

JOHN BROWN'S LEGS.

The poet laureate begs
A tear for John Brown's legs;
Those lacinated legs,
Cut and carved about the knee,
Which 'twere a pity to see.
What service they have done,
What royal errands run!
Now come with grace,
Alas! no more
They chase the huns and find the freshest eggs,
Those faithful legs, those lacinated legs.

Dressed in his Highland rig,
His plumed bonnet and bright checkered
plaid,
A bonnier, braver lad
Than John Brown never danced a jig
Upon the breezy heights of Balmoral.
Stately as cedars upon Lebanon,
Ere massive as the pillars of Karnak,
His mighty legs beneath his neat kilts shone,
A new sight to look upon,
And send a thrill of pleasure down one's
back!

Alas! no more
On Scottish hills or by the sad sea shore
Those legs will now be seen
Gay gamboling o'er the green,
Nor Buckingham nor Windsor's gate shall see
Them, firm but supple, waiting there for me;
For scratches and cuts and scars,
By black adventure marred,
They're stiffer than were ever Silas Wegg's,
Those lovely, lacinated legs.

On such a pair of legs Anteus stood
In a stout west wind, and all his blood;
Such Hercules, when hum lay for a stew,
The marble-jawed Nemion slew;
And on such legs the stalwart Samson strode
When Goliath's gate he carried off by night,
As far as London's from the Isle of Wight,
And hauled them flat upon a mountain road;
When Goliath's gate he carried off by night,
He made a dreadful and a fatal pass,
And left ten thousand Philistines, o' more,
Upon the field to welter in their gore.
O legs! legal legs! On legs no harm compare!
O happy days, when John displayed them bare!
Now carefully mewed up in silks and drags,
Resembling naught so much as clumsy
bags!

Stuffed out with cotton—what mishap was
that?
Milton's loss of sight deplored
In lines of sounding sorrow; but his loss
To hear was not by half so hard a cross
As Brown's, who, without legs, was floored!
What's man without his legs, or what to him
Sunlight or moonlight, morn or twilight dim?
Horses with envy the domestic fly
Over his dinner sitting patently by;
Even the small moving of his tail he fears,
Bearing his household goods upon his back,
Stirs sharp regret that he, like any dog,
Fixed in the depth of some Chimærae bog,
Must helplessly lie still,
Against his sovereign will.
Thus Brown was fixed, and could not stir his
legs.

Those manly and intemperate legs,
Mourn, Albion, then, along thy seagirt shore,
A woe Scotland, too, repeat the sad refrain,
And let the British lion ramp and roar;
For never, never shall John Brown again
Ski like the kids the hills and vales among
Upon those legs, now scratched and cut, and
sore,
Those legs which praise I have feebly sung,
Those legs, I say, which were the life of
Brown,
For which the poet begs
The tribute of a tear, those legs of faithful
Brown,
Which in the Queen's own pages,
Shall reach all future ages,
Of all historic legs the legs of most renown.

DOLLY'S LAST FLIRTATION.

I am Kitty, and Dolly is my twin-sister. I was always sedate, mother used to say; but Dolly was giddy, and fond of flirting.

When we were 17, Dolly became engaged, with our mother's consent, to Frank Wilton, a young fellow of 24, son of a banker, free and cheery in manner and disposition. He was very indulgent to Dolly, for he felt so confident of her love, and was himself so loyal and sincere that the admiration she excited was his triumph; the freedom with which she received and encouraged it never pained him, though mother and I used to watch her with serious anxiety.

Sometimes our mother would say a few impressive words; then Dolly would throw her arms round her, and with kisses assure her she would be a better girl, or she would put a little, with tears in her bright blue eyes. She would be very demure through two balls, and at the third worse than ever; scarcely could Frank get one waltz for himself.

One evening he brought to our house a cousin of his, a barrister, a man some years older than himself. He was rather famous, though only 30, being an acute lawyer, and consequently looked up at the bar.

Dolly owned to me that evening that Frank had confided to her that I was Jack Dacre's ideal woman.

"So don't blush so angrily, darling," said she, "for it would be the most delightful arrangement. He is Frank's ideal man and dearest friend. It would be the happiest thing for us all!" And Dolly gave me a hug and a kiss and ran off to bed.

Mr. Dacre came very often after that one visit, and I soon found that he was my ideal man, for he strangely resembled my father, both in manners and his chivalrous courtesy to women, as well as in appearance. It was with a chill at my heart that I was the first to make the discovery that he was falling in love with Dolly—he, the soul of honor, seemed bewitched by the charms of his bosom friend's affianced wife. I knew it before he did, but of course not before Dolly, who had a genius for unerringly detecting every symptom, however obscure, of dawning love, either in her own case or another's.

My mother and Frank were utterly blind to the danger. I was very unhappy, and exceedingly sorry for Dolly, for Frank, for Mr. Dacre, and I own it, for myself; for, though I had not fallen in love with Frank's cousin, I must say he was the only man I had seen whom I felt I could fall in love with.

An accident brought matters to a climax.

We were sitting in the drawing-room after dinner one evening, when a noise in the street drew us to the window. The pole of a carriage had entered the shoulder of a cab horse. Dolly became ill and faint at the sight, and Mr. Dacre, who was at her side, threw his arm around her to save her from falling. He led her to a sofa and stood aside as Frank drew near her; but from that night he came no more. He and I only had seen the half-petulant way in which Dolly had turned from Frank, had caught another expression on her face, had seen her vivid blush.

From that evening she became cold, petulant, teasing to Frank. At first he laughed, then was hurt, and finally the engagement was broken off. This is soon told, but what my mother and I suffered must be imagined. I dared neither to tell her the truth nor to hint to Dolly that I knew to whom her heart was given, though I loved her so dearly; and I felt so sure that this was the first true love of her life. This determined, decided, somewhat stern man was sure to charm our little butterfly, if she noticed him at all.

Mother and I arranged that Dolly should go away on a short visit. Frank was to come one evening to return the letters Dolly had sent him. They would not feel the abruptness of this rupture so much as if they were placed personally by him in my hands; and I had his letters also to give to him. Mother was quite unequal to seeing him, for she loved him dearly, and the task was left to me. I was not sorry, for I felt I could say all that was likely to comfort him, loving both of them so deeply.

So poor Frank produced his sorrowful little packet, received the one I had for him, and stood leaning against the chimney-piece, while I sat quite unable to utter a word, but with tears dropping quietly from my eyes. At last he told me that he knew Dolly had been faithful to him. He felt sure she and Jack Dacre loved each other, and he spoke so humbly of himself, and as if it was quite to be expected that his cousin should be preferred above any other man, that I was greatly touched, and my tears fell faster and faster.

"Jack is the soul of honor, Kitty; but I must make it clear to him that he is free to do as his heart dictates. His and her happiness must not be wrecked. I will get my father to send me to our branch house in India, and will not return till they are married. Jack is rich enough to marry at once. I shall embark on Thursday."

Then he charged me with tender blessings for Dolly, and at his request, I went to ask my mother to bid him farewell. Presently she glided in, pale as death. She held out her trembling hand in silence, but Frank folded her in his arms, and she sobbed on his breast. I stood by, weeping bitterly, and, when we were calmer, Frank embraced us both finally, and, placing me in my mother's arms, left us. Poor fellow: how brave he was, how gentle and patient!

In a month from that time Dolly was affianced to Mr. Dacre, and the marriage was arranged to take place at the beginning of the long vacation. We were by this time convinced that it was the best thing that could happen. No one could see Dolly and doubt for a moment that this was the only man she had loved. His calm, intense character impressed her; his great talents awed her; and her pretty, innocent pride in her manly lover, her meekness and quietness were most promising symptoms of happiness in her married life.

Dear mother was so serenely happy! I was very fond of my new brother; he was such a power for good and peace in our home that we never had been so contented before. Frank wrote freely to us—many, patient letters, full of unselfish interest in all around him. His sorrow had sweetened, not embittered, his character. He had set himself to alleviate his anguish by doing good, and his first act on reaching his destination had been to use his keen commercial gifts for the welfare of the widow and children of an officer of the army, and, at the cost of time, talent, and energy, to rescue her small fortune from unsafe hands and invest it profitably. His letters were filled with similar incidents, naturally and simply told, and our affection increased for this truly brave man.

Dolly's godmother took it into her head that it was her godchild's duty to pay her a farewell visit before her marriage. Though, as she had never troubled herself much about us, we were rather startled at this demand; all thought it would be best to accept the invitation—for my sister was not looking well—and it was settled that she should go and spend a month with the old lady in her lovely North County home. Mr. Dacre was pressed to go as often as his professional engagements would permit; so Dolly left us in pretty good spirits, in charge of the elderly servant who was our substitute for a regular lady's maid.

She wrote to tell us how she was enjoying the repose and beauty of the country. Mr. Dacre had managed to run down from Saturday till Monday at the end of the first week, and had of course made a great impression, but was afraid he could not come again—a long case was pending at Westminster. The letter which followed this I give in its entirety:

Highwood, July 20.—Dearest Kitty: I hope you will get this in time to send my hat here instead of to grandma's. I am on a fortnight's visit to Lady Milcent North. Such a charming woman—a widow about 38 years old! She persuaded Mrs. Lloyd to let her have me for a week or two; and, as her daughter-in-law, a confirmed invalid, was coming to spend just that time with her, my godmother was glad to get me out of the way, I know. I can't write much, for the post leaves here at 4, and we drop our latest letters into the hall box as we go to dinner. I expect the post's every minute. This place is lovely, and the new Baronet—Sir Charles—is the dearest. The going! Your own DOLLY.

I felt uneasy concerning this letter. I was sorry Dolly should have left her godmother's quiet home to visit a gay young widow just as she was sobering down and growing such a thoughtful little love. It might unsettle her again to pass a fortnight in a country-house with a fascinating Baronet; and I knew Jack Dacre would never permit, never pardon the smallest suspicion of flirting. He had pardoned her defection in Frank's case, for Frank himself had pleaded eloquently, saying that she was very young, so naturally affectionate. But mamma and I felt, sure that not for one hour would he permit the slightest approach to disloyalty to his deep tenderness for his girlish betrothed. Neither her youth, her love of fun, nor her merry heart would plead one atom in her favor, so I read this letter with a heavy heart. My answer was as follows:

Dearest Dolly: Your letter reached me in time to have it boxed sent to Highwood. You will receive it soon as your letter reaches you. I write you a few lines to tell you that I have sent you a full description of every one, for you have roused my curiosity as to "Sir Charles," who is "the dearest." The rest of my letter contained home news, and I need not transcribe it. But Dolly's answer I will transcribe:

"You ask me for a description of everybody, darling. Lady Milcent is very beautiful, very clever, and devotedly attached to this Sir Charles; but I feel sure her heart is buried in the grave of her noble husband. I send her photo, so need waste no words in describing her."

"Sir Charles is very fascinating, though I fear my description may not

predispose you in his favor; but you beg me to be particular. He is short and stout, has a very fine head, but rather thin light hair, fine eyes, good mouth, but not much of a nose—in fact, it is all tip—very nice hands and feet. He is, I believe, very talented, but does not employ his gifts, seldom talks, never reads, is a little fond of eating. In spite of these drawbacks, he is very charming, and all the girls far and near make a great deal of him. Of course, he is rich. He likes Lady Milcent to live in the house. She has complete influence over him."

I was much relieved after reading this letter. I felt so easy in my mind that I told Dolly how I had feared for her.

"But," I wrote, "of course you never could really admire a fat little man, who never reads or talks, and with a nose all tip, and who cares for nothing but eating."

It turned out that the most unfortunate thing I could have done was to confess my fears to my provoking sister. She answered me by vehemently declaring that Sir Charles was the most lovable fellow she had met for a long time, and really was so excited that I posted a letter to her at once.

"You distress me, Dolly. You know Mr. Dacre would never forgive you if he saw your letters. I hide them even from mother. Oh, pray do think before you madly risk the loss of his love, for that will follow the very hour he loses his high opinion of you!"

This is how Dolly answered my tender appeal:

"What a lecturing little thing you are getting, Kitty! I am very much attached to Sir Charles; and, if Jack is ever so angry, I can't help it."

I was really angry and distressed, but resolved to try no more lectures; they clearly made matters worse. So, the next time I wrote, I gave a full description of a day we had spent in court hearing Mr. Dacre plead. I described his dignified appearance, his easy, graceful gestures—above all, I dwelt on the beauty of his nose.

Dolly answered:

"I am quite shocked at you, Kitty, to make such an idol of a nose!"

And then she continued, as usual, about Sir Charles.

Meanwhile Mr. Dacre seemed quite happy, and said he had his daily letters from Dolly as regularly as when she was with Mrs. Lloyd. Was my beloved sister growing deceitful?

I kept all this from my mother; but I grew more and more wretched over Dolly's letters. A picnic would be "glorious," for Sir Charles was going. She had spent the whole morning "quietly with Sir Charles." Once he was indisposed, and she had "nursed him, played for him, sung to him."

Well, I could do nothing more. I resolved to say not another word about him to any one else. I began to dislike the very sound of his name, or rather the sight of it; and when Dolly declared I should like him as much as every one else did, I made up my mind that I hated him. I wrote one more tender appeal, which I said was my last.

Every Tuesday mother and I had Dolly's letters, but one day there was none by my breakfast plate as usual. Mother read hers.

"Dolly says she has written to you," she observed presently. "How can it be that you have not received it?"

Mistakes of the postoffice are so rare, we could not suppose she had omitted to post it. By the next delivery, however, I received a letter from Mr. Dacre, containing an inclosure which turned out to be a letter to me from Dolly. A few lines from him ran thus:

Fear Kitty—I had read too much of the inclosure before I discovered the mistake. If you receive a letter from Dolly before this reaches you, you will have discovered she has mislaid the letter. I shall run down to Highwood without loss of time.

I had not received any letter then, but by the second country delivery came one directed to Jack at once. The letter he had read began thus:

All you say is useless, my darling. I love Sir Charles devotedly, and he has this day declared he loves me. You ask me, does he know I am engaged? I told him a gentleman was coming to see me; but he seemed little concerned at this piece of information.

So far Mr. Dacre had read, and the mine was sprung.

I looked my room door and fell back, despairing into an easy chair. I was resolved to hide all from my mother till Mr. Dacre had seen Dolly. I hunted up Bradshaw, and found that a train started about 4 o'clock that would convey me to Highwood by 7:50. If Dolly wrote to me at once I should get her letter by Thursday; but of course I should hear from Jack on Wednesday. I dreaded every ring, every postman's knock. All day Wednesday passed and no letter arrived from my sister or her lover.

On Thursday morning I ran down when I heard the usual welcome sound. On the table lay a thick letter addressed in Dolly's handwriting. I ran up to mamma and gave her the one I found inclosed in it for her; then I sat down to read mine, after fortifying myself with a cup of coffee. I must give every word of it:

"You are well aware that a catastrophe has happened through my heedlessness. The best thing will be for me to describe fully the whole consequences of that misfortune. On our return from the garden party on Tuesday I found a telegram awaiting me from Jack—'Shall be with you by 7:55.' Of course this awoke no fears in my mind, for I knew Jack might run down at any moment the trains permit. Lady Milcent sent me off at once to be dressed by her artist-maid. What she made of you must have been seen to believe, Kitty. I would not look at myself till the whole process was complete; and, when I glanced in the long glass, I was really amazed at what I saw. It was the result, I now know, of many discussions between Lady Milcent and this gifted young person. You may imagine how I exulted in the thought that Jack would see me look as he had never seen me look before, for I am so improved in health that my whole appearance is changed. Well, the bell rang. Lady Milcent received Mr. Dacre in the morning room, and came to send me down at once."

I ran down with my heart bounding.

I entered the room. I noticed Jack give one start; but he received me in such a very un-Jack-like manner that I was terrified. "Mamma—Kitty?" I cried. "Quite well when I left them," said Mr. Dacre; but when he placed me in a chair, and took one opposite to me, I felt matters were desperate. "What is wrong?" I gasped. "Dearest Jack, pray speak!" Only an address, said he, and put the unfortunate envelope in my hands. "This contained a letter for your sister, which I, perhaps, unfortunately, read before I perceived the mistake. I have just seventeen minutes before I leave for the return train; so, if you wish to say anything, let me beg of you to speak at once."

"I sank back in my chair and covered my face with my handkerchief, trembling with agitation. 'Will you hear my explanation?' I stammered. 'Need less; the letter can have but one meaning. I came to release you from your engagement to me. Did this sound like a question? You were engaged?' I covered my face again. To hear Sir Charles North call a scoundrel was too much for me. I did not speak for several minutes; but time was flying fast, and at length I said, 'If this is in truth our last meeting, grant me one favor: say that you will before I tell you what it is. Of course it is a reasonable, honorable request that I wish to make; but I own it is one you will not like to grant.' He paused a moment, then said, 'I will do whatever you ask.' 'I ask you to see Sir Charles North.' He winced, and bowed silently. I left the room to see the Baronet. I found him in his own room, intently studying an immense book—but only the illustrations, I believe. I asked him to come with me to speak to a gentleman who was waiting to see him. He flatly refused. Time was rushing on. I knelt by him, implored him. At last I kissed him, and he yielded."

"Taking my hand in a firm clasp, he descended with me to the room where I had left Mr. Dacre. Jack stood, moody and stern, pale as ashes, where I had left him. We entered. I led Sir Charles toward him. 'Mr. Dacre,' said I, 'let me present you to Sir Charles North, Baronet.' Jack started—paused—seized Sir Charles in his strong arms, and—threw him out of the window?—no, kissed him! For this 'scoundrel,' this 'fat, greedy, idle little man' is the dear little son of Lady Milcent, aged just 2 years! Now you see, Miss Kitty, you had better have had a little faith in your sister for once. You put all this into my head, and I could not resist the joke; but it shall be my last, for never more do I wish to see such a look of pain in the face I love best in all the world."

"Jack did not go back by the return train, though he was obliged to leave early this morning; but I do not think I can stay away from him one day over a month. Lady Milcent says you must come to take my place. She will write and ask mamma. You will soon be as madly in love with Sir Charles."

And so it proved. I went to stay with Lady Milcent; and of all the darling, quaint, noble, chubby little pets I had seen, Sir Charles was the king. At the end of the year Frank returned in time for Christmas. He did not go back to India; he settled in England. He and I were married about six months after Dolly.

We both live in a lovely part of Kent. Dolly's husband pets and loves her devotedly. My husband adds to all his love a delicate, tender homage, infinitely precious to me.

"Kitty, dearest," my mother once said to me, "you and I have tasted the fullest earthly happiness. We both know that reverence is the perfectly peerless jewel in love's crown; but we must earn it."

A brave Eton boy spends as much time with us as his mother can bear to spare him, and the most welcome guest in Jack Dacre's home is Sir Charles North, Baronet.

The Cantilever Bridge.

The new bridge over the Niagara river, which connects the Canada Southern road with the New York Central, is a mechanical novelty in the way of bridges. It is called a cantilever bridge. This name is borrowed from architecture, and means a bracket to sustain a balcony. In this new bridge, the only one of the kind in America, there are two brackets opposite each other, each resting on a pier. The shore ends of the brackets rest upon and are fastened down to another pier; the outer ends, projecting over the water, sustain a central span, merely resting upon them, and free to respond to the change in the temperature. To get a rude idea of the principle of the cantilever bridge, place two chairs two feet apart; put a foot-rule on each chair, held down by a book; the ends of the rules will not meet across the space separating the two chairs, but by resting a third rule upon their ends the bridge is complete. This is a skeleton idea. Now, in place of the chairs substitute four piers of masonry; instead of the two rules, balance upon the piers two beams resting upon the intermediate piers with the shore ends of the beams placed upon and fastened to the two extreme piers; another span resting upon their outer ends substituted for the third rule, and this is the cantilever bridge. There is another bridge of this kind building in Scotland over the famous Frith of Forth—*Demorest's Monthly*.

Queer Things in This World.

The world is chock full of incongruities. There is, for instance, the big bearded man with a voice like the Bull of Bashan. He comes before the audience and sings "I Fear No Fox" in bravura style, and in a way that drops bits of plaster from the ceiling. And in two hours thereafter that man will be going up stairs in his stocking feet lest he wake a 110-pound wife. And next morning he gets up meekly and kindles three fires.—*Pittsburgh Telegraph-Chronicle*.

In the Isle of Wight a spider was observed dragging two or three leaves to the water. It fastened them together with a web, then launched the raft, and sailed away. It darted off a ter insect upon the water, and returned to the raft to devour them.

THE BAD BOY.

"Your pa got over being scared out of his boots?" said the grocery man to the bad boy, as he took up a handful of hickory-nuts and began cracking them between a couple of five-pound weights on the counter.

"What do you mean? Who told you pa had been scared?" asked the boy, as he put his thumb in his mouth, after knocking the nail off with a weight. "I didn't know as anybody knew anything about it but me and the girl."

"O, a brakeman that runs on the Chicago train was here this morning, and he told me your pa came up on the train last night, and along there about Kenosha he went through the train as though he had been kicked, and got into the postal car and crawled under a lot of mail sacks, and rode all the way to Milwaukee, sweating like a butcher, and as pale as a ghost. What was it all about? You haven't been playing another trick on him, have you?" and the grocery man picked up the hickory-nuts the boy had left and threw them in the basket, while the boy wrapped a handkerchief around his thumb and looked mad.

"No, I didn't play anything on him, but I saved his life. He is an old smarty, and got himself into a scrape. You see, pa and me went down to Chicago on a pass pa got somehow in politics. We took in the Battle of Gettysburg, where a fellow can see all about the war without getting shot in the back. We came back on the 5 o'clock train, and of course pa couldn't sit with me, but had to go and sit down in the seat with a girl that was alone. Pa hasn't got any more sense than a cow about such things. A girl don't want an old duffer to sit with her. What she wants is a young-feller, that has got bear's oil on his hair, and smells sort of drug-store like. But pa thinks he is just as entertaining as when he was young, and if he went into a car where all the seats but one was vacant, and that one had a girl in it, he would go up to her in his insinuating way, and take off his plug hat and show his bald head and say, 'Miss, is this seat engaged?' and before she had time to say anything he would sit down with her and begin talking about something she didn't care any more about than she would about the process of embalming Egyptian mummies. Well, pa sat down by a girl who was knitting, and he began to talk sweet. He said he was a traveling man, getting \$3,000 a year and a share of the profits. He found fault with the railroads, the cars, the hotels, and everything, and to hear him talk you would think he was reared in a palace, always traveled on special cars, and was worth \$11,000,000. I sat behind him, and heard what he said, and it was all I could do to keep from asking him if he thought ma would be expecting us home to-night, but I have had experience enough with pa to know that when he is engaged in business that causes his brain to expand and throb, that the safest way is to keep still. He told the girl she was purty, and asked her all about herself, and if she was going far, and he put his arm on the back of the seat, and acted as though he was going to hug her, but he didn't, cause just as his arm began to get near to the girl's small of her back, I imitated the brakeman and shouted, 'Take Care!' and pa thought the brakeman was right behind him, and he drew his arm away so quick he hit the funny bone of his elbow on the back of the seat, and it hurt him like everything. The girl laughed, and he blushed, and in a little while he had his arm there again. The conductor and the brakeman watched pa, and just as he got close to the girl, and was whispering to her, the conductor touched him on his shoulder and asked him what the number of his pass was. Pa had to take his arm away to get his pass, and then he put it back again, and was commencing where he left off, to give the girl some taffy, when the brakeman touched pa on the shoulder, and asked him if it was his dog in the baggage car, chewing the hinges off the trucks. Pa said he didn't have no dog, and the brakeman went away. The girl was real disgusted with pa, and I could see she wanted to have a rest. Just before the train got to Waukegan the girl said she wanted to send a dispatch to Racine, and pa gave her some paper and she wrote a message and asked pa to send it for her. Pa didn't want to leave his seat, so he said to me, 'Here, little boy, you get off at Waukegan and send this message for the beautiful young lady,' and he gave me the dispatch and a dollar. I went out at Waukegan, and read the message and didn't send it. It read like this, 'Father, come down to the depot with a horse-whip. There is an old drunkard on the train who has made himself very obnoxious to me, and I want you to man him within an inch of his life.' Well I wouldn't contribute to pa's being mauled, so I kept it, and after the train left Waukegan I called pa into the other end of the car and told him I didn't think it was best to send that dispatch, so I kept it. He was mad in a minute and told me I had no right to think anything. When I was told to do a thing it was my business to do it, and ask no questions. He said he was ashamed of me, and told me when the train got to Kenosha to go right out and send it quick. He was going to start back to talk with the girl some more when I handed him the dispatch, and told him to read it, and then if he wanted me to send it I would. He read it, and his face got as white as chalk, and the few hairs on his head raised right up so they were stiff enough to tack down a carpet with, and big drops of perspiration stood out all over his face, and his collar just wilted right down, and he was not half as tall as before. 'Don't say anything about this,' he said in a whisper. 'I know the clerk in the mail car, and he has often wanted me to ride with him, and I guess I will go in there. There is not air enough in this car.' Pa went forward about as sudden as you often see an old man go while a train is in motion, and I went and sat down behind the girl. I said to her, 'The old party who sat with you has gone out to ride on the cow-catcher to get cooled off.' She said she wished he would fall off and get left. I asked her if the old man was her pa, and she said he was an old fool,

and I agreed with her and we had quite a nice visit. I think if old people would keep out of the way, and not be so fresh, young people could have more fun. I sat down in the seat with her, and got real well acquainted, and when she got off at Racine, I helped her off, and I could imagine pa in the postal car just as sweating. Well, pa didn't show up till we got to Milwaukee, and then he came out of the side door of the postal car all mused up, and smelling mildewed like old sacks. He asked me if I noticed any unusual commotion at Racine, and I told him there was nothing special, only there was an old prize-fighter on the depot steps with a black-snake whip, and lots of people seeming to expect a row, and I guess the girl sent another dispatch. Pa shivered and said, 'Let this be a warning to you, my boy, not to ever allow any female strangers to get acquainted with you, and become familiar.' I told pa I didn't see any harm in it, 'cause I rode all the way with that girl, after he left, and she seemed to like it, and never once thought of having me horse-whipped. Pa is getting calm again, but it will be a long time before his hair lays down smooth again, the way it did before he got scared."

"Well, your pa is a la-la," said the grocery man, "and ought to be kept locked up as a monk in a monastery, somewhere." The bad boy agreed that a monastery was about the prescription his pa needed, and he went out and caught on behind a cutter and was tipped off in the slush, and went home to run himself through a clothes wringer.—*Peck's Sun*.

An Uncomfortable Companion.

A gentleman having, at the invitation of the Superintendent of an insane asylum in Massachusetts, inspected the interior of the building, asked leave to go out in the grounds. The Superintendent showed him the way, and then left him for a few moments, with the assurance that the patients who were at work in the garden were harmless.

The gentleman was met as he stepped into the garden by a quiet, respectable-looking man, who bowed pleasantly and asked if he might show him through the grounds. Taking him for the gardener, the visitor thanked him and accepted his offer.

They walked together, and the visitor was surprised at his companion's intelligence and refinement. He was apparently a thorough horticulturist, and spoke thoughtfully upon the flowers they examined. Posing before a gorgeous bed of pansies, he stooped down and picked half a dozen kinds and handed them to the visitor with the words:

"Observe those colors, different in each flower, and yet each color is so placed as to blend, or to make an agreeable contrast with the color beside it. No bad taste there, sir. I tell you when God sorts the colors He doesn't very often make mistakes."

They walked slowly along, talking on various topics, and as they passed by a grass-plot, the man picked up a sickle that lay near by, and trimmed the border of a flower-bed with it. Then, with the instrument still in his hand, he continued his walk with the visitor. This act confirmed the latter's conviction that the man was a gardener, and he was more than ever surprised at his intelligence.

As they retraced their steps to the house, the man with the sickle suddenly turned to the visitor and exclaimed, "You have not, I think, noticed anything strange in my conversation?"

"Why, no," answered the visitor, in surprise; "except that I have enjoyed it exceedingly, and am much obliged to you for your kindness."

"There is nothing in my appearance to cause you to doubt my sanity, is there?"

"Not at all," replied the other, beginning to feel a little uneasy.

"You would, then, take me for a sane man, wouldn't you?"

"Cer—cer—tainly."

"Well, to be frank with you, I am sane on all the subjects we have couched upon. But do you know," said he, as he drew a little nearer and whispered in the visitor's ear, "do you know, I sometimes have an irresistible longing to cut a man's head off? I can't control it when it comes over me. I haven't had such a longing to-day, but I never can tell when it will seize me. It may be at any moment. I can't tell."

Imagine the feelings of the visitor at this confession! Just then the Superintendent appeared, with an anxious look on his face. He was attended by two keepers, who took the sickle from the man and led him into the building. The Superintendent explained to his frightened friend that the man was a dangerous patient. By some trick he had that morning escaped the vigilance of his keepers and strolled into the garden.

The visitor congratulated himself on his escape, but was nevertheless so shocked that insane asylums are not at present his most attractive visiting places.—*Youth's Companion*.

Drummond's Phlox.

In the year 1835 Mr. Drummond, a botanical collector in the service of the Glasgow Botanical Society, while traveling in Texas, discovered a very pretty species of Phlox, which bears his name. It was one of the last plants that he sent home, for soon afterward he visited Cuba and died there. Sir W. Jackson Hooker, in naming the species, remarked that he did so in order that it might serve as a frequent memento of its illustrious, but unfortunate, discoverer. Never were words more truly spoken, for wherever annual plants are grown, the different varieties of Drummond's Phlox are found to be occupying a prominent place; and if the illustrious Drummond had only given us this single plant, he would well deserve our deepest gratitude and respect.—*Floral World*.

A PLANT is found near Damascus, in Syria, which coils and uncoils according to the changes in the weather, indicating any change from twelve to forty-eight hours in advance. It indicates in advance of mercury, and can be destroyed only by fire. There is nothing useful or beneficial that nature does not provide in the shape of plants.