

A Song of Mysteries.

Who shall say what snowflakes light
Falling on the lambs at night?
Clothed then in their coats of white?
Who shall say what veins of sun
Through the rose's petals run,
"Till they crimson one by one?"
This, O Love, is all our knowing:
Lambs are clad and flowers are blowing.
When the wild birds are awing
In the blue and bloom of spring,
Who shall say what makes them sing?
Who shall tell this heart of mine
Why in thunder and in shine
Still the moss-oak hures the vine?
We but know the wild bird singeth
And the fared vine clingeth, clingeth.
Who shall say why rosiest dawn
Gleameth, streameth, dreameth on,
To the breast of Darkness drawn?
And why thou, by earth crossed,
Still hast sought me - loved me best,
Crept like sunlight to my breast?
Dy and dark may love and sever,
But thou lovest me forever!
-[Frank L. Stanton, in Atlanta Constitution.]

What the Kettle Sang.

BY HELEN M. WHITNEY.

The Widow Rabble was brushing her smooth black hair, and giving her niece, Dolly Hodges, a piece of her mind at the same time.

"I wonder you ain't ashamed of it, and you a church member, too!" she cried.

"But, Aunt Tabitha, what is it? What have I done?" pleaded Dolly, raising a pair of clear blue eyes to her aunt's snapping black ones.

"What have you done! You haven't primped and pucker'd, and set your cap to catch Deacon Holly—oh, no!"

In her wrath Tabitha twisted her black hair till it was the size of a hickory nut.

"Oh, aunt! how can you say such a dreadful thing?" Shy, sweet-tempered Dolly blushed with the words with a spirit akin to her aunt's. "You know it's not true."

"I know 'tis true."

The black eyes snapped again, and the widow brushed and scolded with equal energy.

"Didn't I see you run down to the gate only this morning in your blue merino dress, and your best hat, and ask the deacon to take you to town in his spring wagon? And 'tain't the first time, either."

"Why, Aunt Tabitha!" Dolly's blue eyes opened very wide, as she looked at her aunt in surprise. "You know it was no money for me to walk to town today, and we were obliged to have that trimming to finish the fluting on Mrs. Green's cashmere dress. I had been watching all the morning for a chance to ride down."

"I don't doubt it."

"I didn't know the deacon would pass—how could I? and it would have been all the same if Farmer Dabson, or old Uncle Peter Jones, had come along."

"Oh, yes, that'll do to tell," retorted the widow. "And of course it was absolutely necessary for you to run back and get a piece of bread and jam, or something, for that spoiled young one that's always stuck along with his father!"

Dolly laughed, in spite of her vexation.

"I went back for my muff," she explained, "and Freddie said he was hungry, so, of course, I brought him the bread."

"Oh, you needn't make excuses, and think I'll believe 'em. I know well enough 'twould be a good match for a poor girl like you, that has to make your own living. But Deacon Holly's too smart to be caught like that; and it's for your own good I'm warning you, Dolly Hodges. But I shall come over and speak to Sister Dorcas about it after a while, for I see there's no use talking reason to you."

"You may spare yourself the trouble, Aunt Tabitha, for my mother knows all you can tell her, already," retorted Dolly, as she drew the hood of her waterproof over her head, and walked proudly away. But there was a troubled look in her downcast eyes, and the venomous words still rankled in her bosom.

Deacon Holly felt weary and worn as he entered his lonely dwelling. The large, handsome rooms, with their costly furniture, had a dreary, desolate look that made him shiver.

The dining-room looked snug and cheerful. A bright fire blazed in the ample fire-place, and the sun streamed through the west window, lighting up a pot of vivid chrysanthemums which stood on the wide sill.

Aunt Patty, the presiding genius of the housekeeping arrangements, had taken her knitting and gone out to have a chat with the next neighbor, having, however, with commendable prudence, first replenished the fire with a fresh back-log and front stick,

and hung the iron tea-kettle over it to save building a fire in the kitchen.

Aunt Patty's other preparations for tea were already made. The cold beef was sliced and set away in the safe. The apple butter was already dished in the cut-glass bowl; a mince pie was cut, and a pitcher of sweet cream stood ready for the table, which was already set, and covered with an extra cloth to protect it from the dust.

The gingerbread was sliced, and a plate of honey stood in close proximity to a loaf of brownbread, and a pot of yellow butter.

Deacon Holly was tired, and throwing himself into an easy-chair by the fire, he fell to meditating on his lonely lot.

It was three years since little Freddie's mother had been laid to rest under the daisies on the hill-side, and the deacon had never ceased to miss her.

Somehow, the more he thought of her the more attractive seemed his latest day-dream, of giving the substantial old house another mistress, and his boy a new mother. He looked down with a smile at Freddie, who had fallen asleep before the fire, with his head on a crimson ottoman.

The smile was followed by a look of perplexity as Deacon Holly leaned back in the cushioned chair, and set to work on a problem that had recently begun to puzzle him sadly. And while he puzzled, a pair of black eyes seemed to claim his attention in the foreground, while two bewildering blue ones cast shy glances at him from a distance, as if too timid to approach nearer.

The black eyes looked very attractive, the blue ones very entrancing, and the frown over the deacon's nose deepened perceptibly.

Presently a most wonderful thing occurred. An amazing thing, such as the deacon had never heard of in all his life before.

The iron tea-kettle, which had for some time been singing away quite merrily, suddenly puffed out a cloud of steam, lifted its lid, tilted itself on one side, and leered at the deacon in the most ludicrous and unaccountable manner.

The deacon could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses. He put on his spectacles and stared at the kettle in amazement.

To his intense surprise, the erratic kettle blew out another cloud of steam, tilted still farther to one side, and gave a broader stare than ever.

It then began to sing, in a boisterous tone:

"Doubt, doubt, toil and trouble,
The deacon married the Widow Rabble."
At this Deacon Holly drew himself up with an air of quiet dignity.

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Kettle," he said, mildly. "You are laboring under a mistake. I am not married to anybody."

"Oh, yes, you are, old chap," returned the tea-kettle, saucily. "You are married to the Widow Rabble that was, and she's out in the kitchen this minute, jawing Aunt Patty for putting so much wood on the fire, and for having both honey and apple butter for supper."

"Dear me," sighed the deacon. "I really had no idea of such a thing. I think you are mistaken, ma'am, indeed."

"No, no, deacon, no mistake about it, I do assure you. Such things frequently happen, my dear sir, take my word for it," persisted the kettle.

"But—but it certainly cannot be a legal marriage, when it occurred without my knowledge."

"Oh, bless your heart, that makes no difference—no difference at all, my dear sir! You are in for it now, and will have to face the music. Rabble rhymes to trouble, you know. The worst of it is, the poor little boy will come in for his share of the trouble. I tell you, my blood boils to see her order that poor child around before you came home today. No wonder he's asleep a the rig this minute, and when she made him shove off all the snow from around the house, and then finish getting that load of coal into the cellar—a bitterly cold day like this, too."

The deacon groaned.

"I should think you'd know a better deacon, I really should," went on the tea-kettle. "I don't your common sense tell you that Rabble rhymes to trouble, and Dolly rhymes to Holly? What could be plainer than that? However, it's too late now, and here's the new madam at her tricks already. Look at her now, a-grubbing that poor child by the scruff of the neck, and bustling him into the kitchen, just because he won't sleep on the floor."

"I won't stand it," cried the deacon, jumping up.

"I'm so glad you're awake, deacon," said Aunt Patty's mild voice. "I've waited half an hour for you to wake

up, and I'm dreadful afraid the tea is spoiled, standing so long."

The deacon rubbed his eyes and stared at Aunt Patty, at the cozy table, at the merry blazing fire, and then at the iron tea-kettle.

It hung demurely from its hook over the ruddy blaze, singing in low, subdued tones, unlike the boisterous way in which it had so recently been indulging.

A weight seemed taken from the deacon's heart, his spirits rose. He was not married, after all!

"Where's Freddie?" he asked, as he took his seat at the table and sipped his tea.

"Oh, the poor child was so hungry I gave him his supper long ago, and he's gone off somewhere, I don't know where."

The deacon finished his supper with a good appetite and a light heart.

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CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

WHO LIKES THE RAIN.

"I," said the duck, "I call it fun.
For I have my little red rubbers on;
They make a cunning three-toed track
In the soft, cool mud. Thank God!"

"I," cried the dandelion, "I!
My roots are thirsty, my buds are dry,
And she'll feel her little yellow head
Out of her green grassy bed.
"I hope 'twill pour! I hope 'twill pour!"
Croaked the toad at his gray bark door,
"For with a broad leaf for a roof,
I am perfectly weather-proof."
Sang the brook: "I laugh at every drop!
And wish they never need to stop.
Till a big river I grow to be,
And could find my way to the sea."
—[Youth's Banner.]

HOW TO MAKE A PIE.

Take a good sized fresh lemon. Let the end where the stem was represent the snout. With a sharp penknife raise two little pointed pieces of rind about half an inch long, a suitable distance from the snout, to represent the ears. Get six matches having dark ends: break off two of them, leaving the sulphur ends about an inch long; sharpen them and stick them in for eyes, leaving, of course, the dark ends on the surface. Stick the remaining four in the body for legs, taking care to put them in proper places, enabling piggy to stand alone. The pointed end of the lemon forms a cute little tail. When you get tired of playing with him you can kill and eat him, provided you are careful not to put sulphur into his body. The effect of the little fellow finished is so comical that one presented suddenly in view in school one afternoon came near upsetting the gravity of both teacher and pupils. —[New York Advertiser.]

A FIVE-CENT CAPITALIST.

A writer in the Boston Advertiser tells the story of a five-cent capitalist in the town of Plymouth.

This small capitalist was a widow. She lived in a mortgaged cottage with her daughter and little grandson who were dependent upon her. One day there was not a cent of money in the family, when the boy came in with a nickel which he had been paid him for some small service.

The widow invested the nickel in popcorn, and with some molasses found in the bottom of her jug she made 15 popcorn balls. The boy started out and sold these for 15 cents. With her little capital trebled in an hour, and it was quickly peddled out at a good profit. The family went to work in earnest, and after a while they had a little stand, then a little shop, and at the end of 14 years, they had paid off the mortgage and had money in bank.

This shows what can be done with a nickel, says the Boston writer. —[Atlanta Constitution.]

A CAT THAT TOOK TO WATER.

The most interesting trait in our cat's character did not appear until he had been a week or so on board. Then he gave us a surprise. It was when we were lying in Camden harbor. Everybody was going ashore to take a tramp among the hills, and Charlie, the cook, was coming too, to row the boat back to the yacht.

Middy discovered that he was somehow "getting left." Being a prompt and very decided cat, it did not take him long to make up his mind what to do. He ran to the low rail of the yacht, put his forepaws on it, and gave us a long, anxious look. Then as the boat was shoved off he raised his voice in a plaintive mew. We waved him a good-by, chaffed him pleasantly, and told him to mind the anchor, and have dinner ready when we got back.

That was too much for his temper. As quick as a flash he had dived overboard, and was swimming like a water-spaniel after the dinghy!

That was the strangest thing we had ever seen in all our lives! We were quite used to elephants that could play see-saw, and horses that could fire cannon, to learned pigs and to educated dogs; but a cat that of his own accord would take to the water like a full-blooded Newfoundland was a little beyond anything we had ever heard of. Of course the boat was stopped, and Middy was taken aboard drenched and shivering, but perfectly happy to be once more with the crew. He had been ignored and slighted; but he had insisted on his rights, and as soon as they were recognized he was quite contented. —[St. Nicholas.]

Had to Hustle.

Weary Walter—Are you still working 'n' de lamo and fooble act?
Ragged Rusk—N-p. Too many dogs in dis neighborhood. —[New York Herald.]

BETTER BEES.

A Proposed New Departure in Bee Culture.

An Expert Says the Insect can Be Improved by Breeding.

J. Edward Giles, in writing on the desirability of producing a larger race of bees, proposes to cross our present race of bees with the giant bees of India, and obtain a race with long proboscis and perhaps increased size (if that should be found to be of any advantage). This improved race should be crossed with the South American stingless bee, and thus a race would be secured with all the good points of the Italian bee, with lengthened proboscis and stings; such a bee, in fact, as it would be difficult to improve. It might be found desirable to breed on the swarming instinct, for there appears to be no reason why it cannot be bred out of bees as thoroughly as the stinging instinct has been bred out of certain races of domestic fowls. But now that swarming can be so completely controlled by the use of queen traps and automatic hives, this is a point of minor importance.

Mr. Giles is of opinion that the improvement of our bees is of sufficient importance, and the prospect of success sufficiently great, to justify the Agricultural Department of the United States in undertaking the cost of the necessary experiments. The cost to the Government would be trifling in comparison with the benefits that would accrue if the experiments were successful. Few individuals who are competent to do the work would have the means to carry it out at their own expense, because the study of the habits of the stingless bees in their native country would necessarily entail a residence of a few years in South America.

Mr. Giles quotes the honey crop for 1879 as twenty-five million pounds, or about half a pound for the year by each inhabitant of the United States. At an average of ten cents per pound the value of the honey crop for that year would be about \$25,000,000, not reckoning the value of 2,229,000 pounds of wax, the amount that would be secreted in the production of the quantity of honey named.

If we had a race of stingless bees there is good reason to believe that the value of the crop would soon be doubled, for many would be induced to go into the business of bee-keeping who are now deterred by fear of the stings, or who live in thickly settled villages and hesitate to keep bees for fear their neighbors will consider their pets a nuisance.

Ever in the oldest and most thickly settled states the number of bees could easily be doubled without exhausting the honey supply, and there is practically no limit to the amount of honey which could be produced by planting special crops in suitable places.

Mr. Giles differs from those who think that an increased supply of honey would lower the price and glut the market, as experience shows that as the supply of any article of food increases, the demand always grows. As an illustration, he quotes the case of a farmer with whom he compared notes on the price of farm produce. The farmer was at the time preparing a load of tomatoes for market, and he remarked that it was easier to sell a wagon load of tomatoes now than it was to sell a peck when he first began to raise them.

The reason it is difficult to sell honey is that people have not learned to use it. When its many wholesome qualities are understood it will take a prominent place as a daily food, and nothing will bring this about more quickly than the proposed new departure in bee culture.

The Wealth of the Osage Indians.

L. A. Wimmer and wife of Gray Horse and Dr. B. Bird of Eschscholtz, I. T., are at the Washburn. Mr. Wimmer and Dr. Bird are both noted traders, this part of the nation being known as the Osage agency, representing the big and little Osage and the Kansas or Kaw Indians. Mr. Wimmer has been among the Osages for fifteen years, the first seven of which he was Government clerk, and since that time he has been a post trader.

"The Osages," he said, "are the richest per capita, I think, of any tribe of Indians in the Indian Territory. They have a reservation of 1,500,000 acres, and receive about \$250 each a year from the Government. The Osages at one time owned the east of Southern Kansas, but made a treaty with the government about 1854, and received a large sum from the sale of their lands,

which were opened up for settlement. The National Government now holds in trust for the Osages about 280,000 acres, and pays them 7 per cent per annum on the amount. This makes up at \$250,000 a year that is divided among about 1700, the present number of Osage Indians. They were allowed in their early treaties with the Government and are now a wealthy people, having \$8,000,000 in cash, with an income of \$200,000, in addition to their reservation of 1,500,000 acres held in common and their farms and stock.

"They are becoming highly civilized. When I first went among the Osages they numbered 2300, but an epidemic of small-pox and measles cut them down to about 1500, but they have since increased to about 1700." —[Ottawa Sun.]

The American Soldier.

To know the American soldier well you must toil with him over the desert trail when the sun beats hotly down on the dry and verdigris earth, and the dust rises in white clouds that hide the column from view, and fill the eyes, the mustache, the ears, the mouth, with profanity and vexation. Here is where his songs and jokes proclaim the stuff that he is made of. Then, when you are sent out with him in the dead of winter over twenty miles of snow, your equipments and supplies on horseback, he tramples down the snow and again without a murmur, pushing, to help the mules up hill, and re-spacing the overburdened sleds a dozen times in a day; then, after it all, digging his hole in the snow, and putting up his tent at night, all the time joking with his "bunkie," and ready as ever to steal a wisp of hay or a handful of oats for his shivering horse. He is it that jumped into a boiling hot spring to save the life of the daughter of a private citizen—a deed for which the citizen, who was a rich man, proffered the astounding sum of five dollars, and the government the gold medal of honor; he that took a flat-bottomed boat out of the heavy sea in New York Harbor to rescue a drowning boy; that lost his life for his identity while attempting to swim in by steam with Harpates; who, single-handed, served a field gun through an action, with a bullet in his leg, to hold a position; he that can receive incapable of anything but "bucking face" and drinking strong liquors. —[Harper's Weekly.]

Ernie Cottages.

"I had an experience with a lot of cottages some years ago that I don't ever even a little bit," said Alfred M. Dikes to the writer.

"I had just left college, my health was bad, and I concluded to go out West and rough it for a few months. I engaged to help drive a herd of cattle from northern Texas into Kansas, and made the usual mistake of supposing that I was the only man in the party who knew a very little from a personal experience. For three successive evenings I attended my college learning while my companions sat in a circle around me and chewed tough beef or smoked plug tobacco. Then they concluded that they had about enough of Aristophanes, Pethingons, and the philosophy of the Peripatetics, and they proceeded to wind me up. The next morning the boss gave me my orders in Greek, the cook asked me in choice Latin whether I would take soap or syrup on my sapsucker, and a cow-sucker with a big revolver sticking out of his booting bossment me in Persian to reserve my kindergarten learning for the babes of civilization. One had been a professor in Yale and the others were Oxoniens. I have not since attempted to dabble the simple children of the frontier with a display of my learning." —[St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

Date Palms in Arizona.

Alva Hamilton, six miles below Yuma, has twenty date palm trees in his garden, the largest of which is fifteen years old. It is thirty feet high. Six of the oldest trees are in bearing. By actual count one bunch contains 2000 dates. It weighs forty pounds. There are several much larger bunches, so that the fruit on them cannot be counted correctly, but it is estimated that there are 2000 dates in each bunch, and that they will weigh at least fifty pounds. —[Tombstone Epitaph.]

An Experienced Agent.

House Agent—Rush around to 126 Bank street, quick, and get last month's rent.
Bookkeeper—What's up?
Agent—As I passed by at this morning I heard a baby. There won't be any spare cash around that house for six weeks at least. I've had 'em myself—[New York Weekly.]

Repletion.

That face of thine, that face of thine,
And all thy lovely self, dear one,
When first thy dear eyes answered mine,
Seemed perfect. "Oh! what have I done!"
I asked God humbly—"that to me
Thou gavest this human blessing rare?"
"My pet of flower!" I breathed o'er thee,
"God never made a flower so fair."
Then, when between thy lips stole
Thy voice in song—like lark's on wing—
I whispered to my happy soul,
"It is as though a rose should sing."
—[Kate Vannab, in Kate Field's Washington.]

HUMOROUS.

A frog is always in the spring of life.
Fonels go from mountain to mountain, seeking other climbs.
The "Hammock Song" is the latest. It's bound to be popular. It has such a swing to it.
Country Child (who sees no novelty in a week)—What is all this grass for? City Child—That's to keep off of.
First Broker: That man Jayguller is as bright as a streak of lightning. Second Broker: Yes, and just as cracked.
When the market reports read, "Butter growing weak," the presumption is that the reporter has kept shy of the boarding houses.
"Behave a man," the teacher cried.
The maiden colored read.
"Behave a man," the pupil sighed.
"I can't—I won't," she said.
"That man can stand and shoulder 600 pounds dead weight." "Humph! I sat down the other day and shouldered a \$20,000 mortgage."
He—A woman can't conceal her feelings. She—Can't, eh? She can kiss a woman she hates. He—Yes; but she doesn't fool the woman any.
She—Why do you toy so nervously with this fan—are you afraid of it? He (puffantly)—I am afraid of anything that could produce a coldness between us.
Cassie: Hello, Bagley, old boy, let me shake your hand. I hear you are engaged. Bagley: Don't be in a hurry, old man. I'm not married yet. Cassie: That's the very reason I congratulate you.
Customer (to waiter who has brought him a beefsteak very much underdone): Waiter, just send for the butcher, will you? Waiter—What, sir? Customer—This steak doesn't seem to be quite dead yet!
A good anecdote is told of M. Carnot, the president of France, who is about to visit Savoy. As usual, he will take with him a collection of decorations and other distinctions for distribution among the notables of the towns he will pass through. The president of the Republic, in order to enhance the value of the decorations, is accustomed to pin it himself on the breast of the happy recipients.
On his last provincial tour it appears that he made a mess of the operation. A statue had just been unveiled and the customary speeches delivered when the persons to be decorated were invited to get on to the platform. Among them was a fat farmer to whom the Academic Pains were allotted. M. Carnot approached him and proceeded to pin the blue ribbon on his breast, but whether the pin was blunt or the cloth of the farmer's coat hard, he found the task difficult. However, at length he succeeded. But judge of his surprise on seeing the farmer trembling and as pale as a ghost. He at first thought it was simply a slip, but the farmer getting worse, General Brugere advanced and found that the pin had stuck in his breast, and that he was bleeding freely. To extract it was of course the work of a second, and the farmer recovered, but it will be a long time before he forgets the first day he wore his decoration. —[London Globe.]

A Blind Hymn Writer.

The oldest and best known hymn writer now living is a blind woman, Fanny Crosby of Park avenue, the city. Her hymns, "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour," "Rescue the Perishing," "Saviour, More Than Life to Me" and "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross," are known and sung wherever the English language is spoken, and, although blind from infancy, she has composed more than 3000 others. She is now sixty-five years of age, and before she made hymns writing her life work was for many years a teacher of the blind. All of her poetical efforts are dictated to a secretary, and so faithful is her memory that she often composes a dozen or more hymns before she dictates them to her assistant. Her disposition is a sunny, beneficent one, and her easy home is the abiding place of cheerfulness and contentment. —[New York Herald.]