."

Mrs. Pontiff shuddered. "What do you mean? Isn't that the bridge people use right along? How do they cross?"

"It was his turn for a shock now. 'Great Scott!' he ejaculated. 'Didn't you see that bridge over there?'"

She followed his index finger. On the other side of the piers of the proposed bridge were terraced steps leading down to the water's edge, where was constructed a snug little bridge securely railed.

She was silent a moment. Then she turned to him.

"I was getting dizzy when you came to my help, and in another moment I should have fallen in and drowned. I wish you would take this; it's all I have with me," and she put a ten-dollar bill into his surprised hand.

"Yes," she said, in reply to his faint protestations, "it's little enough, and please never tell any one."

As she hurried on to the station, she thought:

"I wouldn't have Henry and Sonny know about it for the world!"

At the station she encountered her husband pacing the platform.

"Why, right on time!" he said in a pleased, surprised tone. "I telephoned to the house, but you had left. I got another telegram from Carrie, and she can't come today."

Mrs. Pontiff made no response.

"I'll ride up home with you," he said, halting a carriage.

When the cabman had closed the door, Mrs. Pontiff burst into tears.

"Why, Helen," remonstrated her husband, "you can't be disappointed at Carrie's non-appearance, or are those tears of relief?"

"Maybe she will come to-morrow," sobbed Mr. Pontiff.

"Well, never mind! Don't cross bridges until you come to them!"

At this injunction his wife, to his surprise, changed her tears to laughter.

"Helen's nature is even more delicate and sensitive than I thought," he reflected. "I must be more careful of her."

That evening Mr. Pontiff picked up the Evening Journal and Sonny did likewise the Herald. Then there issued from each an exclamation of surprise.

With dread forebodings, Mrs. Pontiff hastened to look over her lord and master's shoulder.

Then she fell into his arms, more terrified than she had been during her trial on the river. For in startling headlines she caught the words:

"She stood on the bridge! A plucky woman! Mrs. Pontiff the first person to cross the first plank of the new bridge!"

"What does it mean, Helen?" he gasped.

Between her sobs and laughs she related her experience.

## DOUBTFUL WEATHER PROPHETS.

Marked Scales on Barometers Do Not Always Tell Conditions.

Much of the current faith in the barometer as a weather prophet is, it appears, misplaced. Because a storm is generally threatened when the fall of the barometer is great and sudden, and vice versa when it suddenly rises, it has been for years the practice to make barometers with "fine," "changeable" and "storm" marked on them; and such is the confidence placed in these by many people who own them that they grow indignant at the weather if it dares to rain when the indicator says "fair" or to be clear if it says "storm."

All that a barometer shows is the pressure of the air upon the earth's surface at the point where the barometer is when the reading is made. The pressure does, indeed, vary continually with the weather conditions, but it varies also with the elevation of the point of observation above the sea level, and it takes an expert to tell whether any given variation is unusual or abnormal, and if so, what it means. A barometer adjusted with weather signs for the seasons may often predict great storms there, but if taken to another and higher altitude the markings are wholly unreliable, even for making guesses. T. F. Townsend, at the head of the Philadelphia Weather Bureau, is frequently called on by people who know this much to adjust their barometer for the level in which they use it, but he is always careful to point out why, even after such adjustment, the indications are not reliable.—Philadelphia Record.

## Three Scotch Stories.

A shoemaker, coming to the minister asking his advice because, that sweep his landlord, had given him notice to quit and he would have nowhere to lay his head. The minister could only advise him to lay his case before the Lord. A week later the minister returned and found the shoemaker busy and merry. "That was gran' advice ye gied me, minister," said the man. "I laid my case before the Lord, as ye tellt me, an' noo the sweep's a'd."

At a funeral in Glasgow a stranger, who had taken his seat in one of the mourning coaches, excited the curiosity of one of the other three occupants, one of whom at last addressed him: "Ye'll be a brither o' the corp?" "No, I'm not a brither o' the corp," was the prompt reply. "Weel, then, ye'll be his cousin?" "No, I'm not that." "No, then ye'll be at least a frien' o' the corp?" "Not that either." To tell the truth, I've bot been weel myself, and as my doctor has ordered me some carriage exercise, I thought this wad be the cheapest way to tak' it."

A clergyman was rebuked by one of the ruling elders for sauntering on the Sunday along the hillside above the manse. The clergyman took the rebuke in good part, but tried to show the remonstrant that the action of which he complained was innocent and lawful, and he was about to cite the famous example of a Sabbath walk, with the plucking of the ears of corn, as set forth in the Gospels, when he was interrupted with the remark: "Oo ay, sir, I ken weel what you mean to say, but for my part I hae nefer thocht the better o' them for breakin' the Sabbath."—Geikie's "Scottish Reminiscences."

## Gentlemen Sports.

"Gentleman sport" was the term applied to the type of student graduating from Eastern universities by Professor William Gardner Hale in a speech to the freshmen of the University of Chicago at the Reynolds Club the other night.

"Education in the big Eastern institutions is not improving in the least," Professor Hale said. "On the contrary, I think it is deteriorating. Scholarship has decreased because the educational system is worm-eaten. There is too much of the 'gentleman sport' idea there."

"The hope of education lies in the Western institutions, where students attend for the purpose of gaining an education and not for the purpose of squandering a rich parent's money in an effort to become a gentleman."—Philadelphia Record.

A Pennsylvania fisherman has discovered that bullfrogs act as sentries to fish, and that it is useless to try to catch bass when a deep-voiced, bellowing frog is watching.

Where the old trunk bristles  
Who used to snuff in  
With his pipe, and his clothes,  
And the smoke of his pipe,  
He's crowded out by improvements—  
By a clicking new machine  
Which clatters and chuffs and throws out  
"Mingled dust of (unclean) brass."  
He's dead; he's dead; he's dead;  
"Many an' many's the night,  
Old Horace would have been there  
To follow his pipe and  
He never saw a better one  
To hoist the smoke of his pipe  
He never yet saw a better one  
"Forty years ago the man  
He knew all the fables and the ancients,  
Græley, and Raymond, too,  
Preptice, Medill, McCullough? "Sure,  
Bill."  
He'd told everyone what to do.  
Now he's replaced by machinery—  
Something that cannot think—  
That don't have to eat, and can't "Pi its  
feet."  
Because it don't know how to drink.

Gone is the old tramp-printer,  
Who'd ask you for a "bit"  
And after the strike would again "hit the  
picks to get a "sit."  
To a town where he might "get a sit."  
He's listed among book-binders  
By the soulless linotypes,  
Which sputter and hiss and set a line thus:  
"Hadgickimogarswainberg-pipes."  
—Josh Wink, in Baltimore American.



"Pa, what is persiflage?" "Some new-fangled vegetable." Ask the cook.—Chicago Record-Herald.

"Henpeck, what do you think of a man who marries for money?" "Think he earns every cent he gets."—Detroit Free Press.

It isn't the thing you do or say,  
It's all in the way you do or say it.  
What would the egg amount to, pray,  
If he had got up on the perch to lay it?  
Wister.—When your are grown up,  
will you be a doctor like your father?"  
Bobby.—"Mercy, no! Why I couldn't  
even kill a rabbit!"—Pown and Country.

Belle.—"Hear about Midge? She has signed a life contract to lecture." Kate.—"What? You don't mean it?" Belle.—"Yes, it's true. A marriage certificate."

"Gladys (sighing)—"Oh, dear, he hasn't proposed yet." "Well, what can you expect of a chap who never runs his auto over ten miles an hour?"

Wife.—"Do you believe, Harry, that married men live longer than single men?" Husband.—"I don't know, but it probably seems longer."—St. Joseph Gazette.

"I maintain," she declared, "that women are better speakers than men." "But sometimes quantity is mistaken for quality," he pointed out.—New Yorker.

Jay.—"Wonder why Smartee turned that portrait back to O'Neil?" Play.—"Well, you see, no artist can paint Smartee as big as he thinks he is."—New York Times.

"I could make up with a finger all right if he 'wasn't so damned satirical. But he keeps the chair of hell between us." "What chair?" "Sarcasm."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Poor Henpeck wrote this epitaph on his departed head:  
"Here lies my wife,  
To save my life  
I cannot wed. It is to laph."  
—Catholic Standard and Times.

Dubby.—"Won't you sing, Miss Squeel?" Miss Squeel.—"I'd not in very good voice to-night, I fear." Dubby.—"Never mind. Anything would be better than sitting around this way."—Chicago Daily News.

City Friend (visiting in Scottish rural town) and tell me, Andrew, are you of the wee Kirk, or the Unit Kirk?" Andrew.—"Ain't in no Kirk, I'm a heather."—Auld Kirk.

The czar owns  
and chateaux  
It takes  
vants to  
ies amou  
stable  
Six