

THE IMPOSSIBLE.

Man cannot draw water from an empty well,
Nor trace the stories that gossips tell,
Nor gather the sounds of a pealing bell.

Man never can stop the billow's roar,
Nor change the winds till they blow no more,
Nor drive true love from a maiden's door.

Man cannot o'ertake a fleeting lie,
Change his wheat to a field of rye,
Nor call back years that have long gone by.

Man cannot a cruel word recall,
Fetter a thought, be it great or small,
Nor honey extract from a drop of gall.

Man never can bribe old Father Time,
Gain the peak that he cannot climb,
Nor trust the hand that hath done a crime.

Man never can backward turn the tide,
Nor count the stars that are scattered wide,
Nor find in a fool a trusty guide.

Man cannot reap fruit from worthless seed,
Rely for strength on a broken reed,
Nor gain a heart he hath caused to bleed.

Man never can hope true peace to win,
Pleasure without and joy within,
Living a thoughtless life of sin.

ANYBODY.

A fading spinster, lone and lorn,
Upon a summer's night,
Was praying for proposals
With all her maiden might.

Beneath her window posed an owl
In sober dignity,
Inspecting the fair landscape
From perch on apple tree.

A zephyr rustled o'er that owl,
Who by that window sat,
The maiden hearing "Who! who! who!"
Cried "Any one, O fate!"

TRAILED BY BLOODHOUNDS.

BY CAPTAIN JAMES MONTFORD.

"The person who passed through the war without meeting with adventures that thrilled his blood, or mysteries which chilled it, must have been a very queer individual."

"We all met with adventures, Colonel," I replied, "but they fitted past so quickly that they became obliterated by the stirring events which came after."

"Umph! I must have a better memory than other people," the old gentleman said, smiling, "for scarcely a day passes but some circumstance is recalled to my mind."

"Then it is your duty to supply the deficiencies of your friends."

"Well, I think the most horrid action I was concerned in took place a few days before the battle of Perryville. There was a negro teamster attached to our company, who was one of the principals. He was a tall, raw-boned fellow, with a countenance of mingled brutality and cunning."

"He was stubborn and unmanageable to a degree, and we had a good deal of trouble with him at different times."

"It was always necessary to place a 'boss' over him, and even then willful mistakes were always occurring."

"One day he was shoeing a horse, a valuable black, belonging to one of the aids, and a sergeant was directing his movements."

"The fellow was sullen, and had committed several faults. At last he pared the hoof so close that the blood followed the knife."

"I happened along at that juncture, and saw the sergeant raise the stick he held in his hand, and bring it down over the black's shoulders."

"The negro turned his head, and cast a look so fierce and vengeful at his chastiser that the latter changed color."

"I shall not soon forget the glance; it expressed all the depravity of his vile nature."

"He did not speak; not even a cry of pain escaped his lips. Resuming his task with the manner of one who desired to complete it as soon as possible, he had soon finished, and, after examining the horse, I walked on."

"The next morning the sergeant was found, wrapped in his cloak, dead."

"The vein in his throat had been severed in a horrible manner, and from the position in which he lay it was evident the deed had been done while he was sleeping, and that he had not been allowed an opportunity to defend himself."

"There was not the slightest clew to the perpetrator of this outrage; but it at once occurred to me that the negro teamster was the murderer."

"I did not express my opinion until I had made inquiries and found that the fellow had left the camp."

"None of his acquaintances had the least knowledge of his whereabouts."

"I then made my suspicions known, and a strict search was instituted; but nothing was found to bring home the charge."

"At last one Medill offered a suggestion which, though it was, perhaps, no more than strict justice would permit, has always seemed awful to me."

"It was to trail the murderer with bloodhounds, a practice too often followed in that country."

"There's a gentleman near here," said Medill, "who owns a fine pair. They will find him, I'll warrant it, if he's above ground."

"After some consideration, it was decided that the soldier's suggestion should be followed."

"It was necessary that an example should be made; for murder, like everything else, if it goes unpunished will spread."

"Medill and another man were dispatched for the dogs, and they returned about the middle of the forenoon, accompanied by an old negro who had charge of the brutes."

"They were an ugly looking pair, evidently old, and their bodies slashed with many wounds."

"I could not resist comparing them with the black whom I thought the murderer. They seemed well chosen for their duty."

"They found a scent immediately, but not the right one. They pursued one of the soldiers who stood upon the outside of the group, and it required all the efforts of their black master to restrain them."

"But after considerable difficulty a scent was found, and the negro expressed an opinion that it was the correct one."

"A dozen men, among whom I was one, mounted the swiftest horses in the command, and as the dogs started away with long leaps we followed."

"It was a plain trail for the first half a dozen miles, and we covered the distance in a very short time."

"There was something wonderfully exhilarating in the chase, notwithstanding the nature of the game we had in view."

"There is more or less of the savage in man, and it only requires a proper opportunity for it to display its traits in full strength."

"I experienced the greatest eagerness im-

aginable in pursuing that poor wretch, and knew from the flushed faces and sparkling eyes of my companions that they felt the same emotions."

"Although we urged the horses forward as fast as they could bear, the dogs were far ahead."

"They came to a halt, however, after we had traversed six miles."

"A narrow creek lay in their path. When we came up they were running up and down the bank, with their noses to the ground."

"We forded the creek, and the dogs failed on the scent."

"'It am a black man,' declared the keeper, his voice trembling with excitement; 'he has waded up de creek; no white man would ever do dat.'"

"The dogs circled for the trail, which was found about half a mile up the stream."

"On we went again. In about half an hour we heard a peculiar sound from the dogs."

"'He am treed!' cried the keeper; and we rode rapidly up the mountain at the foot of which we had now arrived."

"We soon came in sight of the dogs, and a small cabin, which seemed deserted."

"The brutes were running about, uttering that strange sound characteristic of them when they have found their game."

"Leaping from our horses, we ran up to the cabin door. It was secured upon the inside, and we had some difficulty in breaking it down."

"As we did so there came a yell from our companion, who had been left to watch on the outside."

"The negro murderer had leaped from a small window in the upper part of the deserted hut, and was now running for life."

"We could not pursue him on horseback as he darted up the rocky slope. He was strong and fleet of foot; none of our hunters could rival him."

"The dogs were tearing about inside the cabin. Their keeper succeeded at last in bringing them to the fresh trail; but then the negro was barely discernible, far up the mountain."

"The fellow was exerting himself to the utmost, and I could not help admiring his pluck, even while straining every muscle in the pursuit."

"We clambered up the slope as rapidly as we could; but the negro and his pursuers had passed from our view."

"Suddenly we heard again that peculiar sound from the dogs. The murderer was at bay. Perhaps fighting for his life with the fierce hounds."

"We ran forward, almost falling at every step, and several gave up the chase, dropping upon the ground through fatigue."

"I was one of the first who came within view of the strange scene presented at the top of the mountain."

"The dogs were sitting upon their haunches at the foot of a huge tree whose limbs hung over a high bluff."

"The negro was hanging upon a limb of the tree. His face was distorted, and his eyes seemed upon the point of dropping from their sockets."

"His clothing hung about him in shreds; his hands were torn and bloody."

"As we came within sight he turned his eyes upon us with the look of a wolf at bay; then he looked down at the dogs who were yelping a few feet below."

"'Come down,' I cried, and the fellow rose to his feet, steadying himself with one hand."

"Seeing his movement the dogs rose also; they licked their frothy lips in anticipation of the prey which they were never to taste."

"Standing for an instant upon his insecure perch, the negro glanced around him."

"The look of desperation upon his face was that of a demon; with a cry scarcely human he swung his form backward, and then leaped far out over the bluff."

"Rushing to the edge, I dropped upon my knees. I saw the form whirl over in the air, then drop from sight."

"We circled the bluff and came upon his mangled body, but

With scarce a shred to tell of human form,
Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm.

AUCTIONS.

BY ANNIE E. MYERS.

It is a matter of history that women in Babylon were publicly auctioned off to the highest bidders for wives."

This sale occurred annually among those old heathen, at which time all virgins of a marriageable age were required to assemble at a certain place in their respective districts, and thither flocked all the gay and frolicsome young pagans to select their wives."

No doubt the dandies flattered and bobbed around, stopped here and there, put their turbaned heads together for confidential confabs, much after the fashion of the busy bee around an intoxicating clover blossom. The young fellows whose silken purses were well lined with gold and silver consulted and compared notes as to the comparative beauty of the candidates to come under the auctioneer's hammer, gave passing attention to the probabilities in regard to the dispositions and tempers of the respective mothers-in-law elect, while the dusky swain whose bidding must be more modest, and whose tastes and desires must be regulated to enjoy what may be left, passed quietly yet observingly around, mingling freely in the midst of the excited throng, silently picking up points and waiting their chances, after the fashion of the hangers-on around the wheat-pit in the Chicago Board of Trade."

The style of conducting this Babylonian sale was quite American in its main points, but perhaps on a fairer basis than deals in "Sept." wheat."

The most beautiful was put up first, and he who bid the most money gained possession of her. The second in appearance followed, and the bidders gratified themselves with handsome wives according to the length of their purses."

But, alas! Strange as it may appear to modern civilization—our civilization in which every girl may become a wife if she can satisfy herself with what the gods provide—among the Babylonians there were some ladies for whom no money was offered."

It seems that physical beauty alone was the one thing desired in a wife. Those benighted heathen had not acquired the taste that could appreciate the æsthetic loveliness of even protoplasmic psychology. But the pagan dogs had all the inventive genius of a maneuvering modern mamma, consequently when all the beautiful virgins were sold the crier ordered the least handsome to stand up, when he would demand who would marry her with a certain sum, then who with a smaller amount, until she would finally be adjudged to the one who would be satisfied with the

least. In this manner the money paid as premiums for beauty served as bribes for disagreeable looks."

This custom emanated from the minds of idol worshippers, at least one hundred years before Christ came with His enlightening religion, but in what movement of reform, in what solution of mystifying social questions has a more humanitarian doctrine been adopted?"

The contemplation of this unique stroke of diplomacy has suggested a modern adaptation."

Why would it not be a neat manner of disposing of our men?"

Use the premiums obtained from the sale of the luckless young and old bachelors who seem incapable of getting themselves married, as bribes to hasten the disposal of married men whose wives are anxious to get rid of them."

Until a man is married his failings are not observable, he is an adorable object in the eyes of all femininity, unless he wears green goggles or parts his hair in the middle, and most of them would go off under the auctioneer's hammer like a dynamite bomb or hot cakes in a gentlemen's restaurant, and the sum realized therefrom would be sufficiently large to greatly accelerate the disposal of the unfortunates whose wives have disclosed to the public their heretofore hidden deformities—men are so deceiving."

If such a sale were to occur at this season of the year, the man who is never satisfied with the house he and his family occupy, thinks the rent too high, or the repairs not properly attended to by its landlord—the man whose wife is obliged to keep the chair-legs in canvas casings to be in readiness for the semi-annual flitting—would be the man who would probably require to be accompanied by the largest bribe."

If not him, it would be the man whose wife is snubbed out of all chance of the most elementary self-assertion. The brute who is guilty of beating his wife would need a large portion to make him salable, but it would be insignificant compared with the amount required to launch the man who is able to paralyze and subdue his wife—in public."

It is presumable that, among these deformed and unsatisfactory husbands, he who could be disposed of with the least ready cash would be the man who belongs to six clubs and lodges and had to "meet a friend" the seventh night, but who, with a modicum of grumbling, provides a liberal wherewithal for the new spring bonnet trimmed with a profusion of the flowers that bloom in the hat season.—Chicago Ledger.

A Cat's Nine Lives.

Of the cat it is commonly said, says a writer in *Popular Science Monthly*, that it has nine lives. By this saying nothing very definite is meant beyond the opinion that under various kinds of death the cat lives much longer than other animals that have to be killed by violent means. When any question is asked of the police or of other persons who have to take the lives of lower animals, they tell you, without exception, according to my experience, that the cat is the most difficult to destroy of all domestic animals, and that it endures accidental blows and falls with an impunity that is quite a distinguishing characteristic."

The general impression conveyed in these views is strictly correct up to a certain and well-marked degree. By the lethal death the value of the life of the cat is found to be at least three times the worth of the dog. In all the cases I have seen in which the exactest comparisons were made the cat outlived the dog. A cat and dog of the same ages being placed in a lethal chamber, the cat may, with perfect certainty, be predicted to outlive the dog. The lethal chamber being large enough to hold both the cat and the dog, the vapor inhaled by the animals being the same, with every other condition identical, the result, as an experimental truth, may be accepted without cavil."

The differences, always well marked, are sometimes much longer than would be credible in the absence of evidence. I have once seen a cat falling asleep in a lethal chamber in the same period as a dog, remain breathing, literally, nine times longer, for the dog died in five minutes, and the cat not only continued to breathe in profoundest sleep for forty-five minutes, but would have been recoverable by simple removal from the vapor into fresh air, if it had been removed while yet one act of breathing continued. This, however, was exceptional, because the cat in the same lethal atmosphere as the dog does not, as a rule, live more than thrice as long—i. e., if the dog ceases to breathe in four minutes, the cat will cease in from ten to twelve minutes after falling asleep."

Novelist Howells and His Dainty Wife.

Howells is a dumpy little man, with a fat nut-brown face, full jaws, handsome chin, eyes that ooze a warm, bright light from their hanging lids, and wearing his hair parted in the middle and banged squarely and most delightfully over his brow. That bang is a touch of nature that makes all women's hearts kind to him. He is undersized, walks with a little lumpily-lump gait most fetching, and has boyish manners hard to harmonize with those stories of his Boston exclusiveness. Mrs. Howells, his dainty little wife, looks like a precious bit of old china, like a fragile, creamy-tinted cup, sprigged all over with blue forget-me-nots, "seen," Charles Lamb would say, "through the lucid atmosphere of far Cathay."—Washington letter to the Savannah News.

They begged him to play a little. He seemed to feel bashful at first, but after a while began to play vigorously. "What power!" said a listener to the owner of the piano. "Yes!" exclaimed the latter in alarm, "he seems to have considerable muscle; but he ought to know that this isn't a gymnasium."

LIFE is like a pack of cards. Childhood's best cards are hearts; youth is captured by diamonds; middle age is conquered with a club, while old age is raked in by the insatiable spade.

The True Ministry of the Kiss.

Of the great needs of American home life to-day, a hearty, sincere, and frequent manifestation of affection stands at the head. Thousands of families there are in which never a kiss is exchanged. The day is begun and ended by all, from the father to the five-year-old, in the same heartless fashion. No wonder the years rapidly hide their faces in the "long ago."

Yet what can stay so many sorrows as the hearty kiss of true affection? Does mamma's kiss possess such wonderful curative power for the baby, and the child's have no power of healing for the mother?"

Boys, kiss your mothers. It won't break the heart that has endured the strain of ceaseless vigil and care through all the years of your infantile tenderness, and the later years of your happy, headlong, heartless helplessness. Try it some day. Many a boy has risen to noble renown by the self-denying toil of a widowed mother. She is proud of your success, and asks no other reward for the heavy struggle than the hearty affection of an appreciative soul. Don't deprive her of that slight recompense, my boy. Should the cloud become so heavy as to take her from your sight, you will never have another mother. The law may give a man a dozen wives; heaven can give him but one mother. The boy that is too big to kiss his mother is too small to kiss anybody else. Girls, beware of him! Such boys fairly pant with anxiety to attend every occasion that may afford them opportunity to kiss some butterfly, whose chief accomplishments may be little waist (no reference to economy) and big bustle—not of useful activity, but of paper."

I know, my boy, your mother's voice may lack the low melody of your "last flame," but it will ring with the music of unselfish affection long after your "flame's" has been lost amid the ashes of selfishness. Your mother may not be able to vie with some girl you know in coddling, with a wealth of affectionate adjectives and languishing attitudes, a pet pug-nosed dog or rabbit-tailed cat. But with arms and body rising superior to the pain and ache that tortured her frame, she carried you night and day in the lingering sickness of your infancy; she pressed you to her heart and covered with kisses your face, even while made so repulsive with foul disease that your fair charmer, who daily divides her affections between you and her dog, would have turned away in disgust. But, then, her arms have borne a nobler burden, her heart is filled with a holier love, her mind occupied with a loftier ideal, else you would not be where you are to-day. Then kiss the dear old face, deeply seamed with care for you. Don't wait till that loving smile, stereotyped by death, can only be impressed upon your heart forever. The noblest and highest ordeal of your future is embodied in your mother, my boy."

Girls, kiss your fathers. Make them glad every day that their patient toil has such affectionate reward. Show, each one of you, that you appreciate your father. His tremulous hand may not be as fair and smooth as the "lily" hand of the dude seeking your smile. His aged form may not be as erect as the brainless fool who impatiently waits permission to take you to a new home, there to surround you with every luxury—at your father's expense. His handwriting may not be as roundly regular as that of your last correspondent; but that s rawing signature on the corner of an old envelope will drain more money out of the bank in a minute, than your admiring Adonis' copper-plate, written all over a spotless page of foolscap, can in ten years."

Then, each kiss imprinted on that whitening brow may help you to remember that your parents won't be with you forever. The rapidly revolving hand is completing the circuit of life's dial; each passing day brings nearer the season for flight; each growing infirmity is a pluming of the wings; by-and-by the mellow dusk of life's autumn will lure the gentle spirit from your bleak neglect to the summer bloom of the glory-land. Then will settle over the old homestead the blight of a poverty which no wealth can banish. So strengthen the soul and cheer the spirit of your father and mother by the affection of to-day; and if, by reason of early privation and disadvantage (from which they have carefully guarded their children), you breathe the purer atmosphere of better things, know that the frequent kiss of loving appreciation is the magical power by which you may daily lift the hearts of your parents to the height upon which their loving self-denial has placed you.—Rev. Henry B. Hudson.

He Remembered.

"Now, pa, dear," said a Hartford girl, "you will do just one or two little errands for me to-day, won't you?"

"Why, certainly, my dear."

"Oh, that's ever so good a pa. You just match these seven colors in worsted, buy me three good crochet needles, you know what kind, and a—package of caramels."

"All right, my dear. I'll remember the caramels." And that was all he intended to remember.—Hartford Post.

SIR WATKINS WILLIAM WYNNE talking to a friend about the antiquity of his family, which he carried back to Noah, was told that he was a mere mushroom of yesterday. "How so, pray?" asked the baronet. "Why," exclaimed the other, "when I was in Wales, a pedigree of a particular family was shown me; it filled five large skins of parchment, and near the middle of it was a note in the margin: 'About this time the world was created.'"—St. Louis Magazine.

HUMOR.

A good listener is always popular, and, besides, his tongue seldom leads him into trouble."

CUSTOMER—"Give me a dozen fried oysters." Waiter—"Sorry, sah, but we's all out o' shellfish, sah, 'ceptin' eggs."

By actual count it has been discovered that a man can shoe a horse in seven minutes less than a woman can shoo a hen.

A MERCHANT is going to have his name stamped on 50,000,000 toothpicks. He seems desirous of having his name in everybody's mouth.

"There's money in mines," says a financial exchange. We don't doubt it; but it is very hard to get it out sometimes.—Boston Courier.

The only thing that equals the spontaneousness with which this country proposes a monument is the unanimous cordiality with which it isn't built.

"STRUCK by a train!" exclaimed a man as he saw his friend intently gazing at the graceful manner in which a passing beauty switched her long train about.

The South Americans put up sausages in bark. Concerning this no comment is necessary, only to say that the South Americans desire to preserve every phase of the dog.

A KANSAS man is sawing wood in the Navy Yard at Washington. Thus the unexpected happens. He went there for a postoffice commission, and, up to date, can only say, "I came, I saw."

The rules of the house have been revised. Guest: "Bring me some smelt." Waiter: "We have no smelt, but we have codfish." "I want smelt." "Well, sir, the codfish will be smelt as soon as it is brought in."

"HAVE you any reason to offer why sentence should not be passed upon you?" asked the Judge of the female pawnbroker who had been arrested for extortion. "Please, your Honor, I throw myself on the mercy of the court. I am a poor loan woman."—Rambler.

"GO BACK and tell your people to send an immediate invitation to the Angel Gabriel," was the reply of a prominent divine to the committee from a Meriden church, after they had stated the qualifications which the pastor must possess to be eligible to a call from their fastidious congregation.—New London Telegraph.

"It is easy to see that this preacher is not a college graduate," remarked the sporting editor. "What preacher?" asked the horse editor. "A man in New York. He preached a sermon from 'Where are the nine?'" "How does that show he is not a college graduate?" "Why, a college graduate would have the position of every base-ball club in the country right at his fingertips."—Pittsburgh Chronicle.

TENNESSEE'S distinguished historian, Judge Haywood, was once presiding in a case where a woman was being tried for some offense in which the evidence was clearly against her. At the close of the trial the Judge, in giving the case to the jury, said: "Gentlemen, you have heard the evidence and you know the law." Then, after a pause: "There is no punishment a man can inflict upon a woman and still be a man." The woman was acquitted by the jury without leaving the box.—Jackson (Tenn.) Blade.

DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT.

She declaimed with fervid vigor on the misery of the Digger, cut a most dramatic figure while lamenting his condition. And she said the bare Numidian, and the much-tamed Abyssinian, and the Cannibal and Guinean overflew her with contrition. And her deep sighs weighed the breezes for those lands where bread nor cheese is; for the Turks and the Chinese she was filled with deep emotion. And her ardent love was greater all the more she strove to cater to those tribes beyond the equator, or across a distant ocean. And like Rachel, that sweet Jewess, she wept tears as thick as glue is at the action of St. Louis and Chicago's degradation; and that these towns where such sin is, such a race for golden guineas, might be made as good as Lynn is, was her prayer and supplication. And the wild men of Alaska or of barbarous Madagascar she would say, if you should ask her, that she loved them deep and tender. While her husband, luckless victim, looked as if the Fates had hoked him, and through back streets where they kicked him, walked about with one suspender.—Lynn Union.

A Great Find.

The agent of a dime museum, who had been sent out by the proprietor with a roving commission to replace a leading attraction who had lately married another freak, and gone out of the show business, came upon a Long Island fisherman.

"Anything unusual in the fish about this vicinity?" he inquired.

"Naw, nuthin' out o' ordinaray," replied the old man, "cept that they bites more one day than they does t'other."

"Didn't you ever hook a big fish that pulled you overboard, and towed you across to the other side of the lake?"

"Naw, never ded."

"Didn't you ever see the fish so hungry that they jumped right into your boat to get at the bait?"

"Naw, can't saay that I ded."

"Didn't you ever see the lake so full of fish that you had to get out of your boat and shove it along over their backs?"

"Naw, don't think I ever ded."

"Never caught a fish that had swallowed a precious gem of untold wealth?"

"Saay, does I look es ef I hed?"

"How long have you been fishing, anyhow?"

"Nigh onter sixty year, man and boy."

"Old man," joyfully exclaimed the dime museum agent, as he took him by the lapel of his coat, "come with me! I have gold for thee."—Exchange.