

A Laurel Blossom. "A charming face, indeed! so bright and so happy. Who is she Mrs. Ruthers?"

"Mary Morrison—one of our village belles." "And like most belles, somewhat of a coquette," said the gentleman somewhat interrogatively.

"Indeed I never thought so until lately," answered the lady, rather gravely. "It is a pity."

"Yes," said a young lady standing by. "It is a shame. I'm sure we have all considered her engaged, or as good as engaged, to Hugh Shirley—and now, only look at her! A gentleman, too, whom she has not known but a few days!"

"But rich, and so handsome," said another young lady. "A city beau, too. Quite a distinction in our rustic community," she added laughing.

"Not worth Hugh Shirley, by half. I am surprised that a girl so good and sensible as Mary Morrison would act so."

"Poor Mr. Shirley! One may see how out he is by it."

Hugh Shirley seated a little apart from this group of pic-nickers, and concealed by the intervening shrubs, had heard every word of this conversation. He now rose and moved slowly away, but first looked back to see if any one appeared.

"I will know at once," he muttered to himself, resolutely.

When out of sight of the rest of the party, he seated himself on a fallen tree trunk, and from a slip from his pocket-book, and wrote in a style perfectly characteristic of himself:

"MARY—You know how I love you. I must now know, once for all, whether you love me, or prefer another. Whether you will, in a word, promise to be mine—my wife."

How to get this scrap of paper to her? There was no one by whom he could send it; and now, whenever he approached her, she was not only shy and restrained towards him, but their every look and motion became so conspicuously the mark for a dozen pairs of eyes, that it would be impossible to convey the paper, however small, into her hand, without it being perceived by others. And yet he could not wait; he must have her answer this very evening, for he had a plan in view depending upon it.

His friend Wortham would leave to-morrow for New York, and thence to California. He had endeavored to persuade Shirley to accompany him, and it had been alone his love for Mary which had held him.

Hugh, holding in his hand the slip of paper upon which so much depended, was startled by the sound of approaching gay voices, and his heart thrilled as the next moment Mary Morrison stood before him, accompanied by Mr. Weston and a young lady.

"Oh, Mr. Shirley!" exclaimed the latter, "hope we don't intrude or interrupt any poetic frenzy. We are hunting for flowers to wear in our hair at the dance to-night. If you will be here? I really think they must have appropriated all the wood flowers to decorate the festive hall, for we can scarcely find one—won't you help us?"

Miss Morrison had colored at the sight of Hugh, and had then turned abruptly toward her escort.

"Oh!" Hugh heard her exclaim suddenly, "there is a laurel—the first I have seen, and my favorite flower. See! I high up on the summit of that tree. If I could only get it!"

"It is quite out of reach, unfortunately," observed Mr. Weston, glancing up wistfully, "and the ground below so wet and marshy. And yet I would give anything to obtain it, since you wish it."

"Oh, never mind; I dare say it is out of reach. Yet it seems so pure and lovely, and would be so pretty to wear in one's hair. Don't you think so?"

"In hair such as yours," he replied in a low voice, and with an admiring glance at the rich clusters of wavy brown hair, which she wore swept carelessly from her forehead. "But any flower would appear well there; and most fortunately here are some wild roses—quite as pretty as the laurel. Will these do?"

"I suppose so, for want of something better," she answered, laughing coquettishly. "Come we will not intrude longer upon Mr. Shirley, since he appears inclined for solitude."

She happened to be standing closer to him at that moment than the others. "Is that my fault, Mary?" he replied in a low voice, to her remark.

paper on which she had written a few moments previously, "seized his pencil, and added these words—"If you will answer 'yes,' Mary, give me this token: wear the laurel, and don't wear the roses."

Then he carefully, though with trembling fingers, separated the pure white, half-unfolded petals of the laurel-blossoms, deposited the folded paper within, closed over it the petals, and placed it in Mary's hand.

"Look within," he said, "It bears a secret at its heart."

When Mary reached the old farmhouse close by, at which the picnic supper and dancing were to be held, she went up directly into a little dressing-room. She was excited, angry.

"To neglect me so," she said to herself. "To become jealous and doubt me as he has done ever since Mr. Weston has thought proper to pay me some attention. What could I do but pretend not to care? And the impudence of this insult! Look within. It bears a secret at its heart!"

"Oh!" she cried, passionately, "if I had but known this!"

"Would you have worn the flower, Mary?" he asked anxiously as though his fate depended upon it.

She only bowed her face upon her hands; but he could see the flush upon her forehead and temples.

"Look at me, Mary—look up and answer me."

She raised her eyes, lustrous with tears. Never in her early youth had she appeared so beautiful as now.

"We have suffered for ten years through a mistake—a misunderstanding. Is it too late to make the rest of our lives happy?"

We need not record her answer. Something Scandalous about Birds.

We clip the following from the New Orleans Picayune:

Some families are such good actors, and so stimulated by pride, that they are generally looked upon as patterns of domestic propriety, even felicity. They are alike, genteel, soft complacent, soft-voiced and smooth-tongued; they hold, in fact, that place in the human kind that birds do in the brute kingdom.

Those who know them best can tell some very different things about them—how they wrangle in private, have their own gentle way of fighting, are fierce and tricky, in a word, imperfect, like every thing on earth, and not the same their friends would make them.

The most universally ill-tempered things in the world that make any show of decency are the birds. With all the talk about their pretty manners, they are ruder than dogs; and as for their hymns of thanksgiving and woodland notes of praise, they never fail to quarrel at a feast like pirates. Their gentlemen can fight harder for the fan of the thing; and their ladies scream and scratch worse about the possession of an empty knot hole, than is by any means respectable; while, as for connubial bliss, the bridegroom beats and knocks his wife about in a manner that is a disgrace to his fine clothes.

About half their pretty songs are given in angry defiance of each other. The jealousy of musicians is proverbial, and none stronger than among the "singers of the grove."

An out-sung bird is apt to die of the most unorthodox charge, and when a presumptuous warbler "puts in" with another melody, that "if he don't shut up he'll get his nose pecked off."

We have seen the supposed-to-be-mercy little singer of our suburban gardens—the pap-p—with scarce a feather on him and his head "banged up" like a prize fighter.

We do not think one person in fifty appreciates the fitness of the slang phrase so often applied to wild and unprincipled young men. "He is a bird." It is meant generally as a pet name; but really, it's a hard name to give to any man.

AN UNBUSTLING BUSTLE—An exchange says: "Mrs. Victoria G. Woodhull has been visiting all the principal cities of the North, and making a great bustle among the newspapers, in preparation for her elevation to the Presidency of 1872. We have constantly supported the claims of Mrs. Woodhull for that position, and to a certain extent we have been in her confidence, but we are grieved to say that she never informed us of her intention to deposit herself with one of those things when she began her duties at the White House. And why, indeed, should she consider such an article necessary for a President. Washington never wore a great bustle made of newspapers; nor did John Adams, nor James Buchanan, nor Andrew Jackson, nor any of them. Mr. Buchanan, indeed, in his inaugural address, distinctly repudiated the suggestion that it was incumbent upon the President to wear such an article, and we need hardly tell the student of history that his position was precisely a situation that Washington had in mind when that immortal paragraph upon bustles contained in his farewell address. We ask Mrs. Woodhull, then, to abandon her design. It is unconstitutional, it is incendiary, it is revolutionary, it is suicidal. She must either retract from her position upon the subject, or suffer defeat; for we will withdraw our support if she persists in her wicked project. Let her undertake to bustle her claims upon this peculiarity, and in less than a week we shall have George Francis Train and all other idiots who are running for the White House, prancing around the country with exactly the same kind of things on."

A student at Yale started the class at recitation the other day. "What stars never set?" asked the Professor. "None," was the prompt reply, save one.

One Rail Railways. A TRAIN RUNNING EASILY AND SAFELY ON A SINGLE RAIL.

Much has been said and written about the respective merits and demerits of broad gauge and narrow gauge railways, but a railway with no gauge at all, and only a single rail, is now before us in modern enterprise, and, therefore, possesses considerable interest to the public generally. We will endeavor to give our readers some idea of this rather curious invention, which owes its origin to the busy brain of Monsieur Larnajat, a French civil engineer, who has not only suggested the idea, but put it into practical operation in France and other portions of Europe.

THE LARNAJAT THEORY is, that, railways as they are now constructed with two rails and the wheels of the locomotives and cars solidly fastened to the shafts, are on a wrong principle, and create resistance in the curves which is avoided by establishing the road with but a single rail put in the plane with the longitudinal axis of the locomotive and cars. Forty per cent. of the weight of the engine and tender goes on the driving wheels, and as the adhesion or friction produced by that weight between the line of the wheels and the rails is smaller than it would be on a macadamized road, it is claimed that the adhesive power of the engines necessary to draw the train is only obtained by materially increasing their weight, especially when the road has heavy grades, and at sixty per cent. of that weight is born by the locomotive, and does not increase the tractive power due to the adhesion on the rail. In building railways with two rails, and fastening the locomotive and car wheels to the shafts, Larnajat says the same mistake has been made as if wheel-barrow were constructed with two parallel wheels pinned to a single shaft. His invention works the driving wheels of the locomotive on a macadamized road, or oak planks laid alongside the rail, which gives him a tractive power of six or seven times greater than iron can furnish, and causes the whole train to run easily and safely on a single rail. This rail is of American pattern, and is spiked in the usual manner, but in the middle of the ties, which the planks alluded to are bolted fast to either end of the ties. For a turnpike road having a grade of five hundred feet, and where the track is to be fifty feet wide, the locomotive and the ties require to be five feet seven inches long, and a three inches thick. If on a turnpike with the above mentioned grade the same weight is to be drawn, and the driving wheels to run on the macadam instead of plank, the rail, instead of resting on ties would rest on oak planks, one foot wide and three inches thick laid in the same direction as the rail. The planks and part of the rail would be buried in the ground; the rails weigh about 85 pounds to the square foot, and the macadam on either side, would be one foot wide.

THE LOCOMOTIVE for our one rail railway has four wheels; being placed, the one at the front and the other at the rear of the engine, bearing on the rail. These give the direction, and are double flanged. The other pair of wheels are placed in a traverse plane, passing on a line in front of the firebox. They run on the oak planks or macadam, as the case may be, and are the driving wheels. By the aid of a screw ingeniously contrived, the engine can be turned in the same or opposite direction, and thus the wheel can be put on or taken from the driving wheels. The wheels are not welded to the shaft, but turn loosely; they have coiled springs, one end of which is fixed to the shaft, and the other to the hub of the wheel, so that the engine moves only after so many revolutions, the spring coiling itself till the tension is equal to the power necessary to start the train. By this arrangement, when the engine is going around a curve, one of the springs discharges itself, and the difference which its wheel has to run greater than the other—so that the strain on the shaft and wheel, is avoided entirely. The directing wheels are on a pivot, can be turned in any direction. The cars have only four wheels, two to run on the rail, and two on the plank or macadam; and all the weight bears on the rail and side wheels, the latter being smaller than the directing wheels, and intended only to maintain the equilibrium.

But after all theorizing and speculation, the proof of the soundness of pudding is in the eating of it—and Monsieur Larnajat has a one rail railway running between Rasey and Montmerle near Paris, which

HAS BEEN IN SUCCESSFUL OPERATION two years. On this railway a locomotive weighing three tons draws two cars with twenty passengers in each, up grades equal to 370 feet in a mile and through curves of 18 feet radius. This sort of a railway can be built in France for about \$1,500 per mile. The locomotives weigh six and ten tons; the former carries fifteen miles an hour, drawing besides its own weight thirty-five tons up a grade of two feet in a hundred, and costs \$5,000. On a level it would draw 180 tons. The cars are correspondingly cheap.

Many practical men believe that the Larnajat system is the true solution of the problem of putting railways on turnpikes with the grades and curves which the common highway usually has, and it is not impossible that the experiment will soon be tried in this country. Should it be as successful here as in Europe, it would be of immense benefit, especially in mountainous regions, or even in such hilly localities as New England.—St. Louis Republican.

A late press dispatch from La Salle, Ill., says: The recent rain, with intervals of intensely hot weather, has pushed forward all kinds of crops with unusual rapidity. Farmers in this vicinity report the best stand of corn obtained for many years. The seventeen year locusts have appeared quite numerous south of the Illinois river, and seem to be moving in a westerly direction. The weather is much cooler to-day.

HEAD WATER—The Columbia river at later date was on the rampage.

Puzzled Chinamen at Versailles. About two hundred years ago a Japanese ambassador came on a mission to Louis XIV. When asked by the courtiers what astonished him most in the city, he replied: "To see myself in it."

If M. Thiers were to ask the same question of the Chinese ambassadors who are now here, it is probably they would answer: "To see you in it." For having been sent by his Celestial Majesty on a mission to that particular Son of Heaven who was supposed to be reigning in Paris when they left Peking, they are greatly perplexed to know to whom they should offer the magnificent presents they have brought with them. Instead of a son of Heaven in the Tuileries they find an assembly of mandarins in Versailles, and instead of one government, they have to choose between two for the transaction of their business. According to Chinese notions France is a dragon with two heads attempting to devour itself. The youngest of the ambassadors is a very gentlemanly man, as far as Chinese gentility goes, well up in his Confucius, and of an observant turn of mind, and is writing an account of the events taking place under his eyes. His notions of French politics are somewhat obscure and it has been impossible to make him understand the difference between the social and non-social republic. Having been favored with a reading of the original manuscript, I give a translation of one of the most striking passages: "Human sacrifices," says the writer, "have not been abolished by these barbarians. At certain epochs they slay each other, that none of them may be massacred by a tyrant. These occidental customs recall the customs of our Western savages who put their parents on the spit to spare them the inconvenience of old age. Individually, these barbarians are mild in their manners and of agreeable intercourse. United in assembly, they can never agree. There is one word that makes them frantic. That is the word 'Liberty.' We cannot give the exact meaning of it, because the learned men to whom we applied for illustration do not themselves understand it perfectly, and we have not found two who interpreted it in the same way. The commonest interpretation of the word 'Liberty' is, that it expresses the right to free one's self and enslave others. This people treats us as barbarians because our laws rip up their bellies in honor of Buddha. With them the whole nation tears itself with its own hands in the belief that it is serving the idol 'Liberty.' They call that civilization."—World.

The Chicago Times of June 1st says: "McFarland is determined to make himself obnoxious to his and the late Mr. Richardson's wife. He has had the Indiana divorce suit reopened, and is in a fair way, it is said, to have the verdict set aside. If this should be the result, his criminal affairs will be in a sad state of confusion. His killing of Richardson has been decided in Court not to have been murder, but in this case would it not be suicide? He killed Mrs. Richardson's husband; that is a well known fact. Now if another Court decides that McFarland is that husband, it will be clearly demonstrated in law that Mr. McFarland is dead. This would be a pleasant way of disposing of the whole matter, though the lady in the case, like most ladies in most cases, is enjoying herself just now in California, in sweet oblivion of any ex-husband!"

AGRICULTURAL—That great and good man, Horace Greeley, is constantly working for the benefit of the agricultural community, and it has become a common thing for farmers all over the country to consult Horace the same as they would an almanac for information. Here is the latest offer ascribed to him: An Elmira farmer wrote to Mr. Greeley for his experience in raising geese for market. Horace said there was no trouble at all about it if the goslings were not weaned too young. He says they should be allowed to run with the old cow and suck until their horns got out an inch or two, when they will be hardy enough to pack and salt down for market.

Persons who have not been in the habit of drinking buttermilk consider it disagreeable, because slightly acid in consequence of the presence of the lactic acid. There is not much nourishment in buttermilk, but the presence of the lactic acid assists the digestion of any food taken with it. The Welsh peasants almost live upon oat cake and buttermilk. Invalids suffering from indigestion will do well to drink buttermilk at meal times.

A LANDLORD'S EXPERIENCE—A Virginia landlord, in commenting on the statement that tight lacing saves the country \$2,000,000 annually in board alone, says it is a villainous and habitual lie. He knows a girl who laces so tight that his arm will go around her twice and lap over clear to the elbow, and she wouldn't think, to look at her, that she could eat anything except soup; but she's got an appetite like a cross-cut saw, and she moves a swath at a table like a self-raking reaper.

LITERARY FOOD.—Poetry is the flower of literature; prose the corn, potatoes and meat; satire is the aquaforte; wit is the spice and pepper; love letters are the honey and sugar, and letters, containing remittances are the plums.

Gentleman came to pay his doctor's bill—"Well, Doctor, as my little boy gave the measles to all the neighbor's children, and as they were attended by you, I think you can afford to deduct ten per cent from the amount of my bill for the increase of the business we gave you."

A gentleman traveling on a steamer, one day at dinner, was making away with a large pudding close by, when he was told by a servant that it was a desert. "It matters not to me," said he, "I would eat it if it was a wilderness."

When our cup runs over, we let others drink the drops that fall, but not a drop from within the rim; and we complacently call this charity.

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IT WILL STAND IN TIME, because it is its mechanical construction is superior, and therefore, more durable than any other piano constructed in the usual modern way. The arrangement of the Agraffe, the position of stringing, the peculiar form and arrangement of the Iron Frame.

Supersedes all Others. The use of a "Jart," (which is a part of the Iron Frame) on a line with the heavy steel stringing, gives

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THE EXTRAORDINARY EVENNESS. Throughout the entire scale, the excellent playing Quality, the

Length and Purity on Vibrations. All go to prove what we claim, viz.: that the Arion Piano-Forte

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Read The Following. It affords me much pleasure to give you, in these few lines, a very interesting account of the Patent Arion Piano-Forte, in our Conservatory, for a year, and have had a fair opportunity of testing their durability during that time. The Pianos have been played upon almost constantly, and morning till night, and a Piano must indeed be a good one when it will bear such constant use without showing signs of depletion. As for remaining in tune, it is a very important feature in the Patent Arion Piano-Forte, and is so striking that I have had private counsel, while taking their views, that although they had at home with them, they supposed to be one of the best makes of Pianos, and the truth was very wrong indeed compared with the "ARION."

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