

UNANSWERED PRAYERS.

Like some schoolmaster, kind in being stern,
Who hears the children crying o'er their slates
And calling "Help me, master," yet helps not,
Since in his silence and refusal lies
Their self-development, so God abides
Unheeding many prayers. He is not deaf
To any cry sent up from earnest hearts;
He hears and strengthens when He must deny.

He sees us weeping over life's hard sums,
But should He dry our tears and give the key,
What would it profit us when school were done
And not one lesson mastered!

Were this if all our prayers were granted!
Not in famed Pandora's box were such vast ills
As lie in human hearts. Should our desires,
Voiced one by one, in prayer ascend to God
And come back as events shaped to our wish,
What chaos would result!

In my fierce youth
I sighed out breath enough to move a fleet
Voicing wild prayers to heaven for fancied boons,
Which were denied, and that denial bends
My knee to prayers of gratitude each day
Of my maturer life. Yet from those prayers

I rose away rejoiced for the strife
And conscious of new strength. Pray on, said heart!
That which thou pleadest for may not be given,
But in the lofty altitude where souls
Who supplicate God's grace are lifted, there
Thou shalt find help to bear thy future lot
Which is not elsewhere found.
—Ella Wheeler Wilcox, in the Cosmopolitan.

WEDDING GIFTS.

"Pooh! Presents!" said the Old Married Man to the bridegroom. "Don't think you'll get what you want. I'll tell you my experience.

"As the time for our marriage drew near I used to call at the house every available evening and whisper confidentially to the curly head which exactly fitted my shoulder that I was the luckiest fellow on earth. On one occasion Agnes sighed and murmured dreamily that that was just what she felt.

"That was on the 5th.
"On the 12th I stopped in a minute at noon to see if she loved me as much as at 11:15 the night before. She replied that she did—that love was unalterable—but that she must hurry upstairs now or the dressmaker would get her skirts fluted-shaped instead of organ-plated.

"On the 14th the present began to arrive—also the relatives. It became an unsettled problem which of the two were more numerous. Aggie had cousins once removed. I had several uncles and aunts. All were well off; in fact, it was a curious coincidence that we were the only poor branches on our respective family trees. I was in an insurance office—fire insurance, not life insurance—and when I had communicated to her the news of my recent promotion she had declared in the face of her family's unaccountable preference for Henry Walker (who was not so good a fellow as I am by any manner of means) that to be Mrs. Joseph Lounsbury and live in a small house on a very small income and bliss was precisely her ideal of existence. So we were not marrying as a speculation; nevertheless, since marriage comes so seldom in one's life, we had hopes that our moneyed relatives would do the handsome thing.

"They did. First came a complete set of knives, forks and spoons in a polished wood case. They were from the cousin Aggie had been named for. 'Such a sensible present!' said her mother; 'they will last a lifetime.'

"Yes," said I, 'it will take us a good while to wear all those out two at a time.'

"Don't you suppose we're ever going to entertain any company, Joe?" asked the girl of my affection, tapping me on the cheek with one of the forks.

"The same night I had a note from her saying, 'Dearest Joe, you ought to see the lovely after dinner coffee spoons Second Cousin Milly has sent—no two alike. Orange plush case. Isn't it exciting? Don't tell dear, but I almost wish they'd been something else, for I think some of the girls are going to give me spoons.' The rest of this letter was not interesting to you.

"This was the beginning of an avalanche of spoons—Charter Oak spoons, nutmeg spoons, soldiers' monument spoons, witch spoons, bust spoons, portrait spoons (I called these last our picture gallery, and suggested that they should be framed in ribbons and hung in the parlor). One of our friends sent a pair of salted-almond spoons, hoping that we would exchange them if they were duplicated, but it turned out that those were the only ones we had. The sugar spoons were all marked. There were five of them.

"It is a time-honored custom in our office when one of us is married for the rest to 'combine' and buy a picture; and you could generally tell what year a man's wedding came off by a glance at his parlor wall. Williams, who was married in '84, had 'Far Away'; Brown's, a few years later, was 'The Three Fates'; Ours was, of course, the latest thing out. It had a silver frame.

"As the days went by and pieces of silver piled up on us I was more than once reminded of the couple whose courtship was conducted in Brown-Ingene, and who were fitted out by their admiring friends with a Brown-Ingene tea set, with quotations around the edge. 'Oh, the little more, and how much it is!' The Forde had a run on china, but a good deal of it got broken

the first year. The Smiths' specialty was etchings; they had enough for every room in the house—only, they never had a house; they boarded ever since they were married. Finally the climax came, when my old Uncle John sent us a solid tea set. I hadn't expected anything from him, unless perhaps a Bible of a Webster's Unabridged, for he didn't enjoy giving anything away. Aggie was getting too tired to be very enthusiastic, but her mother was delighted, and it was no use thinking that I would just as soon have had the money.

"This makes 103, dear—nine more than Susie Fish had," said her sister.
"One hundred and two," said Aggie.
"No, dear, 103—102 came this morning."

"Oh, I know I shall never get this list right!" exclaimed Aggie, diving for her blank book.
"Look out, or you'll be handing that book to the parson for a prayer-book," said I.

"Wouldn't be a bit surprised," she answered, smiling; Aggie could smile when she was tired.

"Well, we were married. A man breathes easier when it's over with. 'But, Aggie,' I said, as the carriage door slammed on us, 'if it ever happens to us again, let's leave out the heathen superstitions.'

"I know it," said Aggie. 'I begged them not, but they would smuggle some in. See any in my hair?'

"Some in your hat brim.' I brushed her off, and she seized the newspaper I had carefully brought along to look like an old married man, and conjured with it a minute, holding it out by an improvised handle. 'Here,' she said, 'the very children in kindergarten know how to make paper dustpans—now brush the carriage seat.' When we got out I gave the hackman a dustpan of rice with a bill on top. 'There, burn it,' said I.

"Did you see him chortle in his joy?" said Aggie, giggling; 'Joe, do you feel like a married couple?'

"Lots," said I.
"Our ten days in Washington had only one bogie—the blank book. Aggie said she must finish her notes. All I could do was to sit by and fret, and put on the stamps; and she told me I hindered her more than I helped, and she was awfully glad to have me around, it made her feel better.

"We began housekeeping in a cheerful way in a little house on a new street. It was something like to come home to one's own dinner table. We had so much silver that it looked funny with our plain china—nobody had given us a lot of ice-cream sets and things. I tell you, marriage is a lottery when it comes to wedding presents. I liked seeing Aggie's face in the sugar bowl, though. Every night the little maid (imported, to live up to the spoons) brought them and all the rest upstairs on a tray and we packed them away in the chest we had made and a pretty penny it cost, with its combination lock, which went into the end of the closet where nobody could get at it. One night we came home at 12 from a reception, and as we stole upstairs not to wake the sleeping handmaid, Aggie so sleepy herself that she tripped on her wedding gown and I had to hold her, we came upon the whole array on the floor outside our door.

"Isn't it imposing? so safe," said I, but Aggie said, desperately, 'I shan't care anything about going out evenings any more if I've got to put that silver away after I get home.'

"Let it stay there."
"Oh, I can't. Mamma thinks we're so careless. We don't appreciate things enough. She says, if anyone had given her such elegant things when she was married she wouldn't have dared to close her eyes!"

"Take more than that to keep my eyes open.' But I helped Agnes shove the tray under a chair, and drape the train of her wedding dress over it.

"What on earth are you doing, Aggie?" I asked, on coming in for dinner one day. All I could see was one foot and a skirt ruffle in the closet.

"Aggie scrambled up enough to catch me round my knee. 'Oh, Joe, I'm so glad you've come!'

"What is it? You're ready to cry."
"That's what I like about you; you don't have to be explained to. Henry Walker wouldn't have known I felt like crying if I'd screamed it at him!"

"That made me feel pretty good? (though dinner wasn't ready). 'But what?'

"It's the silver! I came up to change the forks and spoons so they should get worn alike, and I've shut the paper with the combination in the chest, and I can't remember what it was."

"I got down beside her. It was hotter than Mexico in that closet. I turned and tried the lock. 'Do you keep your dresses out of my way, they tickle the back of my neck.' No good. 'Well I guess we'll use the old forks to-day,' said I; 'I don't believe they'll fade away yet awhile.'

"Oh, I'm so sorry—but—they're every one shut up in that chest.' So we laughed. What else was there to do? It was funny when Deming came home with me to tea—we'd asked him some days before. It wouldn't have been funny with some girls. The table looked principally white china, and the kitchen knives and forks didn't go round. Ever cut omelet with a pewter spoon? It is great.

"It wasn't quite so funny when three hot days had gone by and we had nearly smothered sojourning in the closet, and no news of the combination. 'Don't tell mamma!' pleaded my wife. I began to think I should have to call in a locksmith, when one evening Aggie started me by jumping out of bed crying, 'I've got it! I've got it!'

"Got what—a nightmare?"
"I've got the combination! I've been working on it all the time, and it just came to me in my sleep. Get right up, Joe, and hold the light, and mind you don't set anything on fire.' In another two minutes the front of the chest fell

down, and behold our household gods! 'If anybody wants to steal them between now and daylight, they can, that's all,' said Aggie; 'but I'm not going to shut that lock again to-night for anybody!'

"In the fall there was burglar scare about town, and Agnes' mother came over and gave her a lecture upon locking the windows. She said we really ought to have a burglar alarm. To please her, I had one put in. Election night I went down to town telling Aggie not to sit up for me, for I should wait for the returns. It was 1 o'clock when I opened the front door very softly, not to disturb Agnes. 'B-r-r-brake-plunk!' I forgotten the alarm.

"Before I had time to say a word or even turn down my coat collar, my wife appeared at the head of the stairs. She pointed a pistol at me. Her hair hung loose, and she was in her—well, never mind; but she looked distracting-ly pretty.

"If you come one step further I'll fire!" she cried.
"It's Joe, Agnes," said I, meekly.
"I don't believe it! Take off your hat!"

"I took it off, and made her a low bow. 'Don't shoot your husband; he's doing the best he can.'

"Agnes laughed hysterically. 'Oh, Joe, I was so frightened.'

"I rushed upstairs and caught her. I took away the pistol, and wrapped her up in her dressing-gown. 'Do you think you ought to appear before burglars in this costume?' I inquired. She blushed. 'I never thought of that.'

"And to think you should point a pistol at your own husband!"
"It wasn't loaded, Joe."

"Agnes Lounsbury," said I, 'do you mean to say you were so rash as to aim at me with a pistol that wasn't loaded?'

"But I shouldn't have fired it, anyway; it wasn't cocked."

"Well, this ends the watchman burglar alarm business," said I. 'We've had about as much of it as we want. Tomorrow we'll decide what silver we want to use every day, and the rest shall go down to the bank.'

"We're able to breathe now. The silver stands on the sideboard, and as yet nobody has carried it off; if they do Agnes' mother will say she expected it, for we aren't the careful people they used to be in her generation. Once in a while Aggie quarrels with me because some dish or other that would make a show for company is at the bank, and I don't see my way clear to bring it home under my arm. 'You can have them all home and trust to luck if you'd rather,' I say.

"I'd rather they were at the bank, because then I should have them, you know."

"Don't see it," said I; 'but it's just as you say.'

"When our anniversary came around we had a present and a note from one of Agnes' elderly friends. The note ran this way:

"My dear Mrs. Lounsbury: We send you our best congratulations on your anniversary. My husband will have his little joke, you know; and, as some one told him that the Lounsburies had had so much silver given them on their wedding that it was a positive embarrassment to them, he says you ought to be ashamed of being such plutocrats at your age, while the older generation has not even accumulated souvenir spoons, and sends you this little gift to remind you of the fact—"

"Oh, Joe! It's silver!" for I had punched a hole in the paper. 'No, it isn't. It's a pudding dish, or for oysters, you know. How kind. And plated, too. It didn't cost much, Joe, did it?'

"A few dollars, I should think."
"How good! Perhaps even less, Joe?"

"Perhaps so; it's rather light weight."
"Isn't it delightful? We'll have some oysters in it to-morrow night, and ask them over to tea."

"I should feel dreadfully to have that taken," I heard her murmur that evening.

"What for?"
"Because it's such a comfort to have one thing that you don't care whether it's stolen or not."

"You're getting sleepy, Aggie. But I know one thing that 'goes on, goes on forever.'"
"What?"
"Our storage rent. I reckon in a few years we'll have paid for the whole outfit, and then we'll fetch it home and keep open house for burglars with a clean conscience."

"Don't be ridiculous, Joe," said my wife.—New York Tribune.

Destruction Caused by Bagpipes.
A Scotch Highlander, dressed in kilts and carrying a set of bagpipes under his arm, appeared at Bar Harbor the other night and next morning at 8 o'clock strolled up Main street in search of a good place to try the bags on the natives. It is years since the uncanny music of the canny Scot has been played there, and it had a wonderful effect, the first tune causing no less than five simultaneous runaways among horses and the wrecking of two wagons and sets of harnesses. The bagpiper stopped in the middle of the tune to see the fun, and after he saw the destruction that one tune had wrought he let the wind out of the pipes and took the 10:30 o'clock boat for Bangor.

Gossip is a pleasant way of criticizing yourself. No man ever did a thing that you are not liable to do.

Half the mistakes of this world are made by people who think they are correcting mistakes of others.

About all the people you used to know have lots of children, and are poor.

TRUMPET CALLS.

Man's Horn Sounds a Warning Note to the Cared-for.

UR liberality does not consist in what we give, but in what we have left.

The man who is trying to get to heaven alone is not fit to go.

Every step taken with Christ is a test of both faith and courage.

Religious hate is the most relentless of all hate.

An honest man can never be a friend to the thief.

Crushing a rose makes it bigger than it was before.

Don't lose any sleep worrying about God's part of your work.

The character of love is the same in every country and climate.

Christ never sent anyone to anybody else who came to him for help.

Some shepherds seem to make a specialty of feeding the lambs goats' milk.

There is much of the devil's work that can only be done by the hypocrite.

The emphasis is put in the wrong place, when a Christian talks louder than he lives.

The trouble about sowing wild oats is that the same hand that sows must do the reaping.

Many a boy has turned out bad, because his father bore down too hard on the grindstone.

The less people know of the Bible's spirit, the more hairsplitting they will do over its letter.

The devil spikes a gun when the impression prevails that the preacher is proud of his head.

There are people who doubt the Bible, who believe everything they see in the newspapers.

The devil will soon be on very good terms with the man who has begun to admire his own plety.

When a skeptic tells you that so and so is in the Bible, always ask him for a chapter and verse.

It takes the devil a long time to find out that he never makes anything by opposing a Christian.

The greatest waste of time we can be guilty of in this world is to neglect to prepare for the next.

We best please men when we ask for the least, but we best please God when we ask for the most.

Shouting in church is sometimes one kind of religion, while paying the preacher's back salary is another.

CIGAR WRAPPERS FROM MEXICO
Their Use Not Yet Increased by the Present Troubles in Cuba.

There is a growing idea among smokers that, owing to the troubles in Cuba, there will be a scarcity of Cuban leaf tobacco, which will soon affect both the quality and quantity of domestic clear Havana cigars, and a rumor is prevalent that already many of the so-called clear Havanas are covered with Mexican tobacco, and that it cannot be detected by experts. The best-informed persons in the trade deny this rumor, and state that most of the large American firms have enough Cuban tobacco to last them for a year or more, and that there is little or no tobacco in Mexico suitable for the fastidious smoker. They say, also, that Mexican tobacco is detected easily at sight, and while it may be possible in future years to produce tobacco for wrappers which will compete with the Cuban article, it will be a long time coming, as up to date no effort has been made by the Mexican growers to cater to this market. The Mexican leaf is thicker and duller in appearance, without the rich gloss of the Cuban variety so attractive to American smokers. What is still more to the point, it rapidly deteriorates in appearance after being worked up into cigars. Still another reason is that all the available Mexican wrappers worth anything are called for by the Mexican trade, one firm of which is said to be under contract with Englishmen for 500,000 cigars every two weeks.

The government statistics also give an important hint in this matter. The total export of filler tobacco from Mexico for 1893 was only 48,451 pounds, of a value of \$11,456; in 1894, 57,840 pounds, valued at \$18,507, while the total amount of wrapper tobacco for 1895 was but thirteen pounds, valued at \$7. This country imported from Cuba in 1893 21,694,891 pounds, valued at \$8,940,058; in 1894, some 14,578,000 pounds, valued at \$5,838,964, and in 1895 some 20,147,000 pounds, valued at \$7,233,474. The total amount of imported wrapper tobacco from Cuba paying duty into the United States treasury during 1895 was 28,130 pounds, valued at \$38,320. These are the facts in the matter, and as soon as Mexican tobacco begins to come in for use on domestic-made clear Havana cigars its arrival will be shown in the weekly tables of imports published in trade and shipping organs. What is very likely is that the consumer of Havana cigars will soon have to face a darker tobacco on his cigars than he has been wishing for lately.—New York Sun.

Until.
The Bishop (to young widow)—My sister, I dare say you find comfort in the thought that you made your husband happy while he lived.
Young widow—Yes. Poor Jack was in heaven till he died.—Pick-Me-Up.



WOMAN AT HOME

WOMEN BREAD WINNERS.

WOMEN are steadily, even rapidly, becoming a recognized factor in the mercantile life of the country. It may not be many years before the United States will be known as the home of the woman bread winner, and while one cannot but admire the pluck which the girls and women of to-day manifest in carving out their own fortunes, one cannot but regret the circumstances which compel them to toil for their daily bread. Perhaps it is only a feeling of sentiment, but it is none the less sincere. Women are essentially of and for the home. That is their proper sphere and there they should remain, if possible, but unfortunately circumstances cannot always be controlled or shaped as people would like, and thousands are actually driven to work. It is a condition which must be respected and all praise should be given to the women who prefer to toil for an honest living rather than enjoy an ill-gotten one or the bounty of others. The increase in the number of women workers from 1870 to 1890, as announced by the United States census of the latter year, was remarkable. There were only 84,047 women teachers in 1870 as against 245,965 twenty years later, while during the same period the number of saleswomen had grown from a little over 2,000 to 58,000, and the number of stenographers from 7,000 to more than 21,000. In 1890 there were 888 newspaper women in the country and 1,225 women preachers, callings which were practically closed to women twenty years ago. And this marvelous increase is to be noticed in the other walks of life. Some may argue that these figures are in favor of the new woman theory, but this is not so. They merely illustrate the independence which has always characterized American life among women as well as men, that spirit of self-reliance which founded the country, established its independence on a blood-stained altar and perpetuated it until it has become the leading nation of the world.

Designs Costumes for Opera.
Edward Siedle is property manager for the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. When getting together costumes for a presentation some time ago he found himself much at a loss to harmonize certain colors and—partly in



bands, powdered with bright sprigs. Broad insertion in drawn and lattice work, intersected with raised spots, border in Russian lace. The plaited-sprigged muslin apron is edged with a deep lace flounce, through which are threaded two baby ribbons in cherry colored velvet.

Pretty Dress for an Outdoor Fete.
A kimono, or Japanese dress, makes a pretty costume for a girl of sixteen to wear at a fancy dress garden party. Those of wealthy Japanese women are made of very beautiful and costly silk. Inexpensive materials, as flowered cotton crepe, can be obtained where Oriental goods are sold in large cities. Cotton crepon might be used as a substitute. A wide, soft silk sash is tied around the waist, and a Japanese fan is carried. The hair is brushed back in a thick roll on the top of the head, and fastened with an elaborate hair-pin as can be procured. No hat is worn. A Japanese parasol may be substituted for the fan if desired.—Ladies' Home Journal.

Something Handsome in Crochet.
A most useful as well as handsome design is presented in the cut. Work separately each trefoil and ring, meanwhile joining them together with picots, and add a frame of open squares and vandykes, through which thread baby ribbon. If preferred, arrange the trefoils in bands and triangles for bedspreads, or for the powdering of a satin



tea cozy or table cover. The square would answer for the top of a pin-cushion, trinket box, or, if enlarged, will make a sofa pillow and perambulator cover.

Cleaning Ostrich Feathers.
Pour boiling water on some white curd soap cut in small pieces; to this add a little pearlash. As soon as the soap is dissolved and the mixture cool enough for the hand to bear, put the feathers into it and draw them through the hand till the dirt is squeezed out of them. Next pass them through a clean lather with some blue in it, and afterward rinse in cold water with blue, to give them a good color. Shake off the water and dry them by shaking near the fire. Curl each feather separately, when perfectly dry, with a blunt knife or ivory paper-folder, or hold the feathers for an instant over glowing coals.

A Famous Heroine.
Miss Kate Shelly, of Moingona, Iowa, who made her way through a raging blizzard at midnight several years ago, and by signaling to a crowded express train on the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, saved it from plunging through a wrecked bridge, is now destitute and has to support her aged mother and invalid brother.

Keeping Flowers Fresh.
The process of crystallizing flowers is simple and can be satisfactorily accomplished by anyone who has artistic

skill. Arrange some basket forms of any desired pattern with pliable copper wire and wrap them with gauze. Into the bottom of these the violets, ferns, geranium leaves—in fact, any flowers except full-blown roses—and sink them in a solution of alum of one pound to a gallon of water. Wait until the solution has cooled, as the colors will then be preserved in their original beauty, and the crystallized alum will hold them faster than when formed in a hot solution. When you have a light covering of crystal; that completely envelops the articles, remove and allow to drip for twelve hours. These baskets make a unique ornament and long preserve their freshness.

Flowered Tea Aprons.
This dainty tea apron shows how to utilize odd strips of powderings of multicolor embroidery in combination with bands of white canvas cloth and lace edgings. The embroidered apron is of white or colored linen adorned in front with floral designs, which are outlined with stem or chain stitch in Ingrain cotton in a contrasting shade, matching the rows of narrow braid, which head the Swiss belt and frame the side

spinach is useful to those with gravel.