"THEY SAY."

They say-Ab! well, suppose they do; But can they prove the story true? Foul slanders oft arise from nought But malice, envy, want of thought. Why count yourself among the "they! Who whisper what they dare not say?

They say-but why the tale rehearse, And help to make the matter worse? No good can possibly accrue From telling what may be untrue; And is it not a nobler plan To speak of all the best you can?

They say Well, even if it should be so, Why need you tell the tale of woe? Will it the bitter wrong redress, Or make one pang of sorrow less? Will it an erring one restore, Henceforth to "go and sin no more?"

They say-Oh! pause and look within, See how thine heart inclines to sin; Watch, lest in dark temptation's hour Thou sink, perchance, beneath its power. Pity the weak, weep should they fall, And speak their good or not at all.

## THE MISTLETOE --- ITS HISTORY

The mistletoe, an emblem of friendship and social happiness, is employed killed Balder, for the mistletoe is alive at Christmas time in European coun- when all other plants are dead with tries, and sometimes in ours, to an- winter sleep. But the mistletoe, being nounce to all whom it may concern that taken from the hands of the god of animosities are at an end, and that mischief and placed under the care of peace and good will with all the world the goddess of Love, is hung on high, are to usher in the new year. The to remind us not to look down, or back, custom of "kissing under the mistletoe" or on the earth, if we would live in love is very ancient, and is founded on the and friendspip, for Loke has dominion legend of Balder, the Phæbus Apollo there; but forward and upward, where of Scandinavian mythology.

dreamed a dream, a dreadful dream. He dreamed that he was going to die, and was so frightened that he started THE LAW OF TRUE MARRIAGE, BY OVERLAND ROUTE from his bed, mounted the swiftest cloud-steed and rode full gallop to his! mother. His mother's name was Fri- woman-wherever any man feels the ga, the Venus of Valhalla, very beau- influence of any woman, purifying, tiful, and brimful of the milk of love. chastening, abashing, strengthening him When Friga heard the dream she was against temptation, shielding him from no less alarmed than her son, and in- evil, ministering to his self-respect, stantly told her husband, the great god medicining to his weariness, peopling Odin-the Jove of Northern deities. his solitude, winning him from sordid What was to be done? Odin evident-ly thought that the dreams of gods did with mirth, or fancy, or wit, flashing not arise from indigestion, but were Heaven upon his earth, and mellowing sent by the Fates as hints and warnings it all for spiritual fertility-there is the of what they were going to weave in element of marriage. the web of destiny. So Odin issued Wherever woman pays reverence to

river of Foreknowledge flowed at his consolidate her thought, utilize her life whenever his godship halted in know- ceiving at every instant of its action. beloved son Balder. Loke was there, death itself into life. the Spirit of Wickedness, whose was the empire of the earth, and old blind Hoder, the god of Death and Darkness. depot in Dayton Ohio, just as the train They heard the injunction and dared on which she desired to take passage not disobey; but Loke, who hated moved away. As she stood gazing at Balder, cast upon him a most malig- the train, her arms full of packages and nant eye, and resolved to evade the in- her eyes full of tears, a gentleman ar-

knew nothing of the injunction.

The envious Loke, having ripped timents precisely. from an old oak a branch of the epiphyte, earried it to his cave and cut it into an arrow. He dried it hard in the ates the various expressions of woman's All kinds of School Books used in this vicinfire of Fate and tipped it with the poi- eye; The glare, the stare, the sneer, ity constantly on hand. son of his own spittle; then going to the invitation, the defiance, the denial, the blind god, asked him to make a the consent, the glance of love, the trial of his new weapon.

the new "quarell," and Loke, placing suspicion, the blare of envy, the fire of him so as to face his enemy, told him jealousy and the luster of pleasure. to set it to his bow-string. He drew the bow as only gods can draw, and shot. Twang! went the string, and whiz! went the arrow, swifter than thought; it struck the Peace god, who instantly fell dead on the pavement of Valhalla

The blackness of darkness now covered the whole world. Peace was killed by the god of War and Death. Peace was killed through the instigation of Wickedness. Peace in Heaven was no more. Peace would be seen on earth no more. Balder was dead, and Loke had out witted Odin.

Friga was inconsolate; the gods and godesses moved about Yalhalla like Niobe, all tears; the trees wept gall; the stars in their courses wept; heaven and earth would have been drowned in tears if Balder could not have been restored

But with the gods nothing is impossible, and the spirit of vitality was breathed once more into his nos-

mistletoe was now given in charge to Friga, and was never to pass from her power "till it touched the earth—the empire of Loke." No wonder, then, the Druids gathered it so carefully; and you will readily understand why it is suspended on our ceilings, to place it beyond the region of Dry Goods, Loke, the enemy of love and good will. Odin now made a decree that a bunch of the mistletoe should be hung in Valhalla, and that whenever any of the gods or godesses passed under it a deity of the opposite sex should give the kiss of peace, and this is how the custom of kissing under the mistletoe had its ori-

This pretty fable is an allegory. A the fall of the year Balder dies-that is, the beauty of the vegetation diesand the sun goes downward to the low-er regions of the world. Loke, the spirit of Wickedness, induced Hoder, the god of Death, to kill the year. Al nature mourns the loss; but the gods revive the dead year; the sun is brought back in his strength, and hea-

yen and earth clap their hands for joy. The mistletoe was the arrow that PROVISIONS. the gods reside, and where a hopeful The tale says that Balder once future is placed before us in the com mencement of a new year.

Whenever man says reverence to

his royal ukase or proclamation, com- man-wherever any woman rejoices in manding everything that springs from the strength of man, feels it to be God's earth, air, fire and water to appear with- agent, upholding her weakness, conout delay before his Serene Majesty of firming her purpose, and crowning her power; wherever he reveals himself to Every tree and river, every stone her just, upright, inflexible, yet tolerand star, every beast and bird, the air ating, merciful, benignant, not unruf-that stirs up the gales, the clouds that fled perhaps, but not overcome by the launch forth lightning, the fire that world's turbulence, and responding to burns, the sea that wrecks, and all the all her gentleness, his feet on the earth hosts of earth and heaven obeyed the and his head among the stars, helping summons. The mighty Odin sat on to hold her soul steadfast in the right, his cloud-throne, under the shade of the to stand firm against the encroachments mighty ash, the branches of which, as of vanity, impatience, fatigue and diseveryone knows, covers the whole uni- couragement, helping to preserve her verse. The river of Wisdom and the good nature, to develop her energy, to feet, and on his shoulder sat the raven |-there is the essence of marriage. Its and the dove to whisper in his ear, love ts mutual, equally giving and reledge. It was an awful moment, and There is neither dependence nor indeno doubt every living thing trembled pendence, but interdependence. Years as the king of gods commanded the as- cannot weaken its bonds, distance cansembly, on pain of immortal vengeance, not sunder them. It is a love which to do no harm to a single hair of his vanquishes the grave and transfigures

A lady lately reached a railroad junction if it could possibly be done. | rived at the depot on a run, with his It seems that a horse and wagon can carpet sack in his hand, his coat on his be driven through a divine Act of Con- arm, and his face streaming with pergress as well as a human one, and a spiration. He, too, wanted to take the flaw was soon found in Odin's prohibi- same train, but was too late. As he tion. The mistletoe springs not from looked at the train, now fast moving air, nor yet from earth, nor yet from away, he set down his carpet-bag, wiped water.; it is a parasite, and grows on his face, and very deliberately and emthe oak or apple tree, but its roots nev- phatically said, "Damn that train." er touch the earth. So, the mistletoe The lady heard him and, smiling upon was not called to the "storthing" and him with a lady's sweetness, said: "Thank you, sir." They were her sen-

A modern writer thus enumerflash of rage, the sparkling of hope, the Hoder, unsuspecting as he was, felt languishment of softness, the squint of

> A Greek maiden being asked what fortune she would bring her husband, replied: "I will bring him what gold cannot purchase-a heart unspotted and virtue without a stain, which is all that descended to me from my Thos. G. Richmond, Proprietor. parents."

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