A ROSCOWER, Editor & Proprietor.

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IN ABSENCE.

My love is far away from me to night. Oh spirits of sweet peace, kind destinies, Watch over her, and breathe upon her

Keep near to her in every hurt's despite, That no rude care or noisome dream affright. So let her rest, so let her sink to sleep,

As little clouds that breast the sunset

Merge and melt out into the golden light.

My love is far away, and I am grown A very child, oppressed with formless

glooms. Some shadowy sadness with a name unknown

Haunts the chill twilight, and these silent Seem with vague fears and dim regrets

Lonesome and strange and empty without

-Archibald Lampman, in Scribner.

PEG.

It was not a "pitch dark" night, though there was neither moon nor stars. The road lay white and glimmering, as roads will lie even on such nights. Perhaps the moon was somewhere behind the clouds.

Pez, the toll-keeper at the gate, had often seen the pike appear just so; and so had Jim Waguer, plodding along the

One might keep safely along, or might instead, by accident or a sudden tightening of the rein, turn square down the Silver Thread, thinking it was the pike-especially if one were dreaming.

But Jim had passed the Silver Thread safely. In soothing tones he was beseeching Black Fan to "go it keerful and not to clank her hoofs, as ef she couldn't make enough noise.

For answer, Black Fan in a senseless and provoking manner clanked her hoofs louder than before, and lifted her head

There was no light in the toll-house nor sound of life about the place; everything was quiet and dark as it should be at almost twelve o'clock at night. But as Black Fan clanked her hoofs almost in front of the little porch, the door of the house flew open and Peg came out

It was the rule of the pike that, after nine o'clock at night, the gate could be left untended, or the keeper, if she choose, might keep for herself the few coppers that came.

"I b'lieve she'd set up watchin' for a feller till mernin'," grumbled Jim, as Black Fan rattled on toward home. "She's the stinglest woman in these

Bill Walsh, Peg's husband, had his blacksmith shop close by the toll-gate. If, ten years before, he had not gone to the Eastern Shore and brought back the chills an I fever, he would have got on well enough. But the chills and fever and the blacksmith trade were never meant to go together.

"He'll set and shake day after day, mebbe for weeks at a time, and then not be over it," said Josh Bernet, explaining this curious disease to a neighbor; "an' his face about the color of them there as ies."

There were four children at the toli-

One was a little girl who had a way of leaning out at the garret window and shaking her fist at people who, she imagined, were planning to keep her mother waiting after dark. Sie was such a very pretty little girl that people only laughe i when they saw her shaking

There were the two boys who went to school whenever they were sent; and then the bad little boy who generally sat on the porch in fine weather, wearing his Sunday shoes every day. He was his mother's pet.

None of Peg's children were sent to school regularly. They went when their clothes were new; and when these garments were old, faded and patched, the children stayed at home.

For Peg was proud. Her neighbors were aware of it, and shunned her accordingly. Poverty was, in their minds, something sent by the Lord, and nothing to be ashamed of. Sickness was a trial sent from heaven; but pride was a crime which they could not forgive.

Peg did not love her neighbors any more than they loved her. Perhaps there was a little jealousy intermixed with the feeling she bore them. Most of them were not nearly so poor as she. Some were farmers, with well-cultivated acres. There were Mr. Jones, the drover, and Mr. Ed Coon, who had set up a rival blacksmith shop on the other side

of the creek, and got plenty of work. "Ef Bill warn't sickly, we might hev thought, as she sat alone in the dark with a bitter feeling creeping about her

If Peg had sent the children to school in old clothes as well as new; if she had allowed Bill to buy on credit just a bit down at the store, to show he could be trusted; if she had sometimes let people slip through the gate in the evening without paying the coppers that made the pike no richer; and above all, if it hadn't been reported that she'd said, "if her or any o' hern was sick, she didn't want am to come with their custards and their gelatine," things might have been differ-

When Bill found her, during his otherwise unhappy sojoura on the Eastern Shore, he saw, under her tilted-back sunbonnet, the biggest of black eyes, the reddest of cheeks, and the daintiest of dark brown curls. Bill had bragge1 about "up our way" until it had seemed to her imagination a paradise; and she had come back with him, his wife.

But "up our way" Bill had seen her harden until the black eyes had no laughter in them; had seen the red cheeks deeper dyed with anger and indignation and jealousy; had seen her grow into a sharp, quick, grasping little woman, whom the Turnpike Company was glad to have at the toll-gate.

"Ef Bill warn't sickly, we might buy yonder corner of John Lawrence's field, and build a house with red trimmin's," ran Peg's thoughts again, "I reckon like as not some other body'll be along and snap it up before our eyes, and Bill not a-keerin' a pin. Ef them Browns buys the lot and puts up their fancy buildin's on 't, I'm a-goin' to leave. The thop won't be much trouble for to carry

Then she started up and said "Oh!" and clasped her bands together and laughed, as she might have done when she was down on the "Easte'n Sho'." She tiptoed softly out through the narrow passageway and up the steep little steps to where the bad little boy lay asleep in his Sunday shoes; for he would not take them off for all his mother's

She knelt beside him, and began to untie the strings. She had forgotten that she felt "sick and tired and most worn-Her black eyes were laughing still, as she stooped over and kissed her

But when she kissed him, the laughter died out of her eyes, and there came an anxious look instead. She put her little, hard brown hand on his forehead, and then on his cheek, and then on his chubby wrist; and as she listened to

the irregular breathing, John Wynn drove past, and wriggled with delight to think that he had cheated the toll for the second time.

The drivers were not kept waiting the next day. Dan Toomey's fast mare was obliged to pause an instant. John Wynn tried it again, was trapped; but Peg's pet did not sit on the doorstep that sunny Tuesday and swing his Sabbath-shod feet as if there were nothing in the world

"Has Walsh's children stopped a-goin' to school altogether?" inquired Mrs. Coon, as Mary and Belle came bouncing in with their satchels.

"Some 'n's sick, I s'pose," said Belle: "I seen the doctor's horse tied to the tree a pawin' like he'd been there a long time."

" 'Hum! Now I wonder if custards and gelatines wouldn't come into account!" said the rival blacksmith's wife, with a shrug of her shoulders.

"They's sick at the toll-gate." The news spread swiftly. "Down with the measels or somethin'." Very soon the word came, "They's down with the scar-

Then Mrs. Coon forgot and forgave, and sent Mary over with a dish of jelly, covered with her finest napkin; but the napkin and the dish both returned with Mary, and the jelly, too.

A little white coffin was carried out from the toll-house one day, and old Mrs. Lisle fell to crying and sobbing as the burden was carried past the store. "An' neverso much as a cracker," she mouned, 'an' no milk nor nothin'!"

"The proudest woman in these parts," cried Josh Bernet, thrusting his hands deep into his trouser's pockets, and vehemently pacing the floor.

"By George!" exclaimed Colonel Green, puffing and blowing. "Bill Walsh is down himself; taken in the night, and raving like a loon. I say something must be done."

There was a light in the toll house now; it seemed as if it had been there a

a house like his'n," Peg had often | long time-a steady, mellow light, that | beg for; but for beef tea and chickens, \(\) fell across the road and lost itself in the

> But the door flew open as usual when Will Smith's wagon drove up, and Peg came out for the toll.

Thinking of the unhappiness and poverty within, Will timidly held out a silver quarter.

"Three cents," said Peg, sharply, and handed him back the change.

The humming-birds whizzed away suddealy from the great clustering honeysuckle at the end of Col. Green's front porch. They had dipped their bills undisturbed into the sweetness of its honey, though the Colonel's voice came big and blustering out through the open sittingroom window.

But this disturbance was more than a voice; it was a girl who came rushing to the bench under the vine and threw her arms on the railing, with her head in her arms, and began to weep.

First she sobbed vehemently, as if she had been keeping back the tears and could do so no longer. Then she wept more softly, and at last stopped altogether, and fell to wondering a little indignantly why her grandfather and the rest of the people did not stop talking and set to work to do something instead.

"If I were only a man," said Hetty Green, hopelessly, "I should think of some wav."

She pressed her face deeper among the fresh leaves and sighed, thinking. Then she began to wonder what she would think of if she really were a man.

As she puzzled her brain she stood so silently that the birds came whizzing about again, only to be started off on another tour as she jumped up and ran back into the house.

If they had remained and peeped in at the window, they might have seen Hetty performing an ecstatic dance across the sitting-room floor to where the worn-out Colonel rested in his leather chair. They might have seen her fling herself upon the arm, and whisper in the Colonel's ear exactly what he and all the other people must go and do.

But the birds must have been sorely puzzled, for why should a whisper from a girl who was always whispering make such an impression upon a gray-haired, sensible man like the Colonel?

He did not wait until she was done whispering before he was tapping his feet on the floor and notlding his head, and exclaiming, "By George!" in approval. Whether or not she was really done they could not have known, for the Colonel suddenly put on his hat and left

All around the country for miles and miles drove Hetty's grandfather, the Colonel, pausing for an instant at every house on the way, rushing in and out of Dillton's livery stable, and exclaiming and gesticulating to every man ne met.

When Colonel Green reached home that night he was ready for bel; but he did not go to it. He ate his supper in a desperate hurry, and ordered out his tired horse.

John Wagner and Will Smith did an outrageous thing. Bill Walsh, as everybody knew, was down with the scarlet fever, and three children lying ill in the next room; but these two young fellows drove through without paying, right under Peg's nose.

She did not call angrity at them, as she would have done a week before. She turned about in the doorway and put her hands over her face.

Some one upstairs tossed and moaned, and a child's voice screamed for water. She let her hands fall, and ran up as fast as she could.

The beautiful day had been good to her sick ones, but what had it brought to her? What had the doctor been saying? That the invalids positively must have beef ten and chickens, grapes an I

Peg cienched her little hard fists and pressed her lips tightly together. Beef tea and chickens, grapes and oranges!

It was not that they ought to have these things-not that it would be well for them to have them, but that they must have them.

"They most, they must, they must," said poor Peg, ueder her breath. She went to the window and glance l quickly down the road in the gathering

No one was coming, but to Peg's excited fancy there was some one hurrying along, this way and that way, up and

down and around. It was the beauty of Peach Blow-that little village down on the Eastern Shore -begging, "up our way." Not for bread; that any one who is hungry may

grapes and oranges!

A singular sick and giddy feeling came over her. She knew she must do this. God had punished her sin of pride,

"I must, I must!" muttered Peg. Then she darted down the stairs, quick as a flash, and stood at the gate waiting for her own and the Company's money.

John Wagner cried out: "We're caught," and W:ll shouted: "Run it fast!" but it was no use. Peg took the money-hers and the Company's.

nine. What was that down the dim roadway? Another buggy. She stood and waited for her money

The old clock inside the door struck

Why, there was a double team coming, and another! Was there a party

somewhere? She had not heard. One after another carrages came pouring in, the one-horse wagons, two-horse wagons, six-horse teams and eight-horse teams; there were little limping ponies, whose trotting day had long been over, and carts and sulkies and horsemen, and mules, donkeys and goats.

Per dropped her money from her hand to her apron, and stood there holding it up. The lamps from a livery stable carriage threw their light upon her face, showing the great, wondering black eyes and the kinks of the brown hair.

Some laughed softly as they jingled the toll into the apron; some reproached her for sitting up so late to catch a party; some declared vehemently that they weren't going to pay at this time in the night, but they paid just the same.

One voice-an old man's-near the end of the cavalcade cried out triumphantly, "By George?' and the last of the train passed through.

"Did you catch 'em, Peg!" Thin and weak came the voice from the bed, with just a tremor of humor in it. Peg looked at him. She could see that he was much better.

Peg held open her apron so that he might see that it was full. Then she went down on her knees beside the bed. "They done it a-purpose, Bill!" she said, and could say no more. - Youth's Companion.

Three Miles Underground.

Colonel Rufus Heptherone is a prominent ranchman of Martin County, Texas, and was recently the hero of an adventure rivaling the extravaganzas of Jules Verne and Haggard, but which is vouched for by several other well-known reliable gentlemen. Colonel Heptherone in company with three, was endeavoring to ford a small stream of the class known as lost rivers, as it loses itself in the earth after a run of a few miles. This stream, which is known as Pilgrim's Friend, is very rapid, running downward with great speed, and is at all times considerel dangerous to cross, but being in haste Heptherone and his party resolved to try

The former gentleman led the way, and had only proceeded a few feet when his horse was caught in the current and borne away before the others could lend any assistance. Heptherone soon lost his hold on the animal, and gave himself up for lost on approaching the sinkhole, through which the stream loses itself. He made an attempt to catch at the earth as he went under, but, carried by the powerful suction, vanished with the stream. He became unconscious at this point, and knew no more until he found himself in the hands of a couple of negroes, who were endeavoring to restore him to consciousness.

These stated that they had been fishing in a small lake known as Johnson's pond, when they saw the body of a man rise suddenly to the surface of the water, and, putting out in their boat, rescued the Colonel, whom it proved to be, though nearly capsized by the volume of water that seemed to burst at this point from the bottom of the pond. The spot where the Pilgrim's Friend loses itself is over three miles from the lake, with which it has no visible connection, and there can scarcely be a doubt of Colonel Heptherone having made this incredible journey underground and in the space of a few minute: . - Philadelphia Times.

Russia is now rapidly constructing the longest railway in the world. It is 4785 miles long, nearly twice the length of the Canadian Pacific, and runs from Miask, on the eastern side of the Ural range, to Vladdivostok, on the Sea of Japan. This road will make England's position in India very insecure.

A Snake With Two Tails and No Head.

"Talking about snake stories," re-

marked Mr. W. F. Dowden, "reminds me of a curious thing I once saw done in Dixie. Marmaduke's column of Confederates were marching through the pines away down in Arkansas one morning hunting for a locality where grub was not so distressingly scarce as it had become where we were camped. The General and his escort were riding at the head of the column. Looking down in the road I saw a peculiarly shaped snake and at a second glance I remarked: 'General, here is a snake with two tails, and no head." General Marmaduke and several members of his staff stopped their horses to get a better view of his snakeship. Upon close examination it was seen that what appeared to be one snake was really parts of two. That they were about the same size and one had partially swallowed the other-had swallowed it too far to disgorge before discovering that it was a physical impossibility to swallow it entirely. "This is a true story," continued Mr. Dowden, "and I often think of the peculiar appearance of the thing." - Marshall (Mo.) Democrat-

Pearl Fishing in Lower California,

One of the largest pearl fishing grounds in the world is in the Gulf of California. "The pearls," says a correspondent, "are not generally regular in shape or very pure in color, but some are of large size, and many of the rare black pearls are tound. The divers are nearly all Indians and their equipment is of the simplest kind, consisting only of a basket hung around the neck, in which to collect the oysters, a knife to detach them from the rocks and a stone with a cord attached. When a diver goes down he takes the cord between his toes, the weight of the stone carrying him at once to the bottom. He gathers oysters as long as his breath holds out, and then rises to the surface, to descend again in fifteen minutes. Some of the divers are wonderfully expert, and can remain under water for as much as two minutes before rising to the surface. The mortality among them is fearful, for the Gulf of California is infested with huge man-eating sharks, who carry off scores of mer. every year."

An Odd Cat.

A mother cat belonging to Station Agent Simpson's household gave birth to a litter of kittens a few weeks ago among which is one that looks and acts like a rabbit. It has no tail and its hind legs and feet are precisely like those of a rabbit. It does not walk or crawl like a rabbit, resting with the hind feet and legs to the joint on the ground like a rabbit. It also shows a partiality for vegetable food and nibbles clover and grass when offered it. It is a decided curiosity and the cause of this remarkable freak of nature is a question for scientists to solve. Two or three years ago this same mother cat adopted two young rabbits which were given her while she was nursing a litter of kittens, and she exhibited a special fonduess and affection for them. An account of this was given in the Tribune at the time, Could this fact in any manner lead to a solution of the present problem? - Lineville (Iowa) Tribune.

A Lawrence (Kan.) drug store window is ornamented with two native leeches, which measure a foot each in length, and have, combined, a blood capacity of



A cream of tartar baking powder. Highest of all in leavening strength .. -Litest U. S. Government Food Report.