

OLD HYMNS.

There's a lot of music in 'em—the hymns of long ago—
And when some gray-haired brother sings the ones I used to know,
I sorter want to take a hand! I think of days gone by,
"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand and cast a wistful eye!"

There's a lot of music in 'em—those dear, sweet hymns of old—
With visions bright of land of light, and shining streets of gold;
And I hear 'em singing—singing—where mem'ry dreaming stands,
"From Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strands."

And so I love the old hymns, and when my time shall come,
Before the light has left me, and my singing lips are dumb,
If I can hear 'em singing then then I'll pass without a sigh
To "Canaan's fair and happy land, where my possessions lie."
—The Cooking Club.

THE PALE BLUE CASHMERE GOWN

THE Rev. John Lawrence sat at his study table, leaning on his elbow, his usually busy pen held idly between his fingers. He gazed far over the plains, a trancelike expression in his thoughtful eyes; he believed that the time was coming when those plains would be peopled, and, with the hopefulness which made his missionary life beautiful, he seemed to see the church leading, inspiring and ministering to these people. Already he had visions of a school wherein his own wife should be the ruling spirit; visions of a hospital, a guild-house and club-rooms, where these savages might grow less savage. Even the fact that thus far only one poor little wooden church building was to be found in many miles did not in the least interfere with his dreams.

How long he might have dreamed, no one knows, but he was recalled by a delicious voice calling in to him:

"I am twenty-two inches around the waist, John, and my skirt length is forty-three. You know you asked me yesterday."

"Sure enough," he answered, with a little start, taking up the tape-line which lay conspicuously on his desk.



HER WIFE CAME IN, FEATHER DUSTER IN HAND.

"I must get that letter off to-day; but I'd better measure you myself. You are probably measured with a string. That's the feminine way, I believe."

His wife came in, feather duster in hand, and as he drew the line about her waist, he dropped a kiss upon her forehead.

"I hope they will send something pretty."

Mrs. Lawrence burst into laughter.

"The idea of anything pretty in a missionary box, John! Who ever heard of it? It's against the nature of things. Perhaps it's wicked, but I have sometimes thought that they made them as ugly as possible. Do you remember the snuff-colored dressing jacket with the black fringe?"

"Wasn't that pretty?" he queried. "I always thought it was very elegant, except when the fringe dipped in the coffee."

"You dear dreamer! You don't know what is pretty. You don't see anything but your beloved Sunday school and night classes and sick people. A rheumatic old Indian woman is beautiful to you!"

"If she is a Christian! Yes, I admit it," he said, gently; "all of God's creatures are beautiful to me, and one of them most beautiful," and again he gave her a loving caress and resumed his work.

"Shirts, pillow cases, street suit for my wife, clerical suit for self, overcoat—I hate to ask for that, but it is such a necessity in this bleak land."

He read once again the friendly letter, in which he had been urged to make known all his needs, assuring him that they would be supplied, so far as possible, by a branch of the Women's Auxiliary.

These boxes, which had so irked the pride of many a missionary, never of John Lawrence. He gave little thought to self. His Divine Master had shown to him, and his own horizon was so rich, too broad, for any petty desire to create even a speck upon it; he sometimes reflected with regret, his wife keenly disliked this phase of missionary life. He could not forget at times, that he had taken her from a luxurious home; but had he not given her a greater opportunity to do God's work? and was she not do-

ing it sweetly and uncomplainingly. He would try to believe that she did not care.

In the meantime, Mrs. Lawrence was dusting the sitting room, and she had come to a standstill before a little ivory miniature of herself, the price of which would almost have paid for everything in their modest home. It was made ten years before, when she had just finished school and was archly charming in that dainty gown. How becoming it was, and how much he had admired her in it!

"Alice, is there anything else you want? We are to mention everything we need, and they will supply us as far as possible."

"Yes," she called, a little sarcastically, "please tell them I need very much a pale blue cashmere gown;" and then she smiled at the absurdity of such a request from a missionary's wife. "Imagine the consternation that would create," she thought, "if he really would ask for such a thing."

She replaced the miniature with a sigh. Was it a crime to love pretty things? And would she ever have any again? Her trousseau was long ago exhausted, and now she lived and moved and had her being in black things and brown things, and all things that wouldn't show dirt. Oh, dear! but—blessed afterthought!—wouldn't she rather be the wife of John Lawrence, in black brilliants and brown surges, than anybody else in the world?

The president of St. Mary's Auxiliary was rapping loudly for order. She was reading a letter saying that the Rev. John Lawrence would be deeply grateful for a suit, an overcoat, etc. It was when she came to the overcoat that the confusion arose; for one lady had a practically new overcoat which her present coachman, being stout, could not wear. It was exactly the Rev. Mr. Lawrence's size, but, being a surtout, she questioned whether it would be the correct thing for clerical wear. The entire auxiliary set itself to argue this point, when the president stopped them.

"Ladies, we can discuss this matter later. Let me finish reading this letter. 'Where was I? 'Shirts, pillow cases, table linen, and—what is this 'a pale blue cashmere gown!'"

A pale blue cashmere gown! Had she asked for an automobile coat the request could not have produced more surprise. There was a deep silence. Even the president found nothing to say for some time.

"A little unusual," she finally said. "Well, I never had a pale blue cashmere gown in my life," gasped some one.

"Pale blue! So perishable!" another said, feebly.

"And cashmere! So out of style!" a third added.

"She must be some poor little country soul," the secretary said.

"Well, whoever she is, she ought to be reprimanded. The idea of such worldliness in a missionary's wife!"

"He should have known better than to have asked for it!"

"The idea of our money going for a pale blue cashmere gown!"

So the comments went around, till everybody had had her say; some of them had had two or three "says," and they were seemingly gasping for breath to say something even more severe, when a bombshell fell in their midst:

"Why shouldn't she have a pale blue cashmere gown? She is probably a young woman, and maybe has not a single pretty thing! Oh, gracious!" and the speaker grew so energetic that she arose and stood facing them, her face rosy with excitement. "I have helped with box after box in this society, and never have I seen a really pretty thing go into one of them! They are so deadly practical. How it will wear, how it will wash, whether it will show dirt—I sympathize with this woman away out there among those Indians, dependent on us hard-hearted things for the little she wants. God knows," she added, even more earnestly, "where they get the grace to sus-

tain them in their work! As for this gown"—her voice trembled a little—"let us give it to her. Cashmere is cheap, and just imagine her pleasure; and do you know, I think a pretty gown would have a cheerful effect on both herself and her husband. Perhaps it might even convert a few more Indians!" She sat down, a little embarrassed by the feeling she had shown.

"We might make her a mother Hubbard, if you are so bent on it," some one said, doubtfully. "Made up plainly, it would not cost much."

"But it mustn't be a mother Hubbard. I wouldn't doom even a woman living among the Indians to that! If we send it at all, let it be pretty. Let us put our hearts into it and make it a beautiful surprise for her. She will probably expect something ugly, if she expects it at all."

"I don't know why we should discriminate this way in favor of Mrs. John Lawrence. We have never done it before." A severe voice threw a damper on the proceedings.

"Mrs. John Lawrence," echoed another; "pray let me see that letter. Mrs. John Lawrence was an honor student in my class at college in 1890, and I believe I am safe in saying that there is no one here who could surpass her in either intellect or beauty. I remember now that she married a missionary enthusiast and went out to those wilds cheerfully." The speaker crossed the room rapidly and approached the advocate of the blue gown.

"I will gladly help you with the gown, and we will make it beautiful as a dream."

How quickly the idea became infectious! Everybody offered to do something or to give something! It was almost as delightful as dressing a doll!

St. Mary's Auxiliary had turned out many a box, but never had anything aroused such interest as this new bit of work. It became a fad; with its silken linings, its dainty trills of lace, its "fagoting" and exquisite accessories, the beautiful Empire gown lay complete. The Auxiliary women who were packing the box stopped frequently to admire and almost to caress it.

"I hate to see it go," said the secretary.

"It has done us more good than anything we ever did. What a lovely idea it was!" the treasurer said. "I don't begrudge the money at all."

"Let me fasten this in." Some one bent over the gown and tacked in a little sachet of violet.

"And I must slip this handkerchief into its bosom;" another deftly tucked an embroidered kerchief into its folds.

"I have written this note to my dear old friend, and have told her what a pleasure this has been;" and the note, too, was pinned to the blue gown. And so, with little final adjustment, and pats of admiration, the blue gown, soft and rustling and enveloped in white tissue paper, was put into its individual box, and shipped away, with more practical things, to the land of the Indians and the plains.

Mrs. Lawrence came home somewhat discouraged from her sewing school one afternoon, to find her house in great disorder. Everything was covered with clothes it seemed. The box had come, and her husband had lost no time in opening it. The street suit for which she had asked confronted her from the bookcase; dark, neat and serviceable. She examined it with enthusiasm. "They were, so good, weren't they, John?"

"Good! My dear, the Auxiliary is always good. Now, don't say anything about your brown sack with the black fringe! The Auxiliary—well, you know what I think of it! See! They have sent us everything, even to the last thing on the list—your blue cashmere gown!" He handed her the box.

"My pale blue cashmere gown! John Lawrence! You didn't really write that, did you? Oh, what must they have thought?" She sank into a chair, pale and distressed.

"I think the dress tells what they thought." He lifted the delicate garment as if it were a baby.

"Silk! Lace! Perfume! A train! John, I can't believe it is mine! And I can't help crying! I didn't mean it. I said it in a half-joking, half-cynical way, never thinking you would ask for it. I wouldn't have dared to ask for it, and see how they have repaid me for my unfaith! Everything is so beautiful, so dainty! There's so much love in it, John! That's what touches me. It means the love of women who saw in me only a servant of God. When you write, tell them this means more to me than anything that ever happened."

Late that night she sat with her old friend's note. She had written a long, heart-felt letter. She turned to her husband with moist eyes:

"I don't believe I ever told you before, John; but it is very sweet to be a missionary's wife."—Living Church.

Force of Habit.

Gunner—That man must be used to trading horses.

Guy—Why so?

Gunner—When he asked how old the automobile was he looked inside for its teeth.

Hate your kin, if you must, but don't go to law with them.



The Fin Coulter.

The cut herewith illustrates a style of plow coulter which is often used in the West. It is made from high-grade crucible steel about three-eighths of an inch thick, and cuts through the soil easily. There are certain conditions under which the rolling coulter will not work well, and then the fin coulter can often be used to good advantage. Years ago the land side of the share was always dovetailed and the cutter set in level, but later manufacturers and blacksmiths have simply riveted or bolted the steel to the share without dovetailing. This is cheaper than dovetailing, but the latter method causes the plow to run better than when the cutter is bolted to the side. The fin coulter is always slanted well back and is rounded back at the top. When made in this form, wear does not so soon impair its usefulness as if the edge were made straight like a cutter which is cast on the share. A fin coulter made with a straight-cutting edge

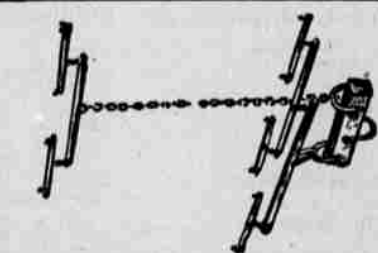


FLOW SHARE WITH FIN COULTER.

and rounded forward at the top would soon wear so that grass, roots, trash, etc., would not readily pass upward and off at top of coulter. A few years ago I bought a plow with fin attachment, the cutter having been put on by the manufacturers. It was such a clumsy affair that I would have done much better to have bought the plow and had the smith put the cutter on, for it was over one-quarter thick and stood forward at top so much that it would not work at all until it was remodeled. There was one nice feature about this cutter, in that it was bolted on with stove bolts, so it could be taken off and put on again, as conditions required.—Geo. T. Pettit, in St. Louis Republic.

Five-Horse Equalizer.

A. J. Ratan, of Treesbank, Man., writes the Nor-West Farmer inclosing a sketch of a five-horse equalizer. He says: "I have had considerable experience in breaking up grub land and have found that the very best results come from a good strong fourteen-inch grub plow. Two men, an ax, brush scythe and five horses comprise the best outfit that can be obtained for any field. In order to equalize the combined strength of the horses an eveners is made on the plan shown in the illustration. A piece of timber 3x5 and fifteen inches long is selected. An inch hole is bored three-fifths of the distance from the end for the clevis



which attaches the timber to the plow ring. A three-horse attachment is fastened to the short end, a chain is attached to the long end of the piece of timber running between the two off side horses through their neckyoke ring and attached to a double-tree clevis for the lead team."

Cattle and Meat Inspection.

The departmental report of the Bureau of Animal Industry from which Secretary Wilson prepared that part of his annual report relating to live-stock matters will show an increase in the number of government meat inspection depots from nine in 1891 to 156 in 1903. During this year 11,900,000 live cattle were inspected by the bureau agents, 14,600,000 sheep, 1,040,000 calves, 31,500,000 hogs and a few horses. Of these animals about 125,000 were rejected, subject to the result of post mortem examination. The post mortem inspections for the year show practically the same figures, a total of 37,261,629 carcasses, of which 78,472 carcasses were condemned and 64,480 parts of carcasses condemned. The figures show 344 horses slaughtered for food purposes.

Good Points of Macaroni Wheat.

Macaroni wheat is a drought resister, a heavy yielder, an early maturing grain, and has another good point for poultrymen—it has a large kernel. This grain sown by itself, or with oats, and kept in the bundle makes a poultry ration hard to beat. We would suggest getting the smooth varieties, as the strong barb on some of the bearded varieties might be objectionable when fed in the bundle. Mixed with oats, as many do now for horse feed, this heavy-yielding grain certainly bids fair to be a good one.

Testing the Seed Corn.

The Illinois Agricultural College authorities are urging the importance of testing seed corn, and have found in their tests samples from farmers ranging in vitality from 63 to 97 per cent. The importance of testing seed corn cannot be too strongly urged. The following is an extract from a letter received from Professor A. W. Hume, of the Illinois College on this subject:

"If, as seems probable, we are compelled to select seed corn for next spring from a crib having a large percentage of frosted ears or of ears which for various reasons will not grow, the question is what can be done to help insure our stand of corn for the coming year? It will hardly do to plant seed on valuable land with a certainty that one-fifth will not grow. The best suggestion the writer has to offer to corn growers is that they make a most careful inspection of corn, which they expect to use for seed, whether it be purchased from reliable growers or selected from their own storehouses. We believe it would be possible for every ear of corn planted in Illinois to be tested for vitality. If an ear does not come to the required standard, it may be possible to discard it, thus reducing the amount of seed which will not grow and materially increasing the stand of our corn crop the coming year."

Selecting a Good Layer.

An old country poultryman makes the following suggestions as a help in selecting good layers: "There are certain individual characteristics, one of which is the shape of a bird. If a straight line be drawn from the back of the head to the toes, the hen which is likely to be a good layer will usually have the hinder half of her body largest, whilst a hen which may be suspected of being a poor layer will show more in the front; the reason being that a poor layer makes a better table bird, and has a larger, longer breast, whilst a good layer makes a poor table bird, and has a comparatively small breast, whilst the egg organs are more fully developed. Birds which are good layers are usually very active. They always look healthy, and in most cases their combs are usually fully developed, particularly if they belong to the long-combed varieties, which are reputed to be the best layers. A hen with a long comb may usually be regarded as a good layer, and if she is not there must be some special reason for the contrary."

Sheep for a Weedy Farm.

A Kansas correspondent has a weedy farm, wishes to try sheep, and wants to know what breed is best to start with in a section where but few sheep are grown and the surplus would have to be sold to the local butcher.

We would get as good a type of mutton sheep as we could conveniently without inquiring particularly as to the breed. We would not take Merinos, however, unless they were pretty well graded up with some of the mutton breeds of which the Shropshire is the most generally known and a very popular breed. We would not get more than twenty-five or fifty to start with and would use a buck of the mutton breeds that we could get most conveniently; Shropshire, Southdown, Hampshire or Oxford. If the butchers do not give enough we would kill the surplus and sell them to the neighbors. Where a man has weedy pastures or weedy lands, any kind of sheep will pay even if he has to sell the surplus at low prices.—Wallace's Farmer.

Use for Cottonseed Hulls.

Paper from cottonseed hulls is the latest utilization of a waste product. A factory has been established at Niagara Falls. It is said that a good quality of paper can be made from this material. The diminishing supply of wood and other materials for paper stock has caused a search for substitutes. If the utilization of cottonseed hulls in this way proves a success, it will mean a new industry for the South. Now that the mills have found an honest use for hulls, it is hoped they will keep the stuff out of the meal which they send North.

Setting a Gate Post.

Have a large solid chestnut post to begin with. Then aim to make the bottom of the post immovable. Tamping near the surface is of little use. Make the hole large enough to leave a six-inch space all around the post. Place the post, brace it straight, then put in about eighteen inches of broken rock, and pour liquid cement (three parts Portland cement, two parts sand) into the spaces, making a solid masonry setting. The rest of the hole may be filled with rocks and earth.

Growth of Pigs.

Foster and Merrill in Utah made two tests to compare the relative fattening values of barrows and sows. In the first test of ninety-one days, six barrows made an average daily gain of nine-tenths of a pound, and three sows an average daily gain of eighty-three one-hundredths of a pound. In the second test of 123 days, three barrows made an average daily gain of seven-tenths of a pound, and six sows an average daily gain of eighty-eight one-hundredths of a pound.