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Selected Story. The Mill on the Bannock. It stands there to-day on the banks of the plashing brook, amid its hedges of box-trees and such-trees and white-blossoming hawthorns, a strongly built, old-fashioned house, with a steep gabled roof, heavily thatched, and deep windows obscured by flour, and snug and well kept a structure as Scotland boasts. A square single-loom over which the green ivy clusters stands at one end; at the other in a huge wood-pile, a contained and well-to-do couple somewhat past middle life. He was content to attend the hopper of his little mill and to feed his goat, and work early and late; for Gawain was healthy and strong, and felt as happy in his buckram gaberline as any noble who wore velvet tunic and armor of Milan make. As for Myrtle, it would have done you good to have seen her bright eyes and ruddy cheeks, and to have heard her merry song as her spinning-wheel hummed by its side in the sunny summer days, or the cooler Autumn one, when the shadows of the Torwood oaks grew shorter along the Bannock. Little they cared, busy with their humble toil, leading pleasant, cheerful lives in this quiet retreat, for the quarrels of kings and nobles and the turmoil of kingdoms. So, though this was a year of war and sad ruin in Scotland, and though only a few miles distant, beyond the Torwood oaks, a battle was raging between the chivalrous and hapless James Stuart III, and his fierce border lords, the noble Gawain and his wife Myrtle, guided to their hopper and their spinning-wheel, all untroubled of whether the day was lost or won.

As the sun went down behind the green peaks of the fertile O'Neil hills, and the gorgeous golden rays spread themselves in the western sky, irradiating all the broad landscape and flushing the waters of the brook to a ruddy hue, Myrtle laid by her reel and wheel, kindled a fire of turf and bog fir in the wide fire-place, hung a leg, three-legged, and put on the wooden crock or crock, and, taking a tin pitcher, went out to fill it with water from the dam. Singing one of her old Scotch songs, and busily engaged in filling her vessel, the gentlewife gave no heed to a tall and earnest knight, mounted on a stately gray steed, who came riding at full speed up to the mill, till horse and rider were almost upon her. Then, alarmed by the unexpected sight, she uttered a terrified cry, and, throwing away her pitcher, started to go into the mill.

Myrtle's loud, sudden cry and the clatter of the rolling vessel frightened the gray horse, which reared furiously, upsetting its rider and throwing him heavily upon the green sward, not many feet from the mill door, where he lay like one dead. "Alack-a-day! what have I done?" cried the buxom gentlewife, losing all her ruddy color as she saw the knight lay prostrate, and his steed galloping over the carse.

Hearing the clatter of armor and his gentlewife's cry of alarm, the miller shut down the gate and came rushing out, his gaberline and bonnet and black beard all covered with flour-dust. "Devil mend thee, Myrtle!" he cried, in some consternation, for he saw that the knight's armor was of the costliest, and that his violet-colored cloak was of satia edged with miniver. "Devil mend thee! thine eldritch scraigh has fraught the horse and slain this comely gentleman."

"No; say it not; he is only stunned a wee bit," said the wife, as she knelt by the fallen knight, and strove to lift him. "Rise, sir, rise, and for the love of St. Mary tell us where ye be hurt." But the man lay motionless, and made no reply.

"Ho! ho!" cried the miller, "this is a poorty scrape. Should his vassals come against ye, stau' a guide chance o' having our mill burnt over our heads. Here, gentlewife, help me bear him in against the hallin; then hasten and make a milk pottage for him. See ye nocht he is fearless and weak?"

The gentlewife's cheeks were as white as the calf of Mary o' Guelder's time that was around her neck, but she helped her husband raise the inanimate man, and together they bore him into the mill, and laid him on the humble box bed in the corner of the room. Then while the sympathizing Myrtle bestowed herself in making up a posset, Gawain gently unbarred the closed window, and, looking out, saw that the night did not revive, he proceeded also to unloose the gorget and the breastplate of the plumed helmet, and laying them aside.

down by the knight's head, Myrtle took some of the cool liquid and began to lave the patient's brow. "Think ye, gentleman, that he is a king's man, or is he o' the blackhearted nobles?" asked Myrtle, as she took the gauntlets off his hands and began to chafe them also.

"I canna tell," answered the miller. "Yet I would na' think such a pleasant looking gentleman could ha' buckled on armor to fight our gude King Jamie, whom God bless."

"How white and how soft his hands are, and his hair is as smooth as silk! Alack! some fair lady in Galloway or Lothian may be looking sadly over me, waiting for the sight of his gray head and white plume. Sure, her eyes wad melt to see the pair air lying side by side."

"O' the zook I Myrtle, lass, yer tongue loupin' like a mill hopper. Dinna see the gentleman is comin' to his sense. This was indeed the case. A faint color swept over the pale cheeks, the long eyelashes unrolled, and the knight with a strong effort rose slowly to his elbow.

"Thanks, my good people, for your kindness, but tell me where I am, and his dark eyes roved about the low-roofed, clay-floored cottage, with its scant furniture, and the turf fire blazing in the great fireplace.

"Ye're in the mill town o' Bannock, gentle sir. And I am Gawain Beaton, a pur miller, at your service." "I am safe, then. Thank God for that," said the stranger fervently. "But how far am I from this day's field of sorrow?" "I told ye, lass, I thought he was a king's man," whispered the miller to his wife. Then, in answer to the knight's question, he said, deferentially, "Little more than a mile, sir. Do you know our King Jamie, and whether he escaped?"

AN EXCITED ASTRONOMER. Our reporter met the astronomer yesterday in the street, looking very dejected. "I have shut up my observatory," he said.

"Why, does the drought affect telescopes?" asked the reporter. "No," said the astronomer, "but it affects the sky, which is about the same thing. With the air choked with smoke from the burning Jersey bogs, and no rain to purify it, there is not much use of trying to study stars."

The astronomer stopped to sneeze as a whiff of smoke-scented air came over the bay. Then he wiped his brow and continued: "This most wonderful weather reminds me of a very striking theory that was put forth many years ago by a celebrated French mathematician named Poisson. He believed that the internal heat of the earth had been derived from without. You know that as the earth circles about the sun it is being constantly carried into new regions of space through the forward motion of the sun itself. Well, Poisson satisfied himself, after a laborious investigation, that the earth had some time passed through a very hot region and so received the heat which has not yet left its interior. Suppose, sir, the astronomer impressively took hold of the reporter's sleeve—"suppose that the earth is approaching another hot region—is already, in fact, entering the outskirts of it! I leave you to imagine the consequences."

After a pause the astronomer continued somewhat excitedly: "Humboldt, to be sure, took the pains to say in his Cosmos that he did not agree with Poisson, and I believe that hardly any man of science accepted the theory. But what of that? I never believed it myself, but since this year began its pranks I know we don't know as much about the ways of nature and the secrets of the universe as we thought we did. Every world in the solar system is disturbed, and there must be a cause for it. Poisson may have been right. We must have some theory, sir, we must have some theory, or we'll be all at sea, and Poisson's theory is as good for the purpose as another. Who knows, sir, but the earth may be rushing straight into another of that Frenchman's hot regions?"

At the reporter walked away the astronomer stood shaking his head and anxiously watching the clouds.—N. Y. Sun.

THE DISCUSSION OF "THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION," by Col. Ingersoll and Judge Black, which was commenced in the August number of the North American Review, is continued in the November issue of that publication. Col. Ingersoll now replies to the strictures of his opponent, and presents much more fully than he has ever before done the logical grounds for his opposition to Christianity. The article will be received with interest by those who have read the first part of the debate, as well as by all those who believe that the cause of truth is best advanced by free discussion. An early number of the Review will contain an exhaustive reply. In a Symposium on Presidential Inability, four of our most eminent jurists, Judge Thomas M. Cooley, the Hon. Lyman Trumbull, Prof. Theodore W. Dwight, and Gen. E. F. Butler, discuss the several weighty problems arising out of Article 2 of the Constitution. "England's Hereditary Republic" is the title of a significant paper contributed by the Marquis of Salisbury, and Senator George F. Hoar writes a statesmanlike article on "The Appointing Power" of the President of the United States.

HOW TO BE BEAUTIFUL. Most people would like to be handsome. All cannot have good features—they are as God made them; but almost any one can look well, especially with good health. It is hard to give rules in a very short space, but in brief these will do: Keep clean—wash freely. All the skin wants to leave to act free, it takes care of itself. Its thousands of air holes must not be closed. Eat regularly, and sleep enough—no more work all the time, day and night, than a horse. It must have regular work and rest. Good teeth are a help to good looks. Brush them with a soft brush, especially at night. Go to bed with cleansed teeth. Of course to have white teeth it is needful to let tobacco alone. Washes for the teeth should be very simple. Acid may whiten the teeth, but it takes off the enamel and injures them. Sleep in a cool room, in pure air. But more than all, in order to look well, wake up mind and soul. When the mind is awake, the dull, sleepy look passes away from the eyes.

CURIOUS FACTS. The cataraet of Niagara recedes a yard a year. Arabian scale armor was sometimes made of thin plates of horn. Bone shavings are used in case-hardening small articles of steel. The number of air cells in the lungs of a grown man are 600,000,000. A hen will lay upwards of 140 eggs per annum, and bear one or two broods. By a law passed recently, a pencil written note is just as valid as though written in ink. Newfoundland dogs have been kept by the city, in Paris, to save human life in the Seine. The food of the Greenland whale is a small crustaceous animal not so large as a shrimp. Five thousand of the inhabitants of Paris earn a livelihood by cutting rats, and selling their skins to the glove makers.