

THE WEST.

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FLORENCE, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

R. F. ALLEY, Editor and Proprietor.

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MAKING THE SUNSHINE GROW.

"Mother, what makes the sunshine grow?"

My darling said one day,
As o'er the hills the heavenly glow
Came speeding on its way,
Breaking the slumbers of the night,
Flooding the earth with golden light,
And clothing mountains, dome and spire
With the baptismal robe of fire.

"From a kind Father's hand, my love,

The precious gift is poured,
In the vast treasure-house above
The glorious light is stored.
It shines for us—it shines for all,
In lowly cot, or princely hall;
And many a sorrow doth beuile,
With the rare sweetness of its smile."

"If I could make the sunshine grow,

How happy I should be,
No cruel blasts, no wintry woe,
Our fair green earth should see.
All the long year should summer's reign
Make glad the fields of ripening grain;
All the long year should flowers blow,
If I could make the sunshine grow."

"God rules and guides the heavenly light,

With wisdom more than ours;
But we can make dark places bright,
And deserts bloom with flowers,
And cheerful heart, kind words and deeds,
True sympathy for others' needs,
Pure thoughts that from pure fountains flow,
These make the blessed sunshine grow."
—Inter Ocean.

A PRACTICAL JOKE.

It was a fine day in the village of
Florence, Oregon, and Isabel Islay
Needed Lesson.

The yellow narcissus was in bloom in the neat little yard that fronted the village post office, the maple trees had dropped their red stars long ago, and here and there one found pink clusters of honeysweet trailing arbutus in the woods.

Isabel Islay had a bunch in the front of her jacket as she sauntered up to see if there were any letters for her.

A little group of men and women had gathered there for the same purpose. The women eyed Isabel and wondered how it was that her dresses always fitted her so stylishly; the men looked admiringly at her big blue eyes and rosy complexion.

Two or three other mill girls joined Isabel; they laughed and talked gayly as the spectacled old postmaster sorted the mail.

At last the unpainted pine partition slid back, the spectacles appeared in the aperture, and the postmaster cried briskly:

"Now, then, who wants their mail?"

Isabel stepped forward.

"Anything for me, Mr. Rider?" she asked.

"Isay, Miss I, Isabel Islay, Miss Isabel Islay?" read out the old man. "Three for you. Who next?"

"Isabel got all the letters!" giggled the mill girls, as Isabel received her treasures. "She might divide with us. Here comes Miss Seaman. Now for some fun."

A pallid, pinched, old young lady here advanced with a smirk on her countenance, wearing a faded shawl, whose folds scarcely covered the flat basket she carried.

"Anything for me, Mr. Postmaster?" she demanded, with ill assumed indifference.

"No, mum," carelessly answered the postmaster.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, mum."

A blank expression crept over her face.

"O, but it really doesn't signify. I thought I'd just inquire, as I chanced to be passing."

Then she withdrew amid the very audible laugh of the mill girls.

"There ain't a mail comes in but Miss Genny Seaman's here a-watchin' for it," said the postmaster, oracularly. "And she never gets a letter—not so much as a postal card. I should think she'd get tired of coming."

"Miss Genevieve Seaman," said the careworn woman of the house where the girls boarded. "O, that all happened years ago! She had a beau or something and he went away—nobody just knew where. Reckon she didn't know herself. And it sort of upset her brain and she ain't fairly been herself since. She's a very good dressmaker and she trims a bonnet quite scrumptiously, and so she earns a decent living. But she's been expecting a letter these twenty odd years and it's never come."

"Girls," said Isabel Islay, as they sat at the round table that evening, laughing and talking, "let's write a letter to that poor old thing from her lover in the east."

"Was he really her lover, Isabel?" asked Lucy Felton.

"Well, from the man she imagined to be her lover. Let's make it fervent as fire and sweet as sugar. Let's lay it on thick."

"In short, let's play a joke on Miss Genny Seaman," said Mary Crane, who was retrimming an old straw hat with lilac ribbons and a bunch of violets.

"Just that," said Isabel.

"But you don't know even the fellow's name, Isabel."

"I can find that out. Mrs. Webb knows, and I can easily coax it out of her. It will be such fun!"

It was morning—a blue skyed, breezy day, with the air full of growing scents and blue-bird whistles—and soon after the cumbersome old four-horse stage had crashed through the village the usual crowd began to assemble in the little post office. Isabel Islay was there, and Lucy Felton and black-eyed Mary Crane, and presently Miss Genevieve Seaman, tripping in with the peculiar gate which the irreverent village children compared to a cat walking upon walnut shells.

"Two for Miss Islay," said the old man, scrutinizing each letter with provoking slowness. "One for Squire Zurbable Jenkins; one for Widder Hopper, and one for Miss Genevieve—Seaman!"

Isabel flashed a merry glance at her companions as the poor little dressmaker tiptoed up to the counter, her color changing from saffron to scarlet, her faded blue eyes full of intent rapture.

"Is it true? A letter for me—me! And I've waited for it all these years! All—these—years!"

She hid it under her shawl, cast a defiant look around at the neighbors' faces, and hurried away like a startled wild animal to its cover. She could not open that letter with other eyes upon her. She felt that she must treasure it to herself, like one who has discovered a precious jewel.

On her way home from the mill that evening Isabel Islay stopped at the little house where the tin sign: "Millinery and Dressmaking," swung creaking in the wind. The window blinds were fastened back, the parlor was opened and dusted. Miss Genevieve was moving to and fro in her best India silk gown, with a flower pinned fantastically in her hair.

A round red spot glowed on each cheek; her bony fingers trembled with excitement as she laid down her spectacles.

"Can you press over my leghorn hat, Miss Seaman?" asked the beauty.

"Oh, my dear, I'm afraid not!" said the little woman, with a hysterical laugh. "Haven't you heard? I—I'm to be married very soon! Capt. Edward Gleason—you may perhaps have heard of him—he used to be a resident of Milltown—he has made a fortune, it seems, in New York, and he is coming back almost directly to—to claim an old promise I made him twenty years ago. My dear, he has loved me—twenty years!" Her eyes shone, her voice faltered with the ecstasy of her soul. "And to-morrow he is coming back to me. Oh, Miss Islay, it seems almost like a dream!"

She laughed again, but her eyes were full of tears. Isabel moved uneasily; she was almost frightened at what she had done. The joke did not seem half

so jocose as it had at first, since poor Miss Genevieve accepted it in such dead earnest.

She took advantage of the entrance of a customer to slip out of the little shop.

"Girls," said she to her conspirators, "we must tell her that it is only a joke."

"Tell her!" echoed Lucy Felton. "What for? She'll find it out soon enough. She needn't have been such a silly, anyhow!"

"It will kill her!" pleaded Isabel.

"No it won't. People don't die so easily," laughed Lucy.

"Heard the news about Miss Genny Seaman?" said Mrs. Webb at the boarding-house breakfast table the next morning as she poured the coffee and helped the eggs and bacon around. Isabel looked guiltily up.

"No," said she. "What is it?"

"Found dead in her cheer," said Mrs. Webb. "A smilin' as happy as a child. Some heart trouble, the doctor says."

Isabel drew a long breath. So she had died and never knew how cruelly she had been deceived. She drew Mary Crane and Miss Felton aside.

"Girls," said she, "you must never breathe a syllable of this to anybody. Let the secret die with this poor little woman."

"But she died happy at last," said Mary, with the tears running down her cheeks. "Believing that her old sweetheart was coming back to her."

"Yes, but that doesn't justify our cruelty," whispered Isabel. And then and there the three girls entered into a compact of secrecy.

Miss Genevieve was buried in a shady corner of the village cemetery, and on the very day of the funeral Isabel Islay met a tall, bearded stranger walking along the street, scanning the houses with keen, troubled eyes.

"Can you tell me," said he, "where Miss Seaman lives—Miss Genevieve Seaman?"

Isabel started.

"Miss Seaman was buried this morning," said she. "Oh, I'm so sorry! Was she a friend of yours?"

They had stopped opposite the little gate where the wheel tracks of the horse were visible. The sign "Milliner and Dressmaker" yet creaked in the wind, the red sun was sinking behind the low eaves, and Miss Genny's cat rubbed itself against the door sill as if begging to be let in.

"A friend!" repeated the stranger, as he drew an old-fashioned miniature from his pocket. "See, here is her picture! I've waited all these years to make a home for her and now—she is dead!"

Isabel looked at the picture. Good heavens! had Genevieve Seaman looked as fair and dimpled and smiling as that? And the thought flashed across her mind that it was well that Capt. Gleason had not been undeceived. "Yes," she repeated softly, "she is dead."

"And were you her friend?"

"Yes, I was her friend—at least as much as anyone here," falteringly owned Isabel, feeling like an impostor.

"Then perhaps you can tell me something of her. I wanted to surprise her—and now—"

His voice was choked, he turned his face away.

Isabel told him, in a low, sweet voice, all that she could—all that was good and cheering and hopeful—and Capt. Gleason went back to the village hotel, walking with his hands behind his back, and his head drooping on his breast.

For the time he truly mourned the sweetheart of his youth, but no one can grieve forever. Moss grows over the fallen tree; violets bloom over the new made grave. Poor Miss Genevieve was dead and buried, and when the next summer blossomed over the land Capt. Gleason was married to Isabel Islay.

"If death was really so near her, I'm glad I wrote the letter that made her happy," thought Isabel. "And Edward will always think of her as young and beautiful! But I never, never will play another practical joke."—Helen Hurst, in Kansas City Times.

—Mr. Fussy (engaging board)—"Ah, I see you have a piano. Do I have the use of that?" Mrs. Pancake—"Why, certainly." Mr. Fussy—"Well, then, please let me have the key and I'll lock it up."

IT NEVER FAILS.

An Illustration of Man's Natural Imitativeness.

"Do you see that gentleman sitting opposite?" said one man in a cable car to his next neighbor.

"Yes."

"I can make him pull his watch out of his pocket and consult the time without saying a word to him."

"You know him, perhaps, and have it arranged that he shall do so on a certain signal from you."

"No, I never saw him before in my life."

"Well, then, I don't believe you can do it."

"I have five dollars to say I can."

"I have a five to say you can't."

"It's a bet, is it?"

"It is."

The other man waited a few moments, until the glance of the man referred to fell on him, and then, with much deliberation, he drew forth his watch and looked at it.

The man across the aisle saw the movement and instantly lifted his own watch from his vest pocket.

The man who had bet he wouldn't handed his five-dollar bill over without a word, and as the other took it he remarked:

"It never fails. Look at your own watch and it is as catching as yawning. Try it yourself on somebody."
—Pittsburgh Chronicle.

Two on Chauncey.

Here are two stories about Chauncey M. Depew:

A tramp who was given a dinner by a kind woman started at it voraciously, when she stopped him and said: "In this family it is always the custom to invoke the divine blessing before meals." "Well," said the tramp, "me and Chauncey Depew always talk best after we've eat."

I saw a letter some time ago written by the secretary of the national board of undertakers, who were about to hold a convention at Buffalo, asking Chauncey Depew for reduced rates in consideration of their large numbers. It was written on paper headed with the title of their weekly publication, the Shroud, and concluded in these words: "If you should see fit to grant our request we shall be happy to exercise toward you professional reciprocity."—Detroit Free Press.

Off Color.

Even the doctor, accustomed as he was to all sorts of sights, could not help but notice that the girl with brown hair and blue eyes looked absolutely bewitching in her white robes, lying there amid a wreath of lace drapery. When the physician had felt her pulse he smiled. "Only a fever," he remarked, with a reassuring nod. Raising herself upon her elbows she glared at him. "What kind of a fever?" she demanded. "I should say—the doctor was still smiling—"it was scarlet fever." With a groan she fell among the pillows. "Oh dear!"—she was on the verge of sobbing—"why couldn't I have yellow fever? Scarlet!"—she turned her face to the wall—"is awfully unbecoming to my complexion."

Then she declined to take any medicine by way of wreaking vengeance on a cruel fate.—Detroit Tribune.

FACTS ABOUT THE U. S.

IN 1890 4,559 new books were printed in the United States.

SINCE January 1, the cost of registering a letter has been reduced to eight cents.

MORE than 33,000 letters were placed in the mail boxes of the United States last year wholly without addresses.

WHEN reappointed to United States government positions, the widows of union soldiers and sailors will not be compelled to undergo a civil service examination.

THE first five presidents of the United States ended their terms of service in the sixty-sixth year of their age, and had John Quincy Adams been elected for a second term, he also would have ended his term in his sixty-sixth year.

THE magnitude of the state department's collection of Jefferson papers may be inferred from the fact that 25,000 titles have been written for the new index of them, a number representing but two-thirds of the whole collection.