

THE OLD TRUNDLE BED.

Oh, the old trundle bed where I slept when a boy,
What panoramic knight might not covet the joy?
The glory and peace of that slumber of mine,
Like a long, gracious rest in the bosom divine;
The quaint, homely couch, hidden close from the light,
But daintily drawn from its hiding at night.
Oh, a nest of delight, from the foot to the head,
Was the queer little, dear little, old trundle bed.

Oh, the old trundle bed where I wondering saw
The stars through the window, and listened with awe
To the sigh of the winds as they tremulously crept
Through the trees where the robins so restlessly slept,
Where I heard the low, murmurous chirp of the wren,
And the katydid listlessly chirrup again,
Through the maze of the dreams of the old trundle bed.

Oh, the old trundle bed! Oh, the old trundle bed!
With its plump little pillow and old-fashioned spread;
Its snowy white sheets and the blankets above,
Smoothed down and tucked around with the touches of love;
The voice of my mother to lull me to sleep
With the old fairy stories my memories keep
Still fresh as the lillies that bloom o'er the head
Once bowed o'er my own in the old trundle bed.
—James Whitcomb Riley.

HIS BUSY DAY.

IT WAS my busy day.
A pile of correspondence as daunting to a man's ambition as Pike's Peak or the Eiffel Tower burdened my desk and there was a kink in my temper which I had calculated would require a dinner at Martin's, tete-a-tete with Marguerite, to effectually straighten out. Martin's chef makes a certain pate that puts a man at peace with all the world, while Marguerite is at once soothing and stimulating, like champagne.
At this point my reflections were interrupted by Forsythe, the best fellow in the world, but with an unlucky habit of turning up at the wrong moment. I didn't give him the glad hand exactly, for which I was sorry enough afterward, but he was too preoccupied to notice.
"Oh, I've something to say to you, Austin," he said after a few preliminaries, with the effect of having just remembered something.
"All right," I replied, taking my feet off a chair to shove it toward him. "But make it twenty words if you can. I'm in a rush to-day."
"I can do it quick enough," he went on, with an uneasy laugh. "I just want to ask you if you've any intentions of a matrimonial sort, you know, toward Marguerite."
"The devil you do!" I exclaimed. "It strikes me that's my business."
"Perhaps it is," he said, with an air of wishing to do me every justice, "perhaps it is, but it's mine, too."
"Indeed," I remarked, feeling that I was unanswerable.
"You see, Austin," cried Forsythe, "when you introduced Dillard and me to Marguerite we both thought you were a trifle gone in that direction, and when I found I thought such a lot of her I couldn't live without her I felt that I had no right to ask for her until I found out whether you wanted her yourself."
"Duced good of you," I commented, stiffly, seeing he had paused for a reply.
"It only seemed fair to give you the first chance," he finished, looking at me in a hurt sort of a way that made me ashamed of myself.
"You're all right, old boy," I hastened to say. "Forgive me: you took me by surprise. But since you ask me I don't mind saying I never had a thought of marrying Marguerite" (which was true enough, and I'd never thought of any one else marrying her either).
"I'm mighty glad of that," cried Forsythe, joyfully.
"No doubt," I said, a trifle dryly; but he hastened on: "I'm going to take her to a picture exhibit this morning, and thought I'd like to ask her then, if you assured me the field was clear. I hope I have your good wishes, Austin."
"Certainly," I said. "Go ahead and try for her, and good luck go with you, old man."
The painful memory of the grip he gave my hand on leaving still lingered with me when Dillard dropped in an hour later. I gave Dillard the other hand.
"Hullo," he cried. "Busy, Austin?"
"Rather," I returned, shortly. Dillard's only occupation in life is spending an income of forty thousand a year, and it's hard to be glad to see a man like that when you've got your own nose down on the grindstone.
"Just a word in your ear and I'm

through," he announced. "It's about Marguerite, you know."
"Marguerite!" I exclaimed, "then you've heard—"
"Heard what," he cried. "Are you engaged to her?"
"Certainly not," I answered, with emphasis; "what made you think that?"
"Oh, I thought you rather fancied her and I'm tremendously glad to hear you don't care about her." (I wasn't aware that I'd said that, but I let it pass.) "She and her aunt are going to take lunch with Forsythe and me to-day, and I thought I might get a chance to try my luck with her then. But as long as you introduced us I thought I ought to give you the first chance."
This sounded familiar—too familiar, in fact.
"Oh, don't mind me," I protested impatiently. "My intentions toward Marguerite are wholly innocuous. Wish you success, Dillard."
I managed to evade his parting handshake, thus saving my fingers a second crushing, and he departed happy.
When I went to lunch and had time to analyze my feelings I found that I resented being forced into posing as a sort of trousered fairy godmother to Marguerite.
Of course as long as I had no intentions whatever of asking her to marry me I could hardly be so absurd as to resent some one else doing so. And certainly Forsythe and Dillard had behaved handsomely—no one could have done more.
But to be asked for my consent to Marguerite's nuptials as though I were her elderly uncle or benevolent maiden aunt was a trifle trying.
At 5 o'clock I was on my way to see her. I felt that however unpleasant my new attitude toward her might be, it at least gave me a right to know which one of my friends she had accepted. By the time I reached the car I was sure it was Forsythe; when I alighted at the corner my mind was made up to accept Dillard as her future husband, and when I entered the door I had come to the conclusion that whichever she took she was undoubtedly doing well for herself.
"What, it is you?" cried Marguerite, when I found her in the library.
"Did you expect some one else?" I asked, scanning her closely. She undoubtedly looked happy.
"You were here yesterday," she replied.
"One good turn deserves another," I said. "Besides I've come to congratulate you."
"Well?" she asked and settled down comfortably to listen. Marguerite is very provoking sometimes. She knew I was all at sea.
"Dillard is a man to be proud of," I hazarded, watching her face.
"Are you proud of him?" she inquired, looking up at me with big questioning eyes. After all the role of fairy godmother to Marguerite wasn't so bad, I reflected, that is, if one couldn't be anything else.
"And his fortune—" I went on, ignoring her question.
"Ah, his fortune—are you proud of that, too?" she asked.
Perhaps it wasn't Dillard after all. "But Forsythe," I said, shifting my ground, "he is a man in a million."
"Yes, he is," said Marguerite reflectively.
"See here," I cried desperately, "which are you going to marry?"
"The man in a million or the man with a million?" she cried with a saucily lifted chin.
"Yes, which is it to be?" I repeated eagerly.
"Suppose," she said, slowly, "suppose I asked your candid, unprejudiced honest advice?"
"Oh, then I suppose I should have to advise you to take them both."
"Yes, I suppose you would," she assented thoughtfully.
"Or else to refuse them both," I added.
"Ah, suppose I had already done that," she said softly.
I felt my breath fall me suddenly.
"Marguerite!" I cried, and a moment later found myself an engaged man.
"By the way," I remarked as we sat waiting for the pate at Martin's that evening, "how were the pictures?"
"Really I've forgotten," said Marguerite with a happy little sigh. "This has been such a busy day."
"Come to think of it," I replied, "I've had rather a busy day myself."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Great Pest in South Africa.

One of the greatest pests of south Africa is the locusts, which descend in swarms each year upon the farms of Natal and the Transvaal. They sometimes fly in such numbers that railroad trains are blocked and are forced to wait until the bodies of the insects are shoveled from the tracks. Last year the government of Cape Colony paid out \$8,500 for locusts' eggs, at the rate of 12 cents a pound. As it takes 40,000 eggs to weigh a pound an idea of the enormous number destroyed in this way may be gathered. But the locusts are not an unmixed curse. They are eaten by the natives, who say they make delicious food, and all animals, including horses, are said to be fond of them.

A circus ostrich once made a meal of sauer kraut and fat pork, and died within three days of indigestion.

A Georgia Literary Blowout.

From the the Whitsett Courier: The closing exercises of the Literary club were highly successful. Perfect order was preserved without the attendance of the town marshal, whose children were laid up with measles, from which we sincerely hope they will recover soon. There was high tumbling by a stranded circus performer, a wrestling match in which nobody was hurt, after which a delightful hot supper was served, consisting of more than we have space to mention. It was said that the sheriff overate himself and had fits, but the report is false, for we were personally present until daylight, and we positively assert that all went merrily as a marriage bell.

Where He'd Go.

"Aren't you afraid the law will take me in hand for gambling?" said the timid man who had just been persuaded into making an election bet.
"Never mind," answered the confident politician. "Even if it does, you're all right. They wouldn't send you to jail for making that bet. They'd send you to the insane asylum."
—Washington Star.

A new rival to Niagara Falls is projected at Newfane, N. Y., where a 50-foot dam is to be erected, and a large number of factories are to be erected preliminary to making it, as its promoters say, the greatest manufacturing town in America operated by electricity.

No Longer a Competitor.

He—Don't you think that girl there is beautiful?
She (suddenly critical)—Oh, I don't know. Who is she?
He—Mrs. Nuter. Just been married.
She—Yes. I think she is—
beautiful.—Detroit Free Press.

"Waiter, it is with great solemnity that I affirm that you happen to be the greatest prevaricator I have ever known, bringing me a half-dozen more of those chickens that go to roast early."
—Philadelphia Call.

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