

A BICYCLE IDYL.

- A little girl, with eyes of blue;
A little dog of snowy hue;
A little wheel, with rider rash;
A bark, a ruck, an awful crash!
A little scream, a little wail;
A pretty sympathetic air;
A little conversation, leading
To blushes, smiles, successful pleading.

NOBODY'S HERO.

No hero was he—only plain Roy McLeod. Little Roy was always called from the first to the last; from the very first day of his pitiful baby life, when—now sad to tell—no tender mother held him, the wee, cold stranger, to her warm heart, with a promise silent, yet true as heaven, of protection against the many ills to which she had ushered him all unwittingly. Poor little soldier! Thru to the great battle of life all unwarmed, armed, even by the shield of mother love. Only Mother Rose, faithful and kind, held him in her great, strong arms, and she wiped many a big tear from among the wrinkles of her old black face as she looked at the little speck of humanity. "Poor little Massa Roy"—but were two big blue eyes opened in protest, and Mammy Rose was stricken dumb by the wondering gaze. Brave blue eyes one might have called them, only baby was so frail and tiny. Little Roy they always called him in the fair Southern village where his childish years went by on their laughing, dandaway. He was ever a merry, hardy strip of a boy, all life and frolic—but happy? No—child happiness, without mother to watch and nourish it, is a plant that never thrives. Little Roy still, even when he counted seventeen summers; and plain, almost to ugliness; naught to watch and that verdict, but the same brave blue eyes that had checked so effectively Mammy's heartfelt pity—eyes strong and true in their steady light, and above them a something, indefinable—a something, may we say, akin to majesty? Little Roy though he was, he could remember no day in his life when his heart had been too small for its dream of love—love for a radiant, gleesome maid, who had been the sweetest, wildest, merriest of playmates, in the days when they too climbed trees together, waded barefoot the woodland branches, rolled over the green hillsides on the sunny days, and made mud pies on the rainy ones. Bonny Alice had something of the Gypsy in her nature as well as in her great, beaming, dark eyes, and as Roy had neither mother nor father to say him nay, they had a glad, free life of it, all full of ups and downs, and frocks and pranks of the maddest kind. They had played at love-making in their simple way when Alice's frocks just touched her knee and Roy's jackets were as tailless as his well-worn summer kites—or, rather, he did all the love-making and she took it quite like a little queen whose right it was, and forgot all about it the next moment in a way staunch little Roy did not all like, boy though he was.

queen bearing his lost love's dear familiar name—she was a new experience. Yet, all things were changed. There was a new-made grave under the Southern skies, where slept Peace, with all its happy smiles and songs, and its brow of golden calm. Over the land it had blessed and made beautiful floated the blood-red banners of war. Campfires flashed out in the darkness of night; the tramp of gathering cohorts crushed to death the star-bright flowers of the valley; bugles called and brave men and gallant youths stood up to do and die for their own. Smarter's guns had boomed, and lol another world; Roy McLeod was ever so quiet during these first stirring days, but Alice Adair was in a fervent glow of grand dreams.

thoughts, yet never once did she think him a hero fit for the pedestal where she had thrown the image of her handsome cavalier, Douglas St. John.

Months later she stood arrayed in bridal white, orange blossoms gleaming in the braids of her dark hair, and such a softened yet glowing light in the great brown eyes. Douglas St. John looked almost a king, and there they were, pledging their lives to each other, many guests standing silent in the great parlors, taking in the handsome, regal-looking pair, when up the wide granite steps in front there hobbled a crippled, haggard man in gray. A small man, young, but his face roughened and aged by other things, not years; the gray jacket was faded and lathered. He only took one glance through the lace curtains of the window opening on the balcony; stood a moment, rigid as a statue, then moved away. Next morning a note was handed Mrs. St. John—one of congratulation, she thought, and with a smile she read: "I managed to come to life in a Federal prison; I got out and dragged all these weary miles to see you, but now I had rather go back to camp. God bless you, dear. Good-bye." Roy.

Proverbs About Woman.

An old Spanish proverb expresses characteristically the high-bred courtliness which was once peculiar to the race: "The counsel of a woman is not worth much, but he who does not take it is worth nothing." In Pattenham's "Arte of English Poetry," a curious and interesting work, published about the end of the sixteenth century, the author speaking of the tender-heartedness of the female sex in general, alludes to the common proverb, "A woman will weep for pity to see a gosling go bare footed." There must have been a touch of real humor about the originator of this ancient proverb, ridiculing, but nevertheless loving, the prodigality of tenderness, which caused him such amusement.

The preference generally given in the seventeenth century to the gray mares of Flanders over the finest coach horses of England gave rise to the vulgar proverb, "The gray mare is the better horse."

George Herbert gave the world many proverbs which are descriptive of the lives and qualities of women. Among others we select the following: "Empty chambers make foolish maids," a proverb which, of course, like so many others, only expresses a half truth; for we are willing to believe that some very wise little maidens have grown into womanhood like moorland blossoms, which only the grouse and the adder and the humble bee have looked on; but foolish is no doubt used here in its slighter significance of bashful, in which case the proverb is a true one.

MRS. MULLICAN'S BLANKETS.

The most noticeable fact in my history is that I am a married man, and it is a consolation for me to admit that Mrs. M. is one of the loveliest of her sex.

When she condescended to unite her lot with mine I was poor, and it was my understanding that her circumstances were also humble; but upon the strength of having made me the proprietor of thirteen dollars, a cow and a pair of blankets during the first seven years of our wedded life, my companion made semi-annual accusations that I had married her for her fortune.

The time came when I found myself in easy circumstances and able to provide for Mrs. Mullican any quantity of blankets of the finest wool and best quality; but, with a perversity which, I trust, not common to women in general, she obstinately persisted in using, in our spare room only, the blankets which she had brought with her upon the occasion of her marriage, and to which she often alluded most feelingly as "the gift of a departed mother." Figuratively speaking, the blankets became a bone of contention between us, for she claimed the right of determining who should repose beneath the fleecy folds. I disputed it, and the result was mutual unhappiness.

Finally her blankets came to grief in such a manner that my peace of mind was restored. I shall relate the history of their downfall, and remark, as an exordium, that, in case this should meet the eyes of my wife, I wish her to distinctly understand I mean no disparagement to her, and desire her to notice that when she is alluded to it is incidentally and in a highly respectful manner; so that, in case she should ever become a candidate for divorce, this article may not be brought forward in proof that I lacked solicitude as a husband or integrity as a man.

We made a fair test of love in a cottage (I can't say that Mrs. Mullican liked the cottage), and we had an orchard and a garden in the bargain. Our cow was allowed the freedom of the former.

One day my amiable and devoted spouse visited a neighbor to inspect a pair of Chester whites, rare animals of the porcine tribe, which were so captivating in their general appearance as to win the susceptible heart of my better half, so that for a time even her blankets were overlooked, and nothing would do but I must convert a corner of our garden into a pigsty, and stock it with a couple of Chester whites immediately. She waxed eloquent upon the economy of such a proceeding; the cow, she said, gave far more milk than we could possibly use, and our vegetables were coming on and would go to waste. There was also a large amount of swill, which would be bread and butter to the swine she had determined I should purchase.

Early Marriages.

Early marriages are nowhere as common as in the prosperous manufacturing districts of Lancashire. Boys and girls not out of their teens, but earning big wages and feeling independence prematurely developed by the absence of home life, get united in holy wedlock at a time when, in the higher ranks of society, they have not left school nor begun to think of a calling. Saturday is a favorite day to get married, because it is a short one, and the ceremony can be got through with a minimum of loss—a thing certain to be considered by a thrifty operative. The town is paraded for a few hours with a cheap tawdry finery of glaring colors, which can never serve any useful purpose again; perhaps one of the watering places visited if it be fine, and on Monday morning by the stroke of six the newly married couple can be found at their looms, in defiance of all poetry and romance, and the wear and tear of life begins with them once more in real earnest. Marriage makes no alteration in the position of a wife so far as mill work is concerned; she puts in her ten hours a day as she did before. Indeed she has incomparably the worst of the bargain, for when her day's work is over it is her privilege to light the fire at home, get the supper ready and do the necessary household work, while it is the prerogative of the husband to use his leisure according to his own sweet will. When the time comes for the baby to be born the mother-expectant withdraws from the mill a few weeks, and when she is well enough to resume her place at the loom the baby is placed in the care of some old crone, who is past work herself and ekes out sufficient to live on by taking charge of five or six of these luckless babies for the consideration of a shilling or two a week, according to the age.—[Sacramento Bee.]

Cattle Feeding.

Most animals eat in proportion to their weight, under average of age, temperature and fatness.

A good guide for a safe quantity of grain per day to maturing cattle is one pound to each hundred of their weight, thus an animal weighing 1,000 pounds may receive ten pounds of grain.

Never give rapid changes of food, but change often.

Give fattening cattle as much as they will eat and often—five times a day.

Every salt feeding in the fall will make the winter progress more certain by 30 per cent.

Give as much water and salt at all times as they will take.

In using roots, it is one guide to give just so much, in association with other things, so that the animal may not take any water.

In buildings have warmth with complete ventilation, without currents, but never under 40 nor over 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

A cold, damp, airy temperature will cause animals to consume more food without corresponding result in bone, muscle, flesh or fat, much being used to keep up the warmth.

Stall feeding is better for fat making than box or yard management, irrespective of health.

The growing animal, intended for beef, requires a little exercise daily to promote muscle and strength of constitution, when ripe, only so much as to be able to walk to market.

Carrying daily is equal to 7 per cent. increase.

Enquirer—No, we don't believe in taking the bull by the horns. We tried taking a goat by the horns once, and that was excitement enough for us.—Boston Post.

A Fanny Hole in the Ground.

In Castle district, at a point about five miles north of this city, is a tunnel that may be called an ex-tunnel. It is a tunnel that reconstitutes against being a tunnel. It was run about four years ago into the side of a steep hill and originally about 40 feet in length. When in about 15 feet, the tunnel cut into a soft swelling clay, very difficult to manage. After timbering and striving against the queer, spongy material till it had been penetrated some 25 feet, the miners gave up the fight, as they found it was a losing game.

A Fanny Hole in the Ground.

Being left to its own devices, the tunnel proceeded to repair damages. It very plainly showed that it resented the whole business, as its first move was to push out all the timbers and dump them down the hill. It did not stay at that, but projected from the mouth of the tunnel a pith or stopper of clay the full size of the excavation. This came out horizontally some eight feet, as though to look about and see what had become of the miners, when it broke off and rolled down the slope. In this war it has been going on until there are some hundreds of tons of the clay at the foot of the hill.

A Fanny Hole in the Ground.

At first it required only about a week for a plug to come out and break off, then a month, and so on until now the masses are ejected but three or four times per year, yet the motion continues and to-day the tunnel has the better of the fight by about four feet.—[Va. Chron.]

A Fanny Hole in the Ground.

He was a bouncing turkey, and they had him hung by the heels, so that his nose almost touched the wall just outside of the butcher shop. A little girl was standing there watching it. You could see that she was a hungry little girl, and worse than that she was cold, too, for her shawl had to do for a hood and almost everything else. No one was looking, and so she put out a little red hand and gave the turkey a push, and he swung back and forth, almost making the great iron hook creak, he was so heavy.

A Fanny Hole in the Ground.

"What a splendid big turkey this is." The poor little girl turned around, and there stood another little girl looking at the turkey, too. She was out walking with her dolls, and had on a cloak with real fur all around the edges, and she had a real muff, white, with black spots all over it.