

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man it is,
In matchless power his hands are,
And the anvil under him
Astonishes as iron bands.

His hair is crisp and black and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns his money and he earns
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With resolute and slow,
And a reaction ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children come home from school
Look in at the open door,
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a turning floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise;
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hand, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Telling—'tis joyful, 'tis sorrowing,
Outward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some lesser being,
Each evening sees some firstling,
Sighing at his coming, sighing at his going,
His heart is never free.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson that hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought,
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

AUNT DORINDA'S LEGACY.

"Little Rin,—that is what I have always heard you called. Pray, Miss Blanchford, what is your name?"

A smile and a dimple, a blush, and then a laugh, while six of Miss Blanchford's admirers waited for her answer.

"I am named for my dear old-fashioned Aunt Dorinda," she said, addressing Lewellyn, who had asked the question. "Having two of the name in the family, I, the younger, am called Little Rin. It isn't a pretty name, or romantic, but very convenient, and so appropriate!"—drawing herself to her full, graceful height, and making her companions a sweeping courtesy; for Miss Blanchford, though not "little," was beautiful, and a belle, and masculine homage attended her every footstep.

The party were at the Osprey House, down on Cormorant Cape, in the finest of the fine summer weather; and, as the young lady spoke, she turned and pointed to one of the prettiest of the shorecottages.

"This is my Aunt Dorinda's summer house," she said.

"Is Mrs. General Bienville your aunt?" asked Lewellyn, with involuntary surprise, while the others politely whistled under their breath, and Miss Blanchford nodded lightly.

A moment more and the group had separated, Aubrey Villars taking Geoffrey Thorne by the arm, and leading him off to whisper in his ear, "Mrs. General Bienville is very odd—very eccentric—but the richest woman I know; and if Little Rin is her niece, she must be an heiress, as well as a belle and a beauty."

The others exchanged much the same confidences. Lewellyn alone said nothing, but walked away thinking. He had often wondered how a girl could be as beautiful as Miss Blanchford, and not be spoiled; and now it turned out that she was, in perspective, rich, he marvelled still more. So generous, so unaffected, so simple, so sweet-tempered—and he had seen her temper severely tried by his father. In contrast with his sisters the only women he knew well—she did not seem to be likewise of flesh and blood. His spirits fell. He had come to that quiet place for the summer, much harassed by care, thinking to see no one he should care for, and yet he believed now that he had found the one woman whom, of all the world, he could love. Of late, his business losses had been heavy, but they had not caused him great despondency until this summer, when he was obliged to realize that he was comparatively a poor man. If he offered himself to Little Rin, he certainly believed her father would counsel her to reject him. Not that Mr. Outhbert Blanchford was a curmudgeon. On the contrary, he was a man of brilliant parts, socially; but he was an opinion eater, and his temper uncertain.

At times he was very tyrannical, though he certainly loved his daughter, who was his only child, and was very proud of her. But they were not wealthy, and he had openly avowed his wish to have his daughter marry a rich man. Certainly Little Rin, with her accomplishments, her lightness and grace, did not seem fitted to be the wife of a poor man. He had better not dream of it. But Cormorant Cape, with its fine outlook, its free breezes, its pleasant nooks, suddenly had lost its satisfaction. He grew restless; there was a gnawing pain at his heart. It amazed him to find that he had hoped.

The rustle of Miss Blanchford's silver-grey dress upon the piazza aroused him from a fit of despondency.

"It is very naughty to be idle," said a musical voice. "Come and take care of me while I go down on the rocks and catch some smelts for papa's breakfast."

He rose from the rustic bench quickly. Miss Blanchford had a sun-hat, with turquoise-blue ribbons, tipped over her face, a fishing-rod in her slender gloved hand. She addressed him with her usual gay frankness, and led the way down upon the rocks, merrily talking.

"I love to steal a while away," don't you?" she quoted. "We have nice social times here—the boarders are very agreeable; but its so deliciously quiet out here—it rests one."

He had bated her hook and put the rod into her hand. Then he held a drooping branch of the single tree to shelter her face. Then he stood and watched the perfect contour of the roseate cheek and dimpled chin, while she dropped the hook into the water and then quietly waited. Suddenly the lovely eyes, bluer than the ribbons, looked full up.

"Hasn't this been a delightful summer?" she said.

"It has been to me," he said. Something flashed from his grey eyes into her blue eyes; the white lids quickly fell.

"But it is past," he said. "I go home to-morrow."

The blue-ribboned hat-brim suddenly fell a little lower. Standing above her, he could see only the dimpled chin now, and could not know that a chill seemed to have touched the satin cheek. It was white as the curling crusts beneath. But her tone had changed when she spoke again.

"I suppose we, too, shall go before the month is out."

He felt the change, yet dared not believe it, and kept bravely silent; but when a breeze suddenly blew the concealing hat back upon the graceful shoulders, a face all pale, grieved and changed was shown him. The revelation was too much.

"Let me tell you why the summer has been so pleasant to me," he said, "because the sweetest woman I have ever known has been my companion. And I go to-morrow, much as I would like to stay, because—let me say it—for I say it without hope—I love her."

One little moment all was still but the clashing of the water and the shrill cry of the snowy wheeling gulls. Then the blue of the lovely eyes shone out.

"Why should you not hope, Lewald, when she loves you?"

He knelt down, took the oval face between his trembling hands, so that there was no escape for the eyes of blue from his searching gaze.

"Does she love?"

"Dear!"

"God bless her."

Then she sprung, laughing, from his embrace, for a fish was running off with her rod.

"Help me, Lewald! help me!"

He laughed, too, as he caught it—so glad to be happy, hopeful!

"Let me do your fishing, Lady-bird, while you sit there, like a queen, and tell me why you love me."

She pulled the gloves leisurely from the white hands and folded them on her lap.

"Because I trust you and you suit me," was all she said.

He cut a maple stick and strung the fish in silence.

"Your father will never consent," he said at last.

She turned the rings on her hands unawares.

"My father does not want me to marry poor. He likes you, but—you are not rich, Lewald."

"No, I am poor," he said bitterly.

"So am I," she answered. The waves dashed and the wheeling white gulls cried. "But do not despair. If Aunt Dorinda forgives papa, I shall be rich."

"I do not want you rich," he replied, absently, his brow corrugated.

"You must have me rich, if at all," she smiled, leaning forward to interpose her beautiful face between his troubled gaze and the water. "Let me tell you about it. My grandfather was poor, and his children had their fortunes to carve out. Dorinda, the eldest, was wonderfully good, brave and capable. She educated herself—taught school. Of the boys, Uncle Arthur and my father, she made father her favorite. She was anxious that he should prepare himself for college; she offered to pay, herself, the collegiate course. But he did not care for a classical education. He agreed, but wasted his time, took another course, and bitterly disappointed her. For twenty years, they did not meet or communicate. Meanwhile, aunt had married General Bienville and grown old; meanwhile I was born. Though papa had not gratified his sister, he admired and respected her. He named me for her. It is only a few years ago since she drove, one day, in her carriage to call on us and see me. Then she sent me some lovely dresses, shawls and jewels. But papa believes she has never forgiven him, and I do not know."

Lewald listened, his heart in his hand. There was no possible fortune waiting for him. The times were bad and growing worse. His important interests had failed; his daily business, as an art-dealer, was hourly becoming less. His partner's letters were daily more discouraging. His lease of his store and art gallery only kept him still engaged in business. It had been a congenial occupation, but of late had become bitterly unprofitable.

He told all this to Mr. Blanchford that evening.

"It is a very hopeless matter, sir, but I love your daughter none the less."

"I will be frank with you, Mr. Lewellyn," said Mr. Blanchford, who was in a serene mood. "Like you, but my Little Rin is not fitted for poverty. To wed her to it would be disastrous. To wed her to so evidently loves you, I hope—perhaps in vain—that a legacy from her aunt may facilitate matters. My sister is very old and failing, and Little Rin will spend the winter with her as soon as she returns to town."

By the last of October all the birds of my story had flown cityward. Mrs. Bienville's city residence was kept quiet during the fall, for she was very feeble and unable to receive; but she did not object to her niece entertaining her friends informally. Lewellyn came frequently to the great rich mansion, where rich carpets muffled his steps to soundlessness, and whose wonderful pictures haunted his dreams.

Aubrey Villars came, too. He was well known in town, a young man of good family, of French extraction, not as wealthy as it had been, but somewhat distinguished. He was handsome and agreeable, and at Cape Cormorant, Little Rin had enjoyed an idle hour with him. But now her heart deepened, all her thoughts another's, she cared little for his visits, and said so to Lewellyn.

"But he cares for you; I assure you he is serious," he replied. "and has been since you became exalted in his eyes as the niece of your aunt. He is my rival."

Little Rin laughed incredulously. But time proved Lewellyn's words true. Mr. Blanchford, unstable and pressed for money, began to complain to his daughter that she had not preferred Villars.

"Villars is of better position than Lewellyn, and has more money than the latter will ever have; why are you so foolish as to prefer him?" he said, irritably. "If you had fortune, it would not matter so much, but my family are long-lived; your aunt may live an invalid for a number of years. Let Lewellyn go, and marry Villars."

Shocked, grieved, distressed, Little Rin knew not what to reply. But then commenced a long winter's struggle. The father reproached, expostulated, insisted; Rin, knowing him well, temporized, hoping for better times.

The winter of 1875 passed. The spring,

however, was equally shrouded in financial depression. Mrs. Dorinda pursued the even tenor of her way, never asking if her brother were poor or rich. She was polite when they met—nothing more. To Rin she was kind and affectionate.

It is not necessary to dwell on the general unhappiness of all parties. Suddenly, in the early summer, without special warning, Mrs. Dorinda Bienville died.

When Mr. Outhbert Blanchford met with relatives to hear the will read, he shook like a leaf.

Various large bequests to various institutions and personal friends, and then—"To my brother Outhbert and his daughter Dorinda, I bequeath jointly the Latin grammar to be found in my library."

The yellow old Latin grammar that she had pressed upon her brother in his youth when life was all before him,—it was a bitter satire.

She had not forgiven him; Rin's life, too, was spoiled. Must she marry for money? Never, she said, and held out bravely; but her beautiful cheek grew thin. Her father's hair became white. He aged fast.

And Lewellyn was wretched and helpless as most men in a financial crisis. His business was ruined. At one time he offered Rin her freedom, but she smiled tenderly and shook her head.

"Wait," she said.

For what? Lewellyn had a taste for antiquities. The Latin grammar was thirty years old, and one day he asked Rin for the privilege of examining it. She went for it. "It has not been opened," she said, handing it to him.

Not for long years, certainly,—the yellow leaves broke apart stiffly under his hand. He turned pale, paler, as he continued to turn them. Little Rin came to his side. The volume was filled with bank bills.

Fifty thousand dollars were hidden in the old book. It was not a satire now—but to Outhbert Blanchford's conscience it was a reproach. But for his willfulness, he need not have needed so sorely the bounty of a good sister.

He was happy only in Rin's enjoyment of it, and for her all the world was bright, for she could marry the man of her choice. Three sweet years as his wife, a wonderful baby son—and then Lewellyn began to hold his own. The tide turned—and to day they are as rich as happy—owing to Aunt Rin's legacy, they declare.

Chinese Nihilists.

It is not generally known in the west that the Celestial empire has a wide-spread secret society of vegetarian reformers whose organization is very similar to that of the Russian Nihilists, or the secret party whose movements are now threatening the peace of Spain. The Chinese sect of the White Lily is also deadly in its exertions of its members and in its purposes toward the present dynasty. The fraternity—which has chosen for its symbol the white lotus, the sacred flower of China—is of comparatively recent date. It is one of the many sects to which the invasion of the Manchus gave rise. It took definite shape during the reign of the Emperor Chien Lung, and its prime object was and still continues to be the overthrow of the Ta Tsing dynasty. In the reign of Chia Ching it assumed for the first time very formidable proportions. The members bound themselves by oaths to secrecy, obedience, entire self-surrender, and undying hostility to Manchus. A man who had once cast in his lot with the society had no chance for his escape, for the punishment inflicted by the chiefs of the confederacy in any case of treachery was far more horrible than any that a faithful member would have incurred had he fallen into the hands of the government. The confederates were strict vegetarians, having placed themselves under a vow to eat no meat while the usurping Manchu sat on the throne of the Ming, and they contributed largely to the treasury of the head center, so that in a comparatively short time the society found itself in possession of enormous wealth. The first serious outbreak of the confederation took place in the reign of the fifth emperor of the present dynasty. At that time the headquarters were at Nanking, and the operations of the conspiracy were directed by a man named Fang Junghsen, the head center, and his wife. This was a woman known as Ma Shi, and celebrated as being the most physically powerful female of her time. The object of the plot was nothing less than the blowing up of the imperial palace in Peking. It was the great gunpowder plot of China, and there seems no doubt that it would have been successful had not all the plans of the conspirators been frustrated at the last moment by a sudden and most violent storm of wind and rain—a prodigy which was regarded as a special interposition of heaven on behalf of the reigning emperor. Nothing short of such an unexpected phenomenon could have saved the place, for the conspiracy was planned with a perfection that was admirable. But even then the desperadoes did not give way. Although the alarm was given and soldiers called out they fought like tigers, and a crusade was organized all over the empire to put down the conspiracy. The viceroy of Nanking covered himself with glory by capturing the head center; and it is a remarkable fact that this man's life was freely offered him on condition that he would eat a bowl of meat. Rather than break his vow, Fang stubbornly refused, and paid the forfeit with his life; and it was well for his honor that he did, for there were others who succumbed to the temptation, and these, on being liberated, met with a shocking and cruel death at the hands of the society. The last occasion on which the Pai Lien Chiao rendered itself conspicuous was shortly after the murder of Mr. Margary in Yunnan. Then war between England and China was trembling in the balance, and excitement prevailed everywhere throughout the eighteen provinces. The brethren of the lotus flower were not slow to take advantage of their opportunity, and they were organized that strange appeal to the superstitious terrors of their countrymen which took the form of tail-cutting. The fact that myriads of Chinese suddenly found themselves bereft of their cherished queues is undeniable; and amid the panic to which the inexplicable phenomenon gave rise there no doubt mingled in their minds a suspicion of what was intended by it—that it was meant as an intimation that the time was approaching when the Chinese would no

longer be called upon to wear their badge of servitude. But war was averted, trade resumed its wonted tenor, life flowed smoothly on again, and the opportunity passed away. Nothing was heard of the lotus flower for seven years. At present, when there is danger of hostilities between China and France, there is a most menacing outbreak of the same society at Wuchong. On the evening of the 25th of May a number of the white lily sect entered the town, pretending to be students who had come to attend the examination. They rented a house at the back of the prison, and waited a notice to the effect that it was the public residence of an assemblage of virtuous persons. In the front house a couple named Wang had opened a bean-curd shop. Their son, whose name was Sheng, was in the service of a small mandarin, and had for a long time been a member of the sect. When the conspirators came to hide in the city he acted as their guide and helped them generally. It had been arranged that an outbreak should take place on the 28th, fourth watch of the night, when the prison was to be set on fire as a signal for the operation to commence. A man named Chu, who was formerly in a garrison, and had received a lieutenant's commission as a reward of merit, recently opened a small cotton shop near the Wang-shan Men, and this man had daily dealings with purchasers of cotton cloth. Among them was a member of the White Lily sect, and he attempted to inveigle Chu into entering the confederacy. Chu pretended to comply, and accordingly he was presented with one of the caps used by the confederacy—a head-dress resembling those worn by servants and retainers during the Ming dynasty. Besides this he received a written talisman of the "Imperial Order." Chu, in possession of these credentials, fictitively went out of his shop one night at watch setting and laid secret information against the society before the commandant of the garrison. The officer immediately communicated the affair to the viceroy, Tu Tsung-Ying, who ordered out soldiers to arrest the confederates. These were pounced upon unawares, and having no time to form plans of resistance or escape, made for the city walls in great disorder. The soldiers succeeded in arresting over forty of the Che-fu's yamen and subjected to intense torture, under the pressure of which they confessed that a branch of the society was to be found concealed in a Buddhist nunnery at Shunhaung Fair-For of the men thus described were arrested the same night. There were also found in the convent an enormous quantity of kerosene oil and some ashes of paper soaked in the same fluid. The nuns were arrested at the same time and taken to the yamen. Early on the 29th all the gates of the city were closed early and all persons of suspicious appearance were taken into custody, over 60 being thus arrested. Some of these confessed immediately, others resisted in spite of the most rigorous torture, others again deposed that the son of an expectant Tao-tai named Ting Changho, and a certain cook were members of the confederation. In accordance with this, soldiers were sent to surround the yamen of the Tao-tai Ting, and the young man and the cook were brought into court under arrest, Ting accompanying his son in an official chair. The sitting magistrates put out their tongues in embarrassment at seeing Ting was there, too, and hardly knew how to proceed. The youth was, however, examined and immediately confessed to prison, but the confessions made by the bulk of the accused were so contradictory that the sitting magistrates petitioned the viceroy to memorialize the emperor for instructions before proceeding further.

By that time many executions had taken place. Between noon and six o'clock thirty-five persons had lost their heads, their corpses being lumped together inside the gates of the Che-fu's yamen. The gushing blood made a noise that could be heard. Then the heads were stuck up over the city gates as a warning to the people. In the evening the carcasses were carried out the east gate, Wang Sheng being among the persons executed. There were also a number of unknown prisoners, who were sent to the Che-fu's yamen and there detained for examination. A nun who was brought up refused in the most obstinate manner to utter a word, in spite of the "extreme torture" that was applied to her. She, too, was sent for further examination to the Che-fu's. The convent was completely gutted, not a thread of hair being left within the walls. Toward dusk on the same day a sergeant caught one of the ringleaders and brought him to the Che-fu's yamen. The fellow's name was Teng. He was the fifth of his family, and went by the nickname of Wu Yen Wang, or the Fifth King of Hell. He was tightly bound and manacled and consigned to the dungeons with the rest. Next morning six more conspirators were captured and taken to the Che-fu's yamen, and the corpse of the one "Fifth King of Hell" was carried out of the city. The authorities now redoubled their exertions to catch suspects and the soldiers in the garrison patrolled the whole night long without getting a wink of sleep in the hope of seizing upon somebody.

The city of Wuchong wears a quiet aspect at present, and it is believed that the riot will not assume formidable proportions. And the Ta Tsing dynasty is still safe, as far as the sect of the White Lily is concerned.—Hongkong Correspondence Philadelphia Times.

The Burning of Washington.

John C. Harkness, an eye-witness, has written an account of the burning of Washington sixty-one years ago, August 24th. In it he says: "Near the close of this eventful day there came by our modest home a tall man in plain attire, being under a heavy load. He paused to rest. Being interviewed he replied: 'After our men had all passed on I entered the president's mansion and found it deserted, whereupon I helped myself to selections of gold and silver service, tied them up in this tablecloth, as you see, gentlemen, and I am making for the Virginia shore.' His interviewers remonstrated with him, and expressed some doubt as to his loyalty. He rejoined: 'Have I not as much or better right to the property than the red coats, who, in an hour's time will get the mansion and apply the torch to it?' The stranger was allowed to proceed."

This incident the writer mentions, because he has seen it stated that such valuable property had been, previous to the entrance of the British, taken to a place of security. Following hard upon this incident, the presence of the enemy was demonstrated by the application of the torch to the public property with incredible celerity. The navy yard, the north and south wings of the capitol, the center building, except its massive foundations, had not at the time been built. The state house and treasury building, with six two-story brick tenements for their messengers, fronting on Pennsylvania avenue, opposite to the Freedmen's bank site, the war and navy building, and the United States arsenal, were in full blaze. The angry billows of flame illuminated the horizon through the entire night. The few citizens who remained, choosing to share the fortunes of their devoted city, now imprisoned in their own homes, watched and waited with intense solicitude for the revelations of the tardy morn. It at length dawned serenely upon the dismantled walls and charred remains of the public buildings. The three-story brick building then at the corner of E and Eighth streets, designed for Blodgett's hotel, at the time occupied by the general and city postoffice and the patent office, was, at the solicitations of Dr. Thom, Rev. Brown of the First Baptist church, Peter Force, and a few other citizens, spared. Private property had, except for cause, been universally protected. This further fact was also made known—that no violence or bloodshed had been indulged in, with one solitary exception—a drunken dragoon of Colonel Hovall's regiment returned late at night on his steed and dashed within the picket-lines at the war and navy building, and fired with murderous intent at the guard. As he wheeled to retire, the guard, with fatal effect, returned the fire. Also at the arsenal, by the ignorance of the British, a magazine was exploded, on which twenty-eight of their own men were killed. During the first night a British officer called at the little frame house above referred to, where were being sheltered for the time the remnants of four families. On politely asking for a drink of water he was kindly served by the writer's mother. She inquired of the officer whether the families were exposed to danger, and he replied: "Keep your lights burning and the shutters open, and not a hair of your head will be touched," and politely returning thanks for the water, said: "The flowers of May to you, madam," and wheeled on his charger and in a moment disappeared.

On the third day of the occupancy of the capital by the British, between 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon there came a cyclone of unprecedented violence for this locality, which cut roadways through the forest, dismantled many buildings, etc. With the retreatment of the storm it was discovered that the enemy had retired also. Some weeks later the scattered fragments of the subdivisions of the army were ordered to report and encamp on "Camp hill," where, for a number of weeks they had a good time generally. In a short time the southeast corner house of the "seven buildings," Nineteenth street and Pennsylvania avenue, was put in good repair and occupied by President Madison and his family until the executive mansion was reconstructed. The state department found accommodations in Gen. Lear's large house on the south side of G street, northwest. In like manner provision was made for the other departments. For the accommodation of congress a number of patriotic citizens by private enterprise built at the corner of First and A streets, northeast, the large building generally referred to during the late civil war as the old capital prison. Here congress met, and during the session made provision for the reconstruction of the public buildings.

As was to be expected, those representatives and others who had through the years past nursed hostility to the location adopted by congress for the seat of government renewed their efforts to that end. Johnny Ray, as he was familiarly called, a representative of the state of Tennessee, will be recalled by a few of the old residents of Washington, who will remember him as never being without his cloak and umbrella, though the session of congress was prolonged to midsummer; nor had he ever made a speech in the house save to vote yea or nay, but when the old irritating question was renewed and the public buildings were in ashes, giving the opposition a decided advantage in the controversy, his righteous soul became stirred to a depth he had never before realized.

Snatching a propitious moment he sprang to his feet and startled the house by crying out: "Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker! Before I'd let the enemies of the republic say that Great Britain had, with a corporal's guard, driven us from the capital and from our grand representative hall, I would vote to meet under a cotton tent pitched over the hallowed site, though in ruins." Mr. Ray took his seat amid uproarious applause.—Chicago Times.

Humming Insects.

An array of mailed forms, including the "hard-borne beetle, with his drowsy hum," demands attention. In no beetle, and, indeed, in no other insect, do we meet the perfection of vocalization seen in the grasshoppers and their relations. And with the beetle we approach more clearly to the region of "hums" and droning, and leave that of specialized sounds, such as we have been metaphorically hearing in the cicadas. To pass from the latter insects to the beetles, bees, flies and their neighbors, appears to be a transition almost as wide as that between the articulate language or arithmetic of culture and the scanty vocabulary of the savage or the primitive "mathematics of the tribe who can count ten as represented on their fingers and toes, but ask in amazement why there should be more things in the world. In the beetles the sound-producing organ is comparable to a kind of "rasp" which moves upon an adjoin-ing surface. The site of the organ in question varies in different beetles. In some the rasps are situated on the upper surface of one or two of the tail segments, and are rubbed against the hinder edges of the wing covers. Sometimes the rasp is placed quite at the tip of the tail; in some well known beetles (such as the weevils) the rasps may be born on the

wing covers and may produce the stridulating sounds by rubbing against the edge of the joints of the tail. Among the sounds produced by beetles, the weird noise of the death-watch (Anobium) stands pre-eminent. The sound produced by these beetles resembles the ticking of a watch, and they may be made to respond by placing a watch close by their habits. The female death-watches are known to tick in response to the sounds of the male insects. The noise is produced apparently by the insect raising itself on its legs and striking its chest against the adjoining wood. Thus the simple explanation of an insect explains away the superstition expressed in Gay's line: "The solemn death-watch click'd the hour she died." Butterflies and moths are known occasionally to produce sounds, which proceed, in one or two cases at least, from a drum-like membrane analogous to that seen in cicadas. Mr. Darwin, indeed, mentions that "makes a noise like that produced by a spring catch, which can be heard at the distance of several yards."—Balgravia.

The "Girl" Question.

One of the most vexed, perplexed, but yet important questions of the day is the girl question; the problem of how the work of the household is to be done, and how more efficient help is to be procured and kept. The decay of the home spirit is a decay that is to be greatly deplored. Whatever says that foundation is working ruin in the moral, social, political, educational and religious foundations of the world. There ought to be hands and heads and hearts enough on our great continent to save us from this ruin and to secure for our people the privileges of home life.

But the trouble is, most of us wish to be freed from all cares and responsibilities and perplexities on the subject. We do not wish to "fight and run away," in order that we may live to renew the "fight another day," but to run away and abandon the fight altogether. The plan of having co-operative kitchens seems to be quite seriously mooted, so that we may have our cooking "done out," then with the laundrying "done out," the educating of the children "done out," the sewing "done out," etc., there really will not seem to be very much left to be "done in," nor, indeed, much individuality left in the home.

Women are not convinced, often and eloquently as they are told, that their true mission, "their right divine and unquestionable," is to create good, true, pure, beautiful homes. Yet the woman who can create a home that her husband will carry in his heart all day and return to gladly at night; a home in which her children grow up into all beautiful right-living and right-thinking to which a friend can come and feel rested and strengthened, and the wayfarer call as a blessed oasis, is a woman who has performed the highest mission on earth. Her mission is not confined and circumscribed.

It is essential that each home should have its own distinct individuality; and that it should be well and comfortably "kept." The art of "keeping house" is only a part of the necessary means to an end, but it is an important, even though a subordinate part. The cooking of food, the washing of dishes, and the setting of tables, the sweeping, dusting, bed-making, etc., must be done, and there appears to be great dearth of means to have them comfortably and well done.

A revolution in a certain household after an uneasy reign of servants, seems to suggest a possible solution of the problem. A tall and slender young girl, with quiet, lady-like ways, entered the family to do "general housework," and she does it quietly and faithfully. She always speaks promptly and pleasantly when it is necessary or when she is addressed, but she never intrudes herself or her remarks. She is self-respecting and dignified; and she is respected, and ably and heartily approved and appreciated. She has her faults, but who of us have not?

That this happy adjustment of household labor is not often seen, is due to two evils. The most evident one is that our American girls lose sight of what is due to others in their determination to assert their own position and dignity; that they seem rude and forward when they attempt any such occupation. They fail to realize that their self-assertion is their own humiliation, and that the position, whatever it may be, does not honor or dignify the person, but that it is the individual that dignifies the position.

If it were not considered a disgrace to perform the essential labor in a home, to do housework; if it were, instead, thought to be not only a respectable but a commendable occupation, one of the greatest objections to accepting such positions would be removed. Then, undoubtedly, our own American girls—than whom none are capable of being more apt and adaptive—would help us in the solution of one of our greatest national difficulties. Our homes must be saved to us; their domesticity, their individuality, their sanctity, must be rescued from the evils that threaten them; and our girls, too, must be saved from the exposure and the temptation, from the want, despair, and sin which now are appalling evils.

But the second trouble is to find mistresses capable of taking charge and oversight of their own household arrangements, and are willing to do it. They must be prepared to take young girls and give them necessary instructions. They must remember that they have human souls to deal with, not merely machines, and must deal with them with the faithfulness and justice they desire to receive in return.

There is a deep social problem underneath this difficulty. It cannot be solved by a tirade against poor servants or poor mistresses. Cooking schools for ladies or cooks will not relieve us. Editorials directed to woman's incapacity and extravagance will scarcely touch the matter. Men must be desirous to have homes; they must leave competition when they leave their stores, and be content to breakfast and dine and sup in a "homely" way. High seasoning must be taken from our tables, and the spice of variety must be, like other spices, more sparingly used.—Christian Union.

Western Kentucky complains that Eastern Kentucky has got all the desirable offices and is getting all the circeuses.