

## NOCTURN.

Outside his nursery window  
A tall green pine-tree stands,  
And every night it beckons  
And waves its shadowy hands:  
Whether the breeze flies lightly,  
Or whether the winds blow wild,  
It's "Good night to you now, O Pine-tree."  
"Good night to you, little child."

The bright moon looks through its branches,  
The thin moon splendid and new;  
It spreads a snare for the dewdrops;  
And stars hang sparkling through:  
But moonlight, and starlight, and sunlight,  
The great-winged winds and the breeze—  
With the little child to wave to  
What should it care for these?

When in the lonely midnight,  
Awake with the storm and rain,  
He opens the blind in the curtain,  
To peer through the window-pane,  
He can hear the pine-tree saying—  
Over and over, too—  
"The night is wet and windy,  
But I'm staying awake with you."

Every night at bedtime  
A small hand waves to the tree,  
All face smiles through the twilight,  
Kissing the pane to see;  
And whether the breeze flies lightly,  
Or whether the wind blow wild,  
It's "Good night to you now, O Pine-tree."  
"Good night to you, little child."  
—Rosamond Marriott Watson.

## ACHMET'S RIDE.

### A SOUDANESE WAR TALE.

In the early stages of the Anglo-Egyptian advance up the Nile in 1896, several thousand soldiers of all colors, with camels, horses, mules, guns, wagons, gunboats in sections, and the end of an unfinished railroad, were waiting at Wady Halfa for the Nile to rise sufficiently to permit the navigation of the Second Cataract. Meanwhile, detached bodies of the cavalry and camel-corps were continually scouring the surrounding desert for marauding parties of the enemy.

A troop of two hundred men, under Captain Somerville, one day sighted a strong force of dervishes about five miles from Anka, and gave chase—and a long chase it proved. As they advanced farther into the desert, little knots of Arabs were continually springing up from nowhere, as it seemed, and joining the enemy.

Captain Somerville and his two hundred charged, with shouts and a brisk fire of revolvers and carbines, and were met in the most provoking manner possible. The dervishes did not meet the shock, but scattered, and as the troopers rode in, the dervishes closed round, and engulfed the little force. In half a minute the whole scene went out in a cloud of dust and smoke, through which vaguely appeared black faces and arms, flashing eyes, squealing, bobbling camel-heads, with the mingled reek of gunpowder, ill-smelling hot leather and camel's-hair dominating the whole.

There was sharp, close fighting as the British force strove to cut its way through, which it finally succeeded in doing, and made for a small hillock dotted with rough black boulders. Every soldier dismounted, dropped behind one of these and opened a hot fire that checked pursuit.

To Captain Somerville, at five o'clock in the afternoon, the situation did not seem comforting. The men had little water in their flasks; their cartridges were few. They could not hope for aid from Wady Halfa, ten miles away, unless word could be sent through.

When the captain called for a messenger, every one volunteered to undertake the hazardous service. Only three were selected—an English trooper of the Staffordshire regiment, an Egyptian subaltern, and Achmet Ben Houssain, a young member of the friendly Arab scouts.

Achmet was a youngster of about seventeen, proud in the possession of a dromedary, a Martini and a belt of cartridges. He had joined the force with his father and most of his tribe, as free scouts. The three were to leave the camp separately, as soon as it became dark.

When the swift darkness of old Egypt came on, the English trooper shook hands with his comrades, tightened his belt and crept off down into the gloom on foot. The Egyptian subaltern followed without a word to any one.

Lastly young Achmet sailed out on his beloved dromedary, and commenced to ride around the hillock in a spiral direction that brought him continually nearer the besiegers' lines. He trusted that his course would produce the impression that he was a chief riding about on a tour of inspection. This artifice seemed to have succeeded when a voice challenged him.

He was about to reply when he was shot from the other side by a volley of firing. The dervishes were firing at the boy as he crept, and he was killed.

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saddle, lashed his camel over the flank with the end of his long rawhide halter, and broke into a gallop, which was injudicious, for the dervishes perceived no reason for this speed. Shouts followed him, then several bullets split sharply as they struck into the sand ahead.

In another moment suspicion seemed to have become conviction in the Mahdist mind. Achmet heard the bubbling grunts of camels being pulled up, and then the heavy padding of big feet in the rear. On he galloped.

And now he heard news of another of the three messengers. As the hill faded out in the darkness, there was a second outburst of angry cries and a few shots. Achmet felt a little thrill as he realized that on him alone depended the rescue of the two hundred. The dervishes in pursuit were firing now, but the night was dark, and they could not shoot accurately by sound of his galloping as he lashed his own beast to a good eight-mile pace.

His camel rolled and pitched like a ship at sea, while now and again a bullet whined over his head through the darkness. But the pursuers were not gaining. So Achmet presently let his camel relax into the regular natural trotting pace of the animal, and mile upon mile passed with no sound but the padding of the soft feet on sand, or the occasional splitting crack of a rifle.

Six miles were covered, and the trained sense of the young Arab told him the Nile was near. When the moon slowly rolled up, bronze and large, over the distant ranges that border the Red sea, Achmet had been expecting this with dread. As the light spread over the black and corrugated landscape he looked back and saw his pursuers distinctly—five of them. The light served them equally well for a scattering volley, and to Achmet the flying lead whistled near. He turned in his saddle and replied with his Martini. The first shot went wild; the next lamed a camel, and one rider was out of the chase.

But he must get out of range, and he again urged the dromedary to a gallop. The Mahdists galloped, too, but the gap grew wider. Four hundred yards' interval became six and eight hundred. Already he saw in the distance an irregular line which might have been a row of squat stakes, but which was the fringe of palms along the Nile.

Straight onward Achmet rode, while the dervishes fired wildly in hope of stopping him short of a place of safety. Now the feathery palms were clear and black in the moonlight. Two minutes more and he rode beneath them. In front foamed the rushing Nile, surging over the hundred black crags and boulders that block the Second Cataract. He was too far up-stream for the camp.

He turned to ride northward on the beaten track by the river, when a peculiar, soft "thud" sounded under his saddle, and the camel, hit by a bullet, grunted, tottered, and sank to its knees.

The boy sprang clear with an agile bound, and stood for a moment in dismay. He thought of his danger, then of the little beleaguered band upon the hillock in the desert, and all the traditions of his tribe urged him to lay down his life if need be, but to stand fast to the service he had taken.

The rocky shores of the Nile were strewn with driftwood from the distant equatorial forests. Achmet fired two defiant shots at the oncoming dervishes, dropped his rifle, threw himself upon a half-stranded log, and ran it before him with a rush that sent it shooting far into the whirling torrent.

He went clear under water with the impetus, and the water was cool and refreshing. When he rose he was in the grip of the rapids, and the bullets were cutting into the water all around him. The strong current drove him downward, and he was absolutely helpless in its grasp. Down chutes or whirling dizzily in eddies he went, with a grim and gasping determination to cling to his log, and to reach the British post below.

He escaped crushing as by a miracle; often the log revolved, and he went under in a choking dash of waves and foam. He could not see where he was drifting, much less direct his course beyond fending blindly off the rocks as they loomed up close beside him. Suddenly, as a leaping wave lifted him, he saw the quiet rows of white tents ashore, and a little lower the lights of Wady Halfa.

His voyage was finished; it only remained to land. An eddy rolled him, log and all, shoreward, and he clutched desperately at projecting crags. They helped him to shallow water, whence he waded ashore.

Dripping and battered and too dazed to give the countersign, Achmet was found by a sentry, and handed over to the officer of the guard.

In half an hour the bugles had blown and two regiments had paraded in the open and set off rapidly eastward, singing vociferously an audacious parody:

On the road to Dongolay!  
On the road to Dongolay!

And Achmet Ben Houssain, provided with a fresh camel and rifle, went with them as guide.

The morning wind brought to the ears the sound of firing, faint in

the distance, and they came to the spot a little after. The garrison sallied as the relieving force attacked; there was a sharp skirmish, hot hand-to-hand fighting. But the dervishes, taken between two fires, fled.

After the water-bottles had been handed over to the late besieged, Achmet was the hero of the hour. A little bewildered by the boisterous enthusiasm of the troopers, he yet stood with the dignity of a true son of the desert. The few words of grave commendation from his tribesmen impressed him more than all, except the fact that he was offered rifles and camels enough to supply an arsenal or a caravan. Captain Somerville shook hands with him and complimented him, and Achmet felt at peace with himself, and that he had been true to his salt.—Youth's Companion.

### Wild Birds in London.

Twenty years ago who would not have laughed at the suggestion that it might be necessary to place a wire entanglement round the trunk of the tree in the Bank of England courtyard to prevent the Bank of England cat from eating the wild wood pigeons nesting therein? It would have seemed almost as reasonable to muzzle the lions at the Zoo for fear they should catch and eat the dodo, or to barricade Exeter hall during the May meetings to keep out the uninvited boar constrictor. Yet the wild wood pigeons of the city of London are an accomplished and very familiar fact. In Leicester square, which some of us remember as a derelict tangle of weeds with the riderless horse of a broken equestrian statue in the middle, there are now trees from which the nesting wood pigeons survey the passing traffic, anon descending to scamble with sparrows for the contents of a cat's horse's split nosebag. In St. James' park the "shy ringdove" woos his mate "coram publico" with an absence of shyness that would be ridiculous were it not welcome testimony to the wisdom of our civilized protection of wild life. In the country a man has but to hold an umbrella or walking stick gunwise to make the wary wood pigeon three fields off rise and fly to a safer distance; in Leicester square or St. James' park a man might carry a whole bundle of guns and, provided that he had also bread crumbs to distribute, the wood pigeons would come to his feet to eat them. A very interesting struggle for existence is destined to take place in the near future between the ordinary London pigeon and the wild wood pigeon, in which it is not easy to say which will triumph.—London Globe.

### Passing of the Courier.

Up to times within the memory of living men, almost no one of means traveled through Europe without a courier. Before railroads were built and before good guide books were printed he was almost indispensable. His tribe survives, but in greatly diminished numbers. To the self-reliant traveler he is of no use whatever. Indeed he is frequently a positive encumbrance, and worse. To my mind, one of the great pleasures of travel is in learning travel by myself. There is satisfaction, pleasure and education in planning routes, deciphering time tables, making bargains, learning by observation the lay of the land.

The time may have been when a courier could save a traveler more than his cost. Most certainly that is not the case now. On the contrary, as he gets a percentage on every purchase his party makes (which, of course, comes out of the purchaser in increased prices), and as it is often for his interest to advise the more costly route, the more costly hotel or the more costly excursion, he eats up much more than his wages, while saving positively nothing. Bean declares that in a two weeks' trip in southern Spain, which he made side by side with a couple having a courier, he invariably reached the hotel first, got the better rooms, saw all the sights to his good advantage; yet the courier was of his kind an expert. The fact is that travel has become so general, tourist companies, railroads and landlords have so well studied its needs, books are so plentiful, that you couldn't very well get off the track or have a mishap if you tried.—Robert Luce in Going Abroad.

### Quadruped Fowl.

Traceyville, near Honesdale, Penn., has a large number of chickens with four legs. The chicken is now a big rooster, and he is very proud of his extra legs. A short time ago a farmer named McGown found a four-legged chicken under one of his hens, the two extra legs being attached to the breast, just beneath the wings. And now the managers of the Wayne County Agricultural society will offer a reward of \$50 for a five-legged chicken, and the hens of the county are expected to do their duty.—New York Press.

### A Live Plant Industry.

The British consul at Ghent reports that the exports of live plants thence to Great Britain during 1897 were 752 tons, chiefly from the nurseries of Ghent. This business is increasing, and more green-houses are accordingly being built in different parts of the town and neighborhood.

## U. S. SHIPS' BUGLE CALLS

### NAVAL OFFICERS NO LONGER THUNDER OUT THEIR ORDERS.

About Every Command Now Is Conveyed to the Men on Deck by the Brass Instrument—The One to Quarters Is the Most Welcome One of All.

In the old days in the British navy it was possible to tell the rank of an officer by the notes of his voice. The captain gave his commands like a broadside. The lieutenant commander thundered a little less loudly, the executive officer still less vehemently, while an ensign gave orders in a mild and apologetic tone.

But in the modern navy the voice has given way to the bugle, and the clarion tones of this instrument ring through the ship at all hours of the day and for a part of the night. The sailor abuses it when it calls him from his hammock at the break of dawn, and blesses it when it gives him permission to "turn in" at night, or when it sounds the order for mess formation.

In the hour of battle the bugle inspires and directs; at sunset and sunrise it calls all hands to salute the flag, as the national emblem is hauled down or hoisted; it may mean breakfast or a long, hard row, under a hot sun, or swabbing down the decks, or calling away the captain's gig, or "church," as the Sunday service on shipboard is called, or practice with the big guns, or inspection, or battalion drill—or half a hundred other things.

An old sailor regards the bugle with scorn. To him it is only an innovation. A "whole bloomin' band" would scarcely strike him as being more inappropriate for the bugle on men-of-war is a thing of so recent date in our navy, that the men who fought and died at the beginning of the civil war had never heard it.

In the old days it was the fife and drum which gave warning that the enemy was in sight, and which sent the men to the guns. The old sailor still longs for the fife and drum, and for him no other music can have such attraction. It recalls the age of wooden ships, the age when muscle and brawn had not succumbed to steel and science, the age when men looked into the cannon's mouth at short range, when ship was lashed to ship, and "All hands repel boarders!" was a familiar cry.

The young recruit of the modern ironclad, perhaps, also sighs for the days of the fife and drum, as he listens to the many calls of the bugle and struggles to learn the meaning of such, but necessity teaches the dullest, and, after a few weeks, the meaning of the bugle notes is as plain to him as the English language.

At 5 o'clock in the morning, in summer, and at 6 o'clock in winter, there comes that inevitable "ta-ra-ta-ta," which means that he must bid adieu to slumber, fold up his hammock and stow it neatly away.

At 7.50 o'clock the bugle sounds again, and the young sailor knows that the quartermaster is preparing to hoist the colors. Again, at 8 o'clock, the bugle call is given, and ere the strains have died away the Stars and Stripes are waving at the stern. This ceremony is technically known as "colors."

If the young man is on a ship the captain of which is fond of "form," the bugle will presently be heard summoning him to fall in with his comrades for mess. Mess formation is not, however, gone through with on every ship.

When the decks have been cleaned and muster or inspection is over, the captain may order practice at the guns, and the bugler gives the officers' call, and ten minutes later the general call to quarters.

While at quarters the bugle directs the men in the various exercises. It orders "commence firing," or "cease firing," or "train the starboard or port battery."

Gun practice may be followed by battalion drill, for which the bugle sounds the assembly call, and then goes through the calls for drill which are in use in the regular army.

At the dinner hour the mess formation call is sounded, and often, after dinner, the bugler may be heard calling away one of the boats, or perhaps all of them. There is a call for each class of boats—launches, cutters, whaleboats, gigs and dingies. The boat call followed by one blast calls away the first cutter, by two blasts, the second cutter; by three blasts, the third cutter.

At ten minutes before sunset the bugle summons the quartermaster to the flagstaff, and at sunset it sounds "colors," when the flag is hoisted down and stowed away in the locker. This ceremony is very impressive and pretty. On the flagship the band plays "The Star Spangled Banner," and everybody salutes the flag. If some of the officers are below dining, "colors" always brings them to their feet and they face the stern and salute.

It is after the evening mess that the sailor finds himself at leisure and he smokes his pipe and lies on the deck forward and swaps yarns with his messmates, or joins in the chorus of some familiar old tune which has done

duty to the fore-castle for generations. But his hours for recreation come to an end all too soon, for at 9 o'clock the omnipresent bugler sounds the "tattoo," which is quickly followed by "taps," and presently the sailor is rocking in his hammock and dropping off to sleep.—Philadelphia Times.

## SPAIN'S NATIONAL HERO.

### Exploits of the Cid Preserved in Legend, Song and Lore.

Spain's traditions of chivalry, nobility and exploit are derived chiefly from the chronicles concerning the popular Iberian hero, El Cid, or El Campeador, whose fame is preserved in legend, song and lore. The Cid is a sort of mediæval Achilles, and the quasi epic in which his deeds are recounted may be compared with the Iliad in so far as both have a basis in history, and both stand together as unrivaled examples of the exuberance of a poetic fancy that is prone to deify and worship its own manufactures. Spain has a regard for her hero that is as wildly extravagant as the character of her people would lead one to expect. The Cid and his apotheosis by the Spanish have no parallel.

The flesh out of which this idol grew was Rodrigo Diaz of Bivar. The name Cid comes from the Arabic "El Seyd," the lord. He came into prominence as a warrior in the army of Fernando I. This was probably about the year 1025. Fernando accomplished a check of the Moslem conquest, and Spain was equally divided between the Spanish and the Arabs, and in the fierce civil wars which followed Diaz found ample field for the exploitation of his military genius.

Toward the end of the eleventh century the Cid was wedded to a royal bride. Ximena, the daughter of the Count Oviedo. She was the granddaughter of the King Alfonso V., and this fact in the story of the Cid is verified by historians, who have the original marriage contract as evidence.

About this time Rodrigo fought in the war between Motamid, King of Seville, and the King of Granada, Abdallah. Abdallah had the aid and comfort of the great Garcia Ordonez. This prince of the blood was seen by Rodrigo, who begged him to recant his disloyal agreement and return to his lawful master. But Ordonez refused, and the battle was fought without the walls of Seville. The Cid routed his enemies and brought back great store of treasure and many prisoners. Ordonez, treacherous to the last, persuaded Alfonso that Rodrigo had stolen the tribute from Seville, and the Cid was banished. Then began the exploits which have furnished the theme of the grand national poem of Espana. The Cid was found fighting the Moors now, and now the Spaniards. Crescent or cross were alike to him, providing he was always in blood and always robbing some one of treasure—in which he proved himself a genuine Spaniard. He led his army against Valencia, a city that had aroused the cupidity of the Moor and Christian. It fell before the Cid's army of 7000 men after withstanding a siege of nine months. The slaughter which followed the surrender—the terms of which were every one ruthlessly violated by the Cid—was truly Spanish. No Moslem soldier could have equalled it. For four years he ruled, it would appear, with much justice, but was at last beaten by Almoravides, and died in a fit of anger and grief. When it is said that Rodrigo was a savage fighter all is said that can be said in his praise. He was a barbarian compared with the Saracens he conquered and who conquered him. It would seem the Spanish poet could have selected a better hero for his quasi epic. It is the Cid of the poet's imagination that lives and that inspires the Weylers, the Polaviejas and the Camaras of today, and they are all poor relations of the original.—Chicago Times-Herald.

### Coal Briquettes.

Coal briquettes are made very extensively and used in Germany, France, Russia and Belgium. In Germany a large part of the output of brown coal, which is too friable to stand handling, is utilized in this way. In the United States very little has been done in this line. A factory for making briquettes from anthracite coal dust was put up at Rondout, N. Y., about fifteen years ago, but it did not prove a paying business, and was abandoned. About a year ago a plant for making briquettes from Texas lignite was built by a firm in Philadelphia. The reasons why briquettes are not made in this country seem to be purely commercial. The manufacture is not profitable as long as good coal sells at present prices. In some parts of the country, as on the Pacific coast, where coal is high in price, they might be introduced to advantage.—Engineering and Mining Journal.

### Old Saws.

"I suppose," said Elder Keepalong, as he took a seat on a bench in Deacon Ironside's shop and glanced around with a humorous twinkle in his eye, "it has never occurred to you to get up a book of proverbs out of your old saws?"

"No," admitted the deacon, "it never has. Still," he added, "I generally put 'em on file."—Chicago Tribune.

## UNTAUGHT.

'Tis ever the same wherever you go  
There's a lad and a lass together;  
Whatever you think or whatever you know,  
Believe as you may, it was always so,  
In fair or in foulest weather.

See men knew aught of the skies above,  
Or of earth with its harvest growing;  
There were secret trysts in field and grove;  
There were lips that told all the words of love,  
As the wind is adept in blowing.

Who taught the roses to bloom full red,  
And the lily its graceful bearing?  
Did the pearls lie deep in the ocean bed,  
To learn at last how its light is shed,  
Its beauty with others sharing?

Loves never came with a task in view,  
But born in the heart of maiden,  
Wherever she went it flourished and grew,  
As fresh as the morn, as pure as the dew,  
And as sweet as a rose in Aiden.  
—Edw. W. Dutcher in Carter's Monthly.

### HUMOROUS.

"Is his book a problem novel?"  
"Yes; and a hard one. It is in the worst form of Scotch dialect."

If you want to be well-informed, take a paper. Even a paper of pins will give you some good points.

When one man proposes a good thing, another man usually proposes one so much better that nothing is done.

Extolling the merits of a dog he offered for sale, the owner said: "He will eat anything, and is very fond of children."

It was the first time Nan had seen any one husking corn. "Do you have to undress every single ear?" she asked soberly.

He (before the wedding)—You are sure you won't be nervous at the altar? She (four times a widow)—I've never been yet.

Brownleigh (visiting friends in the country)—I don't often get such a good supper. Johnnie (son of the host)—Neither do we.

"I wonder why artists are always so careful to sign their pictures?"  
"Possibly so the public can tell the top from the bottom."

Jack—I wonder how it was first discovered that fish was a brain food? Jill—Probably by the wonderful stories that men tell who go fishing.

"Madam, these flowers will look well on your hat; they are a perfect copy of nature."  
"Then I don't want them; show me something original."

"He," said the fond but firm father, "is, I fear, a young man of extravagant tastes."  
"Yes," the daughter admitted, "he wants me for a wife."

Johnny Hay—What kind of engagement rings d'ye sell? Polite Jeweler—All kinds. Johnny Hay—Well, I want one a girl can't sneak out of.

Clara—I see Cynthia has decorated her room with guns, pistols, swords and the like. Cora—Yes; she always has been a great girl for having arms around her.

"Alfred," she exclaimed, "how do you like my new hat?"  
"Well," he replied very slowly, in order to gain time, "I dunno. How much is it going to cost?"

"I have learned a new distinction between pessimist and optimist."  
"What is it?"  
"A pessimist calls cream 'milk,' and an optimist always calls milk 'cream.'"

Young Doctor—I'm doing very well. I was called up three nights last week. Old Doctor—That's good! I hope you never forget to appear annoyed on such occasions?

"I wonder," said the artist, thoughtfully, "what price that picture ought to command."  
"Oh," replied the dealer, cheerfully, "there is no way of telling that. You're not dead yet, you know."

Little Mary was discovered one day by her mother vigorously applying the oil can to the kitten's mouth. On being reproved, she replied: "Why, mamma, kitty squeaks so awfully when I pull her tail."

He—If I should kiss you, what would you do? She (startled)—I never measure an emergency until it arises. He—If this emergency arose now, how would you meet it? She (courageously)—Face to face.

First Worker (gloomily)—Women are crowding into every department of industry and lowering our wages. Second Worker—I ain't afraid of 'em. First Worker—You're not? What are you? Second Worker—A cook.

Old Gentleman (dictating an indignant letter)—Sir: My stenographer, being a lady, cannot take down what I think of you. I, being a gentleman, cannot think it; but you, being neither, can easily guess my thoughts.

Maurice and Johnny have been rude to their mamma. Mamma has complained to papa, who is heard coming up stairs. Johnny—I say, Maurice, here comes papa. I shall pretend to be asleep. Maurice—I shan't. I shall get up and put something on.

### Always Dangerous.

The Youth—Have you got a horse that is safe to drive with one hand?  
The Cynical Liveryman—Young feller, it never is safe for a single man to drive with one hand.—Indianapolis Journal.