

FIRESIDE MISCELLANY.

IS IT ANYBODY'S BUSINESS?

Is it anybody's business
If a gentleman should choose
To wait upon a lady,
If the lady don't refuse?
Or, to speak a little plainer
That the meaning all may know,
Is it anybody's business
If a lady has a beau?

Is it anybody's business
When that gentleman does call,
Or when he leaves the lady,
Or if he leaves at all?
Or is it necessary
That the curtain should be down,
To save from further trouble
The outside lookers-on?

Is it anybody's business
But the lady's, if her beau
Kisses her with other ladies,
And doesn't let her know?
Is it anybody's business
But the gentleman's if she
Should accept another escort,
Where he doesn't chance to be?

Is a person on the sidewalk,
Whether great or whether small,
Is it anybody's business
Where that person means to call?
Or if you see a person,
As he's calling anywhere,
Is it any of your business
What his business may be there?

The substance of our query,
Simply stated, would be this:
Is it anybody's business
What another's business is?
If it is, or if it isn't,
We would readily like to know;
For we're certain, if it isn't,
There are some who make it so.

If it is, we'll join the rabble,
And act the noble part
Of the intemperance and defamers
Who throng the public mart;
But if not, we'll act the teacher,
Until each meddler learns
It were better in the future
To mind his own concerns.

KISSING.

For the benefit of whom it may concern (and who does it not?) we propose to offer, as an "outside leader," a short sermon on the "at sorbent" topic of kissing. We term it a sermon on the ground that, like a sermon, it requires two heads and an application-ah! The text is to be found, beloved reader, in Worcester's Dictionary, and readeth in this wise:

Kiss—A salute by kissing, or by joining lips.

Of the origin of kissing we shall say but little, as but little is known onto it, but in passing with another great writer who preceded us, we unanimously unite in invoking our heavenly blessing onto the head of him who first invented the delicious "beverage."

Kisses may properly be divided into two great classes—the kiss universal and the kiss sentimental, says a contemporary, and both have their place in the "economy of nature." Under the first head we may mention the salutation common among ladies, and occurs generally upon any encounter, public or private, and is very violent at times, especially after an absence of a couple of days or so. In these off-hand inclusions there seems to be no particular form prescribed, except to "fire and fall back," which gives it a military aspect. Under the second head comes the sentimental kiss! Ye gods, how shall we describe the stupendous, ecstatic bliss conveyed by the "application" of a sentimental kiss! It occurs at all times and at all seasons, and seems to be never out of place. Othello's farewell kisses, which, tender and heart broken as they were having no power to bring the poor dead Desdemona back to life, were the most truly sweet and touching. And there were the grand, passionate kisses of Coriolanus—long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!—and sweet Romeo's dying kiss in the vaults of the Capulets. Under the head of sentimental may be ranked the young lover's kisses, which are rendered with upturned optics. They occur commonly by pale moonlight in grots and shady retreats. We close this short sermon by two quotations, one from Rev. Sidney Smith, and the other by an unknown author.

Says Sidney Smith: "We are in favor of a certain amount of shyness when a kiss is proposed, but it should not be too long; and when the fair one gives it, let it be administered with warmth and energy—let there be soul in it. If she closes her eyes immediately and sighs, the effect is greater. She should be careful not to shudder a kiss, but give it as a hummingbird runs his bill into a honeysuckle—deep but delicate." So much for Sidney. Our unknown author writes: "What's in a kiss? Really, when people come to reflect upon the matter calmly, what can we see in a kiss? The lips part slightly and then touch the cheek softly and then they part, and then the job is complete. There is a kiss in the abstract! View it in the abstract! Look at it philosophically! What is there in it? And yet millions on millions of souls have been made happy by kissing. Go where you will, into what country you will, there is kissing. There is surely some virtue in it."

Finally, with these brief remarks, we close our sermon, only exhorting by way of application, our readers to apply themselves earnestly to the study of this subject, believing that eventually they will know more about it, and that practice makes perfect.

A corn extractor that has never been patented—the crow.

INFLUENCE OF NEWSPAPERS.

A school teacher who has been engaged for a long time in his profession, and witnessed the influence of a news paper upon the minds of a family of children, writes as follows:

I have found it to be the universal fact, without exception, that these scholars of both sexes, and of all ages, who have access to newspapers at home, when compared to those who have not, are

1. Better readers, excellent in pronunciation, and consequently read more understandingly.

2. They are better spellers and define words with ease and accuracy.

3. They obtain practical knowledge of geography in almost half the time it requires of others, as the newspaper has made him acquainted with the location of the important places of nations, their governments and doings on the globe.

4. They are better grammarians; for having become so familiar with every variety of style in the newspapers, from the commonplace advertisements to the finished and classical oration of the statesman they more readily comprehend the text, and constantly analyze its construction with accuracy.

5. They write better compositions, using better language, containing more thoughts, more clearly and more connectedly expressed.

6. Those young men who have for years been readers of the newspapers are always taking the lead in the debating societies, exhibiting a more extensive knowledge upon a greater variety of subjects, and expressing their views with greater fluency, clearness and correctness in the use of language.

"Olivia," in the Philadelphia Press, gives women's rights known as "rats." Sorosis fills her with anger and disgust, and she cries: "Clab! Execrable word, conceived in ingenuity and brought forth in sin. Launch at Del monico's! Pretty women making speeches over toast and tea! Diluted, respectable wickedness! The Sorosis is the weak puffing infant; the Cheyenne sisterhood is the stout rollicking boy." The Cheyenne sisterhood stand up at bars with men, smoke, chew, drink whisky, and eat "holonies;" and "Olivia" thinks that, if things go on as they are now going, Sorosis will be likely to do the same disgusting things. For Susan B. Anthony she finds some excuse. "Let us," she says, "visit her faults tenderly. Baby lips have never pressed her hard, cold cheek. She has never tasted the sublimity of motherhood. She has never bathed in that immeasurable sea of glory whose waves touch the gates of Paradise." "Olivia" has evidently loved herself in that sea, and thinks she likes it. But then, you see, there are women and women.

PASS FOR WHAT WE ARE.—A man passes for what he is worth. Very idle is all curiosity concerning other people's estimate of us, and all fear for remaining unknown is not less so. If a man knows that he can do any thing—knows that he can do it better than any one else—he has a pledge of acknowledgment of that fact by all persons. The world is full of judgment days, and into every assemblage that a man enters, in every action that he attempts, he is gauged and stamped. In every troop of boys that whoop and run in each yard and square, a new comer is well and accurately weighed in the course of a few days and stamped with his right number, as if he had undergone a formal trial of his speed and temper. A stranger comes from a distant school, with a better dress, trinkets in his pockets, with airs and pretensions. An old boy says: "It's of no use, we shall find him out to-morrow."

FAMILIAR LOVE.—Mr. Anthony Trollope, in the last installment of his novel of "He Knew He Was Right," has the following: Perhaps there is no period so pleasant among all the pleasant periods of love-making as that in which the intimacy between the lovers, the coming event is so near as to produce and endure conversation about the ordinary little matter of life; what can be done with the little means at their disposal; how that life shall be begun which they are to lead together; what idea each has of the other's duties; what each can do for the other; what each will renounce for the other. There was a true sense of the delight of intimacy in the girl who declared that she had never loved her lover so well as when she told him how many pairs of socks she had got. It is very sweet to gaze at the stars together; and it is sweet to sit out among the haystacks. The reading of poetry together out of the same book, with arms mingled is very sweet; but for the girl who has made a shirt for the man she loves, there has come a moment in the last stitch of it sweeter than any star, haystack, poetry or superlative epithets have ever produced.

A Western paper announces the illness of the editor, piously adding: "All good paying subscribers are requested to mention him in their prayers. The others need not, as the prayers of the wicked avail nothing, according to good authority."

EVILS OF GOSSIP.

I have known, says a writer in "All the Year Round," a country society which withered away all to nothing under the dry rot of gossip only. Friendship once as firm as granite, dissolved to jelly, and then run away to water, only because of this: love that promised a future as enduring as heaven and as stable as truth, evaporated into a morning mist that turned to a long day's tears, only because of this: a father and a son were set foot to foot with the fiery breath of anger that would never cool again between them, only because of this; and a husband and his wife, each straining at the heated lash which in the beginning had been the golden bondage of a God blessed love, sat mournfully by the side of the grave where all their love and all their joy lay buried, and only because of this. I have seen faith transformed to mean doubt, hope give place to grim despair, and charity take on itself the features of black malevolence, all because of the spell words of scandal and the magic mutterings of gossip. Great crimes work great wrong, and the deeper tragedies of human life spring from its larger passions; but woful and most mournful are the uncalculated tragedies that issue from gossip and detraction; most mournful the desolating lives made of noble natures and lovely lives by the bitter winds and dead salt waters of slander. No easy to say, yet so hard to prove, throwing on the innocent all the burden and strain of demonstrating their innocence and punishing them as guilty if unable to pick out the strings they never hear, and to silence words they never hear—gossip and slander are the deadliest and cruellest weapons man has ever forged for his brother's hurt.

LET YOUR WIFE KNOW YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES.—It is a custom too common with the men of the world to keep their families in utter ignorance of the situation of their business. The wife knows nothing—has not even an idea of the amount of her husband's fortune, whether it is to be counted by hundreds or thousands. What can a woman kept in such ignorance learn? She spends, as a matter of course, all he gives her to spend, with full confidence that when that is gone, and she asks him, he will give her more.

If an unmarried woman works, she may go with a bold, unblushing face, and demand her wages; but a wife can demand nothing, her claim is for bare necessity; and generous men, on that account, are too indulgent, too fearful of letting a wife know the exact state of their finances. 'Tis all wrong. Husbands and wives have a mutual interest; every woman should know the exact state of her husband's finances, understand his plans, and aid him, if possible, with her counsels, and then these terrible catastrophes would not so often happen. Many a wife is plunging her husband deeper and deeper into debt from ignorance, who would, if she knew his embarrassments, be the first to renounce the first to save, and with true womanly sympathy and generosity, help him to reinstate his failing fortunes.

The coolest reading for these "very" dog-days, is a correspondence that lately transpired in Hartford: A young gentleman, whose bosom was being rent by the pangs of jealousy, addressed a billet to the lady, enclosing her notes to him, and requesting her to reciprocate the courtesy. In her reply she thanked him for his consideration, and would "return his letters as soon as a young gentleman, to whom they had been loaned, had given them a satisfactory perusal." That is what may be termed "pouring cold water down one's back."

Here is a bit of French philosophy. It is set down to the credit of Dumas: "Walk two hours every day. Sleep seven hours every night. Get up as soon as you wake. Speak only when necessary, and say only half what you think. Don't write anything but what you can sign. Think neither too much nor too little of money; it is a good servant but a bad master. Beware of women before you are twenty. Avoid them after you are forty."

A matter-of-fact old gentleman in New England, whose wife was a thorough "Destructionist," was awakened out of his sleep by his possessed rib one stormy night, with the words: "Has Gabriel! did you hear that noise? It's Gabriel coming! It's the sound of the chariot wheels!" "O, pshaw, you old fool!" replied the good old man, "do you s'pose Gabriel is such an ass as to come on wheels in such good sleighing as this? I tell you it's not him—turn over and go to sleep."

THE TRUE WAY TO SECURE BEAUTY.—It is not to cosmetics and artificial appliances, to skin and complexion, that we must look for personal comeliness, but to pure and healthy blood. Let those annoyed with a sallow and rough skin, eyes yellow and dull, complexion discolored with blotches, pimples, eruptive sores, etc., teeth discolored and breath offensive, cast aside all frivolous cosmetics, and resort at once to the use of Dr. Walker's VEGETABLE VINEGAR BITTERS, which will purify and enrich the blood, and give health and buoyancy to the system.

A gentleman wishing, not long since, to "pop the question," took up the young lady's cat, and said, "pussy, may I have your mistress?" It was answered by the lady, "Say yes, pussy!"

"THESE LITTLE ONES."

As a general rule, we are not half thoughtful or courteous enough in our manners toward our children. We are too apt to content ourselves with a general consciousness of being right in the main, with theoretically intending that they shall grow up to be good Christian citizens and an honor to ourselves. We make big sacrifices in their behalf, resolve fine schemes, and bring out the heavy artillery of our nature on very slight occasions. But our graces, our courtesies, our delicate acts of appreciation and lofty consideration are not for them. These are reserved for adult friends and select acquaintances—as if to any one living were due more of the best and sweetest that is in us than to those whom we have brought into the world to meet its jabs, temptations, and cruelties!

Think of the really coarse way in which the fondest of us sometimes wound our children's sensibilities.—How we parade their special traits and accomplishments, and ignore their individuality; how recklessly we break in upon their little plans and pleasures; how carelessly we comment upon their defects; how we laugh at their childish distresses, because the grievous look or the tragic little scowl is "so cunning"; how we visit our vexation of spirit upon their innocent heads; how we resent their inexperience; how needlessly or sharply we deny their little petitions, and how we ignore our "Thank you," and insist upon theirs; how we jerk or push them in our impatience; how we float their earnest questions, and deal out cutting, cruel words of "wholesale reproof," when perhaps the little heart is quivering under some real or fancied wrong! It is terrible to think of.

Many, seeing these charges in the aggregate, will indignantly deny them. Yet we venture to assert that no parent answering each in turn, can plead guilt less to them all.

We shall not dwell upon the monstrous wrongs of chastisement too often inflicted upon children—such as beating, threatening, frightening, and, that meanest act of all, the "boxing" of ears. The dear Christ teaches no hard lesson of harshness or brute force toward the little ones committed to our care. Even as He was "subject unto" his parents, returning meekly with them from Jerusalem while his child soul yearned to be about his Father's business, so would He have our little ones subject unto us. They are ours to lead and protect, to teach and warn and cherish; ours to love wisely, to deal with firmly and reverently—mirrors of our example cleaners of the harvest of our home life—not ours to pet, and rebuff, and sacrifice to our hundred weaknesses. Well for the father and mother to whom their child's heart is as a holy of holies; and their child's fancies and human tendencies as stumbling blocks not to vex and upset them, but which the little one must wisely and lovingly be taught to overcome. Heaven bless the always cheerful, gentle-voiced, conscientious parent! And heaven help all those who, when it is too late to atone, remember with anguish the quivering lip and pleading eye of a little face, that has passed away!

THOUGHTS ON SATURDAY NIGHT.—Somebody gets off the following beautiful thoughts on the closing night of the week. There is a volume of truth and sense in them: "Saturday night makes people human, sets their hearts to beating softly, as they used to do before the world turned them into war drums and jarred them to pieces with tattoos. The ledger closes with a clash, the iron doored vaults come to with a bang, up go the shutters with a will, click goes the key in the lock. It is Saturday night, and business breathes free again. Homeward, ho! The door that has been ajar all week gently closes behind him, the world is all shut out. Shut out? Shut in rather. Here are his treasures after all, and not in the vault, and not in the book—save the record of the old family Bible—and not in the bank. Maybe you are a bachelor, frosty and forty. Then, poor fellow, Saturday night is nothing to you, just as you are nothing to anybody. Get a wife, blue eyed or black-eyed; but, above all true-eyed. Get a little home—no matter how little—a sofa, just to hold two or two and a half, and then get the two, or two and a half in it, of a Saturday night, and then read this paragraph by the light of your wife's eyes, and thank God and take courage."

GOOD ADVICE.—A promising young chaver of five or six years was reading his lesson at school one day. In that deliberate manner for which urchins of that age are somewhat remarkable. As he proceeded with the task he came upon the passage, "Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from guile." Master Hopeful drawled out, "Keep—thy—tongue—from—evil—and—thy—lips—from—girls."

When a lady was questioned concerning her birthday, she said that it occurred on April 10th. "The 10th, my dear?" incredulously interjected her husband; "I thought it was on the 1st?" "One would naturally suppose so," was the witty response, "from the choice I made of a husband."

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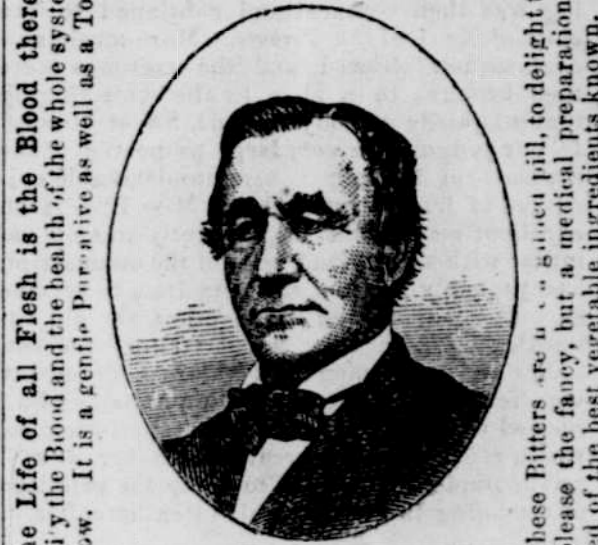
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