

MAY ON THE MARSHES.

Glided with buttercups, with frost of white
Wild lilacs-of-the-valley, the marshy green
Glimmered with blueflax countless all
between
Me and the brimming stream's long line
of light
And all the sweet air laughed as to a
sprite,
And danced and reigned with music
crystalline,
With trilled and titling melody, faint
and keen
Where in the flags the marsh-wren
woke delight—
Delight to break my heart; for when I
turned
To meet your dark-eyed smile, to see
your face
Reflect the light wherewith the sunset
burned,
Only the dark-eyed flags smiled at me,
Only the green was trilled with golden
grace,
And only the marsh-wren thrilled my
tears to see.
—Century.

KEEPING STEP.

"Go away; it's no use, Mab," said Prisey Cartwright to her sister. "The thing has been settled ages ago so far as I am concerned. Hush up, now—hush up!"

"Ages ago!" Mab echoed, refusing to "hush up." "I believe it must be ages ago. Well, if you persist in this unreasonable course,"

"I don't persist any more than you. Look at how you did with Tom Vanduren."

"That was a long time ago. I didn't do it for an example, either. And you said at the time you wouldn't do as much for me. Then you went and did the very same thing, after all!"

"Don't care," Prisey said doggedly. "I will not marry off and leave you for any man under the canopy of heaven."

"Then, my dear, since we cannot get our suitors to keep step, so to speak, we might as well make arrangements for a quiet and dignified old maidhood. Let's buy a parrot or something, Prisey."

The front door bell rang while the two young women were discussing their mutual affairs in their own room on the second floor. Just as Mab's brilliant suggestion for the purchase of a parrot had thrown both the suitors into a fit of laughter the servant girl of the boarding-house appeared at their door with a square envelope addressed to Mab.

"The boy says he's to wait for an answer,"

"Here, Prisey," said Mab as soon as she had glanced at the signature, "this must be for you. It's addressed to me—yes—no—wait a minute."

Then she read to herself: "My Dear Mab—Do you intend going out this evening? If not, will you see me at 8:30? I have something to say to you of the greatest importance—to myself, at least."

"JULIUS CLEMENT." And Mab handed the letter to her sister. "What do you think he means?" Then she added, speaking gently, to avoid being heard by the servant girl, who was waiting at the door, "Do you think he's got us mixed up?"

"I don't know whether I ought to say do," Prisey answered. He had already worn out his first embarrassment and was beginning to warm to his subject. "Perhaps I ought to consider my own fortune, rather."

"Oh, may I take—"

"Of course you may. I suppose you know what answer I got?"

"Well, no."

"Just so," he laughed nervously. "But when I found out something—I think."

"What did you find out?"

"If your sister said 'No' it was because it wasn't because—it was because—because she wants always to be with you, just as you are? There! Am I right?"

Mab had a way of tightening her lips which Prisey called "shutting up herself all to herself." She went through this process now.

"We were talking of buying a parrot," she said, very seriously, after a little pause.

"A parrot? What for?"

"For our amusement and consolation."

Clement laughed at this idea so heartily that Mab began to wonder.

"Tell me seriously," Clement said, "isn't it something to know that somebody cares for you—even if—"

"Mr. Vanduren to see Miss Mabel Cartwright," Jane interrupted, opening the door at this point in the interview.

"Mr. Vanduren!" Mab exclaimed, not concealing her surprise.

"Oh, I—er—I intended to tell you," said Clement. "He arrived in town today, you know. You hadn't heard?"

There was some embarrassment in the meeting between this young artist and the girl who, in the language of common report, had "given him the mitten" nearly two years before.

Vanduren had taken himself off to Mexico and Central America, alleging an irresistible longing to sketch nature in those parts.

"You quite surprised us," said Mab as she shook hands with the bearded last arrival, "and very pleasantly. When did you get back? Prisey will be so glad to see you again. Let me go up and tell her you are here."

Without prolixity it would be impossible to describe Vanduren's manner of receiving this suggestion. There was more than mere embarrassment, there was annoyance. Something seemed to have gone wrong. Mab saw this much, but was not clear as to what was wrong.

Clement smiled a very proper, conventional smile and stroked his mustache. Vanduren numbed something which Mab felt perfectly at liberty to talk for as long as she pleased.

"You seem amused, Clement," said Vanduren, breaking the silence.

"Well, why shouldn't I?" Clement answered. "What did I tell you to-day? Of course, you didn't tell me you would be here so soon—very first evening, you know."

"I didn't think it necessary to advise you of all my movements beforehand," said Vanduren, coldly, while he stood before the mantelpiece critically examining an applique drape.

"That's right, Vanduren—quite right. Now, before they come down, let me tell you something." Vanduren turned quickly and faced the other man. "We have no time to lose," Clement went on, speaking hurriedly. "You may not know it, but you are my 'god out of the machine'—that's a classic allusion, you know. I'll explain it another time. See here, I knew well enough you'd be here to-night. That was why I told you I was coming. Now you want me to get out, don't you?"

For answer Vanduren only stared.

CAVE DWELLERS OF ALASKA.

Queer People Who Inhabit King's Island in the Bering Sea.

A race of cave-dwellers live on a small island off the Alaskan coast. It is King's Island, in Bering Sea, due south of Cape Prince of Wales. There is only one village there, and this has a population of 200. Dr. Sheldon Jackson, the United States agent of education in Alaska, says that it is one of the most remarkable settlements in America, yet few people know of its existence.

King's Island is about a mile in length, and is a mass of basalt rock which rises perpendicularly out of the sea to a height of from 700 to 1,000 feet. At the south side this is cleft in two by a deep ravine which is filled by a huge permanent snow bank. High up on the west side of the ravine is the village of Ouk-lvak, which consists of about forty dwellings, partly hollowed out of the cliff and built up outside with stone walls. Across the top of these walls are laid large drift wood poles, over these are placed hides, and over the hides grass and dirt. The houses are entered by a tunnel which runs along underneath, sometimes for a distance of fifteen feet, and ends under a hole—eighteen inches in diameter—in the floor of the room above. This is the front door of the establishment. The tunnel is so low that it is necessary to stoop, and often to crawl, the entire length of it.

In summer these houses generally become too damp to live in. The people then erect another dwelling on top; this is a tent of walrus hide, which is stretched over a wooden frame and guyed to the rocks by ropes to prevent its being blown off into the sea. These tents allow of a room about ten or fifteen feet square, and entered by means of an oval hole in the hide about two feet above the floor. A narrow platform two feet wide runs along outside of the door and leads back to the hill. These platforms are often fifteen or twenty feet above the winter dwelling below.

At the other side of the deep ravine, at the base of the cliff, is a huge cavern into which the sea dashes. At the back of this is a large bank of perpetual snow. The cave dwellers use this as a storehouse. They dig rooms in the snow and store their provisions, which freeze solid and keep the year round, for the temperature in the snow never rises above 32 degrees. —Pittsburg Chronicle Telegraph.

The Prolific Life of Alaska.

John Muir, who has summered and wintered in the Alaskan lands, says in the Atlantic: Nowhere on my travels so far have I seen so much warm-blooded rejoicing life as in this grand Arctic reservation by so many regarded as desolate. Not alone are there whales in abundance along the shores, and innumerable seals, walrus, and white bears, but great herds of fat reindeer on the tundras, and wild sheep, foxes, hares, lemmings, whistling marmots and birds. Perhaps more birds are born here than in any other region of equal extent on the continent. Not only do strong-winged hawks, eagles and water fowl, to whom the length of the continent is only a pleasant excursion, come up here every summer in great numbers, but also many short-winged warblers, thrushes and finches, to rear their young in safety, re-enforce the plant bloom with their plumage and sweeten the wilderness with song, flying all the way, some of them, from Florida, Mexico and Central America. In this going so far north they are only going home, for they were born here, and only go South to spend the winter months as New-Englanders go to Florida. Sweet-voiced troubadours, they sing in orange groves and vine-clad magnolia woods in winter, in thickets of dwarf birch and alder in summer, and sing and chatter more or less all the way back and forth, keeping the whole country glad. Oftentimes in New England just as the last snow patches are melting, and the sap in the maples begins to flow, the blessed wanderers may be heard about orchards and the edges of fields, where they have stopped to glean a scanty meal, not tarrying long, knowing they have far to go. Tracing the footsteps of spring, they arrive in their tundra homes in June or July, and set out on their return journeys in September, or as soon as their families are able to fly well.

The Origin of Tally-ho.

As quaint a mixture of words and interjectional cries as I have met with is in an old French cyclopedia of 1763, which gives a minute description of the hunter's craft and prescribes exactly what is to be cried to the hounds in all possible contingencies of the chase. If the creatures understand grammar and syntax the language could not be more accurately arranged for their ears. Sometimes we have what seem pure interjectional cries. Thus, to encourage the hounds to work, the huntsman is to call to them "Ha hallo, hallo, hallo" while to bring them up before they are uncoupled it is prescribed that he shall call "Hau, hau," or "Hau, tahaunt" and when they are uncoupled he is to change his cry to "Hau la ya la ya taya" a call which suggests the Norman origin of the English tally-ho.—Primitive Culture.

Rain for Plants.

Rain does plants comparatively little good until it enters the soil, where it can be absorbed by their roots. A daily record of the amount of water in the soil would indicate whether the indications were favorable or otherwise for certain crops. There is a plan for burying specially constructed electrodes in the soil, in order that by measuring the resistance to the passage of a current through the soil the amount of moisture can be ascertained. This method was suggested by the necessity of grounding thoroughly telephone and telegraph lines. If the terminals are not continually in a moist soil the lines do not work during dry seasons.

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