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Three Kisses of Farewell.

Three, only three, my darling,
Separate, solemn, slow;
Not like the swift and joyous ones
We used to know
When we kissed because we loved each other,
Simply to taste love's sweet,
And lavished our kisses as the summer lavished heat.
But as they kiss whose hearts are wrung
When hope and fear are spent
And nothing is left to give except
A sacrament.

First of the three, my darling,
Is sacred unto pain;
We have hurt each other often,
We shall again.
When we pine because we miss each other,
And do not understand
How the written words are so much colder
Than eye or hand.
I kiss thee, dear, for all such pain
Which we may give or take;
Buried, forgiven before it comes
For our love's sake.

The second kiss, my darling,
Is full of joy's sweet thrill;
We have blessed each other always,
We always will.
We shall reach until we feel each other,
Past all of time and space;
We shall listen till we hear each other
In every place.
The earth is full of messengers,
Which love sends to and fro;
I kiss thee, darling, all for joy
Which we shall know.

The last kiss, O, my darling,
My love, I cannot see
Through my tears, as I remember
What it may be.
We may died and never see each other,
Die with no time to give
Any sign that our hearts are faithful
To die, as live.
Token of what they will not see
Who see our parting breath,
This one last kiss my darling, seal
The kiss of death.

—SARE HOLMES.

RIDING TO DEATH.

My name is Morgan Grenoble and today I have reached the turning point of my thirtieth year.

People say that I look "odd," with almost snow white hair, and wonder how it came to be thus to one so young.

Eight years ago, come the 23th of this very month, I stood at the altar with Laura Comstock.

I was a telegraph operator and was stationed at Wayburg, a station twenty miles from Stockton, and at the terminus of the then D. C. & C. R. railway.

Returning from our honeymoon I left my wife in Stockton and proceeded to Wayburg, intending to remain at my old post until relieved, which I thought would be in a few days, as my offered resignation had been accepted at headquarters.

The engineer on the "up" train was Mark Moore, a rather handsome young fellow, who had been my rival for the hand of the woman I called my wife.

When the train stopped at Moreland's I alighted from the passenger coach and walked forward to the engine. Mark was busily engaged oiling the machinery.

"How are you, Morgan?" he said, as he espied me, and held out his hand.

His disappointment seemed to have left him and he was very pleasant.

"Going to Wayburg?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Just get in with me, then," he said.

I replied that I would do so, and when the train moved away I was occupying a seat in the engine, chatting with the engineer.

"One hardly notices the ascent, but the descent is an entirely different thing. I was thinking, Morgan, what a terrible thing it would be if an engine, with full power on, were to become unmanageable at the top of the grade and dash away."

I shuddered.

"And if a man bent on revenge were to place a fellow creature bound on the engine, what a terrible death he would hasten to, with almost lightning rapidity."

"Suppose the engine should encounter the C—— passenger?"

"Then death would spread his wings over the spot of the collision."

I had no desire to pursue the conversation further, but he persisted in it, and I was greatly relieved when the train ran into Wayburg.

The following night was dark and tempestuous, and I alone occupied the station, watching the little machine before me.

That day a new engine had arrived and Mark Moore had been put in charge of it.

From two o'clock in the afternoon to five I saw him moving about the engine.

Until ten I watched the little machine. Then Mark opened the door and stepped into the small apartment.

"Are you receiving a despatch, Morgan?" he asked.

"No, Mark; why do you ask?"

"Because if you are not I wish you would leave the clicker a bit and come and look at my Red Bird by lantern light. I am going to run down grade to Chalmers, reverse the engine and run back. The train will not be due here for an hour, and I can go to Chalmers and return within twenty minutes."

We walked into the great temporary shed where the new and beautiful engine stood, ready to run off at the command of its master.

"I dare not be so long absent from my post at this hour, Mark."

"Pooh, man, there's no danger. You must go with me."

"But I cannot, Mark."

He put his lantern on the ground and then sprang erect.

"You shall, Morg Grenoble!" he cried, and before I could answer him, he dashed me to the earth and planted his knees on my breast.

"Not a word out of you, Morg," he said, fiercely, producing a rope. "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. You know we were discussing the consequence attending the rush of a maddened engine down the grade. I reckon I won't go to Chalmers, but will send you clear to the bottom of the grade."

"Mark Moore, you are mad," I said. "Would you murder me in cold blood and others who are coming up on the 11.10 passenger?"

"Yes," he said coldly.

I might have resisted, but resistance would have availed me nothing, for I was constitutionally weak while he was a lion.

"Now for the ride to death!" he cried, lifting me up and bearing me into the little engine room.

Again I pleaded for mercy; but as well might I have pleaded to stone, for he met my prayers with taunts.

"What will it profit you, Mark," I asked, "to wreak your vengeance on me? The hounds of justice will run you to earth, and you will suffer for your crime."

"What care I?"

"There!" he said, at last, as he closed the furnace door. "Everything is ready for your ride. You'll go right through Stockton; but I reckon you won't have time to stop to speak to loving Laura. Goodby, Morg; write when you get to the foot of the grade."

The engine was moving and he leaped off.

"May heaven have mercy on your soul, Mark Moore!" I shouted after him.

The grade between Wayburg and Chalmers was quite steep, and before I reached the little town the speed of the Red Bird and its tender seemed to rival that of the telegraph.

The towns, with their glimmering lights, appeared and were gone in a flash.

The manner in which I was bound permitted me to look out of the window.

I did so, and Stockton, the home of my wife, greeted me with its many lights.

Ahead, I saw many people waiting for the 11.10 passenger.

The next moment I was carried past them.

I saw their astonished faces, and heard a piercing shriek.

I recognized the voice as my wife's.

There was one hope for me—just one.

Perhaps the operator at Stockton had telegraphed down the grade, and, thus warned, the coming train would switch, and save its passengers from death.

Looking out, I saw far ahead the glaring headlight of the southern train.

To me it looked as though it stood on my track. Evidently the train had not been warned.

Suddenly I heard a man shout, "Stand back!" and then, crash!—all was dark!

"Is he injured much?" somebody asked.

Sympathizing faces bent over me, and a surgeon was examining my wounds.

The ties stopped the engine," said the surgeon. "We received a telegram from Stockton, informing us that the new engine was rushing down the grade. The southern train was switched off upon its arrival here, and we set to work to pile innumerable ties on the track, which, thank heaven, checked your mad career."

"Telegraph to Stockton," I said, "to my wife."

It seemed as though every bone in my body was broken, and I cannot tell how I ever survived through the prostration that followed.

But I did, to find my hair rivalling the spotless purity of the snow, and crow's feet on my youthful forehead.

My rival was never tried, for the third day following his arrest he was conveyed to an asylum, a hopeless maniac.—Boston Globe.

A Samson's Powerful Tug.

The examining surgeons of the Sixty-fifth Regiment, New York National Guard, recently found a Samson at Buffalo. Among the candidates examined was Bert Bartram, a cartman, about 32 years old. When he had stripped for the examination he sat on a chair and asked the physicians to stand on his ankles. One stood on each ankle, and then, apparently without any great effort, Bartram raised his legs until they stood like parallel bars, and held the doctors in the air for two minutes. Four Hebrew clerks in a wholesale clothing house found this Samson a week earlier. They know that he prided himself on his strength and put up a job on him. He gets the wages of two men on account of his great strength.

Bartram was delivering some heavy cases at the clothing house and lifted the cases on and off the dray without the aid of skids. One of the clerks pointed to a big case on the floor and asked Bartram if he could lift it. They told him it held 700 pounds of cloth. He offered to bet that he could, and agreed to return as soon as he had delivered the other packages on the wagon and do the trick for them. While he was gone the young men emptied the case, drove four long nails through the bottom of it into the floor, and went into the cellar and clinched the nails. Then they returned the goods to the box and waited for Bartram. He appeared at the appointed time, strode over to the case and took hold of it. It didn't budge.

"Sure there's only 700 pounds in it?" said he.

The four young men assured him that that was all it contained, and then offered to bet him that he could not lift it. Bartram put up $20 against $20 raised by the four clerks. Then he removed his coat, fastened his big hands on the case, gave a powerful tug and the case rose in the air with a crackling of timber and a cloud of dust. Six square feet of the floor came up with the box. Bartram pocketed the money and after reproving the young men for the attempted fraud went away. The carpenter bill of $8 was paid by the crestfallen clerks.—New York Sun.

Lesson From the Far East.

In Japan there lives a native scholar and writer than whom no one has done more toward introducing education and civilization into his country. Repeatedly he has refused both titles and remunerative offices.

This man had never sought for wealth, but he had acquired during a long life of usefulness a moderate sum for his support in later years—about ten thousand dollars in our money. When the war with China broke out, he at once gave this money to his government as his contribution toward the war expenses, saying that individuals must make sacrifices for the cause of patriotism.

This splendid example of love for the native land illustrates the intensity of the patriotic spirit in Japan. The general absence of this unselfishness in China has been one cause of her defeat. Office has been used to satisfy personal greed. The government has been feared and cheated, not loved and strengthened.

A Japanese student in this country, talking with an American, said naively,

"In Japan I was a Christian; here I do not know what I am. I do not understand your young men. They do not want to do anything for the country. They want to make money, or get in Congress, or marry rich widows and go to Europe. In Japan every young man wants to do something for the country."

Devotion to the general good, earnestness in advocating what is for the interest of all rather than for that of the class or individual, willingness to give one's own time and trouble to advance needed reform—these are qualities that should be universal. In them lies the hope of the future.—Youth's Companion.

Tit for Tat.

Customer (who has made a collection of some of the choice candies in the store)—Now, if you will wrap these up, I'll take them home, examine them, and let you hear from me.

Confectioner (astounded) — Why, man alive! I can't stand that!

Customer—Can't stand it! Why, your wife comes up to my dry-goods store about twice a week and does the same thing with my dry-goods.—Puck.

It's Advantage.

Dusty Donovan—You're de most reckless man I ever seed. If dat dog 'ad bit yer, yer might 'a' got the hyderfobia!

Saturated Sam (ecstatically)—Dat's wot I want. When yer has dat, Dusty, nobody dast offer water ter yer, any shape or form!—Puck.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

TELLTALES.

Pussy-willow had a secret that the snow-drops whispered her,
And she purred it to the south wind while it stroked her velvet fur;
And the south wind hummed it softly to the busy honey-bees,
And they buzzed it to the blossoms on the scarlet maple trees;
And these dropped it to the wood-brooks brimming full of melted snow,
And the brooks told Robin Redbreast, as they chattered to and fro;
Little Robin could not keep it, so he sang it loud and clear,
To the sleepy fields and meadows, "Wake up! cheer up! spring is here."

—Youth's Companion.

A LITTLE CHAT ON "THAT."

"That" is a necessary word, but it is one of the most abused, ill-used words in our language, so often being placed in sentences, both written and spoken, when entirely superfluous. "I hear the president of France has resigned."

"Yes, that's so; and I heard that that queen of the Sandwich Islands with that queer name that I can't pronounce, has abdicated."

Of course this is an exaggerated specimen of the misuse of the word, but it serves as an illustration.

Did it ever occur to you that (there, I'm using the condemned word!) it is possible to form a sentence containing six successive "thats?" It can be done, but I must confess it is not by any means elegant English. Here is a sample, and I should like to see some of you Merry Timers parse it: Jim said that that "that" that that man used was a conjunction. This caused the children to call Jim the "that boy."

Then Sam said that that "that" that that "that boy" parsed was a pronoun.

I once heard it asserted that seven "thats" in succession might be used, but I never had the "thatisfaction" of seeing it tried.—Detroit Free Press.

BICYCLING.

To learn the "mount" take your machine by the handles, give it a running push, place your left foot on the step, and, rising from the ground, maintain your balance as long as possible in that position without attempting to gain the saddle. After trying this a dozen times or more, try to take your seat in the saddle, not with a spring, but slide in easily, and do not let your body lean forward or you may pitch over the handles.

A beginner should have his saddle set well back on the spring. Although this position gives less power, it is much safer.

In going up hill lean well forward, and transfer the entire weight from the saddle to the pedals. Do not be ashamed to dismount in going up hill, but do so in every case rather than exhaust yourself.

In going down lean back as far as possible, and keep your machine under control. A little practice in backpedaling, or pushing against the pedal as it comes up rather than as it goes down, will enable you to take your machine down very steep hills at ordinary walking pace. If your machine does escape from your control, throw your legs over the handles, and "coast," as you are less liable to get a bad fall while in this position than in any other.

Keep to the right of road as much as possible. Always keep to the right when you meet a team, foot passenger, or other bicycle, and in overtaking any of these always pass to the left. Dismount and walk past any horse that becomes frightened at your bicycle.

Always carry a light when riding at night.

Be careful not to use your whistle or bell more than is necessary, otherwise you will become a nuisance, and as such will not be a welcome addition to the ranks of wheelmen.

Remember that while you have rights for which you are bound to stand up, others have equal rights which you are equally bound to respect.

In selecting a bicycle, be sure that it fits you perfectly. Do not gratify a mistaken ambition by trying to ride a wheel that is too large for you. The larger the wheel, the more difficulty you will find in driving it up hill.

As soon as you own a bicycle, make yourself familiar with every part of it, and especially with all of its adjustments.

Never lend your bicycle.

Always clean and adjust it yourself. If it gets broken, send it to none but a first-class machinist for repairs.—Detroit Free Press.

In preparing his father's biography Lord Tennyson will be obliged to read about 50,000 letters.

MADCAP BISMARCK.

Impetuous and Roystering Boyhood of the Great German.

To Win His Wife Became Sedate as a Judge.

In his youth Bismarck was terribly wild. "The mad Bismarck," his neighbors called him. Drinking, fighting and horseplay seemed to be his sole amusements. He would fill his ancestral home at Schoenhausen with guests and insist that no one should rise from the supper table until sunrise was at hand. Then those who were sober enough would go to bed, and those who were not sober enough would sleep under the table. Bismarck, the heaviest drinker of all, would remain sober as a judge, and would amuse himself, after his guests had retired, in firing pistol bullets through the bedroom doors and frightening the inmates almost to death. At other times he would go riding about the country like the wild horseman himself, jumping ditches and fences, and spurring his horse through places where no other man would dare go.

"Once," he says himself, "I was riding with my brother, he in advance. Suddenly he heard a crash. He turned, and lo! it was my head that had struck the ground. The saddle was broken, but my head wasn't. On another occasion while riding through the brushwood in a forest I lost consciousness and lay for three or four hours before I came to. When the doctor examined my hurts he said that it was contrary to all professional rules that I had not broken my neck.

In view of his impetuous character and eccentric manner of life, it is not strange that when he asked for the hand of Fraulein Joan von Puttkamer in marriage her parents bluntly refused him. He was still very young, and they preferred to wait years to see if he would abandon his reckless habits. Bismarck, however, did not propose to wait. Marry Fraulein Joan he would whether her parents were willing or not. So he visited her every day, taking no notice of her family's rebuffs. He knew that she loved him, and that sufficed. This state of things however did not last long. "See here, Herr von Puttkamer," exclaimed Bismarck one day, "why do you refuse to let me have your daughter?"

"Because, Herr von Bismarck," was the reply, "you are not fit to be any woman's husband. You ride and fight all day and drink and swear all night. Your life is a scandal to the country.

Bismarck looked at him in silence for a moment and then roared out: "Donnerwetter! Is that all? But it is absurd. Come, and give her to me and you will see me as steady and sedate as a bishop. Come, I swear it!"

Sincerity was stamped on the young man's countenance and words, and Herr von Puttkamer finally gave his consent to the marriage, though not without misgivings. Bismarck, however, kept his word. He wrote to his sister, "All right," in English, to let her know that his suit was successful; and he bought a Bible. Wild riding and all-night drinking bouts had no attractions for him any more. He became a sober and pious man and a tender and affectionate husband and father.—New Orleans Picayune.

New York City's Wealth.

The assessed value of real estate in New York and of buildings upon real estate is about $1,600,000,000. The value of personal estate—bonds, bank shares, stock, cash, fixtures, furniture, vehicles, and similar effects—is about $900,000,000. Under an ordinary construction of the law there should be a complete assessment of both and each would bear a fair share of the burden of city expenses. This, however, is not feasible because while the real estate, being tangible, is easily assessed, the personal estate cannot be got at by the commissioners except by estimates. The wealthy man, who holds in a strong box in a bank securities of which there is no formal record cannot be compelled by any law to clearly disclose the extent of his possessions. Exemptions and offsets are many, and so the total amount of the personal estate assessments falls far short of the actual total. Instead of being $900,000,000, last year it was only $390,000,000. The year before it was $370,000,000. The extent to which swearing off or concealment of personal property is carried may be shown readily by the following facts: In the year 1894 there were 29,755 assessed personal property owners in New York. Of these 14,653 or about half, claimed exemption or a reduction, and 11,708 of them were able to sustain their claim before the commissioners. Thus only 18,000 of the 29,000 assessments stood.—Atlanta Journal.

Blindness on the Increase.

The startling announcement is made that while the population of Missouri increased 100 per cent the number of cases of blindness increased 550 per cent, and that this proportion exceeded the showing of any other State in the Union.

Statistics show that blindness is on the increase in this country, notwithstanding the greater knowledge and skill in treating the many affections which tend to destroy sight and the ample facilities now afforded all classes of persons in the cities in the way of infirmaries and free dispensaries, for caring for the various diseases of the eye. This increase of percentage of blindness prevails throughout the United States, but is much greater in some of the Western States.

In Missouri the last official returns show an alarmingly increased ratio of blindness over the last census. Eye diseases and blindness are rare among primitive people who know none of the vices of civilization. Practically put, a large percentage, perhaps at least twenty-five or thirty per cent of blindness is preventable. The two potent causes that operate against prevention, leaving to the mere lint and the Christian reformer the correction of the conditions inducing the risks, are ignorance on the part of the affected and neglect, often combined with ignorance, on the part of the attendant.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Moving to the Farms.

Fifteen carloads of "newcomers" with their stocks of farmless implements, were brought into one Kansas town recently. These "newcomers" will scatter about the country surrounding the town and will live upon farms. Ten years ago nearly all the strangers who came to Kansas settled in the towns. The towns were built up until they were far ahead of the country. When the boom collapsed there was nothing left for the towns to fall back on. The farmers who had been the mainstay of the towns had moved into town themselves, and the farms had joined the speculating boom and brought more land than they could manage.

Things went from bad to worse. The five-year mortgage made at the beginning of the boom, and the three-year mortgages made at the end of the boom, all came in '93. There was no way out. So Kansas tried to "crawfish" out. That failed. For the last three years Kansas has been paying the debts. The "newcomers" have been going to the farms. The farms will increase in value as the farmers increase in number. Kansas is rapidly coming out of the "slumps."—Kansas City Star.

Hearing Plants Grow.

The farmer who used to rouse his sons and daughters in the morning by calling out to them: "Wake up and hear the grass grow," little dreamed, perhaps, that the time would come when it would be among the possibilities actually to hear the growing of vegetation; but this sound may now be made audible to ordinary ears by means of the microphone. A wire is attached to a pencil by one end, the other is connected to a drum covered with platinum foil of a special sort. This platinum is so arranged as to complete the circuit of a galvanic battery with an electric bell attachment. This bell is made to ring by the growing of the plant, and continues ringing while the growth covers the width of the strips in the platinum drum cover. If these strips are arranged with spaces between, the bell is silent until the plant has grown over the space and even with the next strip. An apparatus of this sort is not hard to construct and would form a most interesting and instructive addition to scientific experiments in school or college classes.—New York Ledger.

A Close Resemblance.

"There are some points about your writings that smack of the immortal Shakespeare," said the editor.

"Do you think so?" cried the delighted author, who had brought in his contribution in with his own hand.

"Yes," the editor continued, "you employ almost the same punctuation marks."—Rockland (Me.) Tribune.

Rats and Crows Protected in Japan.

Nature's scavengers—crows and rats—are not only tolerated but protected in Japan. Squawking rats scurry through the frail houses, half-naked crows put their heads in an open window and inquire: "Caw?" much as if they would ask: "Anything to-day? No? All right!" They are the buzzards of the city and country.

A Time for All Things.

There is a time for all things.
The bud and then the bloom,
Come forth as fair to scent the air
With Arcady's perfume.

There is a time for all things
The snow has given place
To sunny skies and joy that lies
In Nature's laughing face.

There is a time for all things.
Grim Winter's far away,
And till it come a truce to glum
Be glad that Spring's to-day.

HUMOROUS.

A highly perfumed young lady—The myrtle-maid.

A Philadelphia scholar says parrots speak in polly-syllables.

A man is most likely to get into a brown study when he's blue.

A youth refused to study arithmetic for fear he would be disfigured for life.

What is love? It is a feeling that you don't want another following around her.

Customer—Do you know anything that is good for baldness? Barber—Did you ever try a wig sir?"

Customer—There's a chicken in this egg. Waiter—Of course there is. What did you expect—a duck.

"Is young Jenkins improving in his violin work?" "I dunno. Either he's improvin or we're gettin' used to it."

French American (translating his Bible for an American friend)—The ghost is willing but the meat is weak.

Sayley—Amy is such a nice girl, Gayley (former suitor for Amy's hand)—Yes, and she's got a nice father to boot.

He—My views on bringing up a family She—Never mind your views. I'll bring up the family. You go and bring up the coal.

Citizen—Who gets the first news of a lynching in your country? Arizona Pete—The fellow that gets strung up gets all the news there is.

Lawyer—Then I understand you to swear, witness, that the parties came to high words? Witness—No, sir; wot I say is, the words was particularly low.

Boarding House Keeper—These are home-made sausages, Mr. Picker. "Yes, Mrs. Boardem, I know it. They taste exactly like the hash we had yesterday."

Maud—That Swattles girl is wildly infatuated with her new cham, that Molly Jamesby. What does it mean, I wonder? Madge—It means that Molly has a brother.

Mrs. Newbridge (in hardware store)—My husband told me to price your lawn mowers, but lawn seems so cheap and common; haven't you got anything to silk or satin?

"The bride nearly fainted during the ceremony and had to be supported by her father until it was over." "Yes, and now I hear that her father is supporting both of them."

"Why do you oppose Mr. Dimmock's attentions to Susie?" said Mrs. Cawker to her husband. "Because I am extremely anxious for her to marry him," was the reply.

Miss Caustique—I hope you'll call often during my sojourn here. You remind me so much of home. Mr. Rifkes—Indeed! How so, Miss Caustique—So homely, you know.

"I don't see how you dare trust yourself to young Dr. Pills. He hasn't any patients." "That's just the point. He'll strain every point to keep me alive. I'm his only source of income."

"I think, she said, as she came into the room, "that I will give that parrot away." "Yes," replied the young man who was calling, "that would be only fair. She has been doing as much for you."

Mr. Pedagogs—Benny Bloodhumper, how do we know that the moon is 240,000 miles distant from the earth? Benny (alarmed at the teacher's manner)—Y-y-you said so yourself, sir?

Mr. Huggins—What do you think of the latest medical dictum that kissing is unhealthy? Mr. Hunker—It is quite true. Mr. Mummy caught me kissing his daughter and I was laid up a whole week.

"Jimmie Smith is awful decent of him." "In what way?" "Well, sometimes he washes his face twice a week." "What has that to do with it?" "Well the teacher thinks he's sick and lets him go home."

As a Northern Pacific train drew into a station up in the Rockies a pleasant-mannered gentleman stepped out on the platform and, taking in a long breath of the fresh air, enthusiastically observed to the brakeman: "Isn't this invigorating?" "No, sir," said the man, bluntly, "it's 'Catamount Creek.'"