

Christian Family.

Memory's Angels.

When the crystal heights of silence
Are with starry splendors crowned,
And the night's stupendous shadow
Wraps the Dreaming World around;
Thro' the purple gates of Twilight,
Flushed with sunset's dying glow,
In the days departing footsteps
Silent Angels come and go!

Unforgotten deeds of kindness,
Gentle words that lightened care,
Clasping hands and cherry greeting
That have blest us unaware;
Hopes, whose rainbow light of promise
From unclouded ether shed,
Arched our morning dreams with splendor
In spring names that are dead!

Love, that lured us with the vision
Of a nobler life than this,
Where the Soul's incarnate Ideal
Dwelt in Apotheosis;
Faiths—long canceled—that were plighted
To the friends of other years,
Touch the sealed springs of feeling,
And unlock the fount of Tears!

In the silence, palpitating
With the sense of unseen things,
We can feel their phantom touches—
Hear the measured sweep of wings—
Catch the fleeting, shadowy fragrance
Of Unearthly roses, shed
By the fair, unfading garlands
Wreathed about each shining head!

In our souls some sleeping sorrow
Wakes the throbbing life again;
Smoldering grief to keener passion
Leap beneath their touch of pain;
Lost delights—unstable pleasures—
Dreams that died and made no sign—
Shadowy ghosts of joy departed,
Our departing heart divine!

Now they feel the fruitless longing
Of unsleeping Memory,
For the loved yet banished faces
We no more on earth shall see;
Or, with tender bands they lead us
Back by pleasant paths of yore,
To the lowly grass-grown threshold
Where weary feet shall pass no more!

The Funniest General in all the World.

Ever so long ago, there lived and fought in Germany a mighty general, and he was awfully funny. I think he was about the funniest general in all the world.

He was very fat and very clever, and, like all fat, clever people, he loved little children. The fatter he grew, the more clever he grew, and when he had a dozen or so of children about his knees, he wasn't much of a general, as generals go, not much of a fighting general, I mean.

But we must give the name and date of this general, and so crack the historical nut-shell, before we can set our readers the sweetmeat of our story. This we will do in a single paragraph, and we shall have all the rest of the space to tell you about the agreeable general, and the funny things that he did.

Procopius, or Procope, the famous fat general, was a Bohemian, and became commander of the Hussites, who were almost an army of giants, in 1424. He won many victories with his terrible army, and caused the princes of Moravia, Austria and Saxony, to sue for terms at his feet. The fame of his great deeds and wonderful victories filled all Europe for eleven years, when he was killed in battle in 1434. Now, the historical nut-shell is cracked, and we will have some account of the funny fat man who loved the children.

In the summer of 1432, good-natured Procopius and his tall army came marching through the hot mountain passes into Saxony, and encamped in a very lovely valley on the banks of the Saale, and invested the old walled town of Naumburg. It was cherry-time, a lovely time of year to lay siege to the tough old town, and the valley was full of cherry trees, which was calculated to make fat Procope and the tall besiegers, who were very fond of the good things in the world, contented and happy. So, while a part of the army besieged the town, the rest went cherrying, and a very comfortable time they had.

But the Saxons who were shut up in Naumburg were resolute and stubborn, and refused to yield. The golden moon that hung over the Saale on the still nights when June perfumed the vale with roses, waned, and halved, quartered and rounded again;

but the Saxons gave no signs of coming to terms with the fat general. And Procopius, although generally so clever and good-natured, began, we are very, very sorry to say, to lose his patience and his temper.

It was far past midsummer. The roses were falling, and the cherries were rotting, and Procope himself was getting sour. So one morning he put on his high-heeled boots, and seemed to be unusually out of sorts, and he sent a terrible message to the good people of Naumburg that, if they did not surrender the town before the end of the week, all of the people in it should at last be put to the sword.

Oh, then there was distress in Naumburg. Yet the sturdy old Saxon lords refused to surrender the town.

But at last the store of food in the town was nearly gone, and strong walls grow weak when the people have no bread. The women began to be hungry, and the children to cry for food.

What was to be done? They called a council, but the council could do nothing. The besiegers were strong without, and the corn was gone within, and their lives were forfeited if they opened the gates to the enemy.

There came to the council an old German schoolmaster, and when the lords and chief men could offer nothing, he begged leave to say a few words to them.

"Procope," said he, bowing very low, so that his queue stuck out like a horn behind, "is very fat."

"That will not help our leanness," said the lords.

"Fat men are very clever," said the spare old pedagogue.

"All the more inglorious to die at the hands of a clever man," said the lords.

"And clever, fat men love children," said the pedagogue, looking very wise.

"That does not help our case," said the lords.

"A man who loves a child will not harm the parent," said the old pedagogue.

"But the Hussites do not love our children."

"Every man has a tender place in his heart," said the wise pedagogue. "Get at that, and one is safe."

"But how does that apply to us?" asked the lords.

"Listen," said the pedagogue, looking still more wise, and bringing the tip of one finger over into the palm of his other hand, in a very knowing way. "Procope loves children, and when they are around him, he grows jolly and mellow, and his heart gets warm, and his sternness all melts away like a glacier in the spring sunshine. Send the children of the town out of the gates to him. Tell them to cling about his knees, and climb up into his lap, and when he begins to pity them, and grow fond of them, tell them to beg mercy for us, and the foodless town of Naumburg."

That quiet summer afternoon the gates of Naumburg swung open, and a long procession of little boys and girls issued forth, and wended their way through the astonished Hussites to the gay pavilion of Procopius. We fancy we can see them now, and an old German picture we have seen helps our fancy. This old picture represents the old pedagogue following behind with a bundle of books under one arm, and a brisk switch in the other hand, with which latter implement he was refreshing the memories of some of the little boys in the rear by a wise application in the usual way.

When Procope saw them coming he seemed mightily pleased, and with large eyes and puffing lips he waddled out to meet them. The little girls seized him around his funny legs, and hugged him tight, and the little boys began to say:

"O, good Procope, we've come to you to protect us."

What could Procopius do? He tried to be hard, but it was impossible. So he sat down under a big cherry tree near by, and the boys and girls in a few minutes were running all over him like goats over a mountain. His heart was besieged, and a breach was soon made in its weakest place.

He put his hand on one little boy's hair and kissed another little girl, who looked so pretty and innocent that he could not help it. And his great arms clasped a half a dozen children at once, and his heart grew warm and mellow, and he found that he could resist no longer. So the clever fat general suddenly cried out:

"It's no use. I can't see the children suffer, you know. I guess I shall have to surrender."

Then he ordered the Hussites to bring him baskets of cherries, and he and the children had a cherry feast, and great was the happiness on the banks of the Saale, near the foodless town of Naumburg.

The children returned to the city at night, and each one hugged and kissed Procopius as they parted, and said in a low, sweet voice:

"Spare for our sakes, the town of Naumburg."

The moon hung over the Saale in the golden air, and in the late hours dipped behind the far mountains. The sun rose fair, and the watchmen looked down from the grim walls of Naumburg on the long valley; but Procopius and the Hussites were gone, and a happier day never was seen in the town.

For four hundred years the Saxons have loved to recall this delightful event of history, and have celebrated it by the "Kinderfest," or "Children's Fete," or, as it is often called, "The Cherry Feast of Naumburg."

This festival corresponds to our Fourth of July, and occurs on the 28th of July, and a right glad day it is to the children of Saxony. And would you see how long the happy influence of a single good deed may last? why then, when you go to Germany, drop down to the Saale in the summer time, and eat some cherries with the Children's Fete, in honor of the funniest general in all the world.—St. Nicholas.

April Fools and Other Fools.

The custom of playing a joke upon one's neighbor upon the 1st of April is of very ancient origin, dating so far back in the past that we are unable to tell just when or with what nation it had its birth.

Among the Hindoos there is a feast which is still observed, called the "Huli," which, continuing thirty days, terminates on the thirty-first of March. One of the distinctive features of the feast is, that every one endeavors to send his neighbor upon some errand to some imaginary person, or to persons whom he knows are not at home; and then all enjoy a good laugh at the disappointment of the messenger.

The observance of this custom by this peculiar people seems to indicate that it had a very early origin among mankind. In fact, it is not impossible that the manner in which the day is observed by us may have been suggested by some pagan custom. But whatever or whenever its origin may have been, we find it so widely prevalent over the earth, and with so very near a coincidence of day, as to be proof of its great antiquity.

In England, the custom of April-fooling is practiced very much as it is in the United States. "A knowing boy will despatch a younger brother to see a public statue descend from its pedestal at an appointed hour. A crew of giggling servant-maids will get hold of some simple swain, and send him to a bookseller's shop for the 'History of Eve's Grandmother,' or to a chemist's for a penny-worth of 'pigeon's milk,' or to the

cobbler's for a little 'strap-oil,' in which last case the messenger secures a hearty application of the strap to his shoulders, and is sent home in a state of bewilderment as to what the affair means. The urchins in the street make a sport of calling to some passing beau to look to his coat-skirts; when he either finds them with a piece of paper pinned to them or not; in either of which case he is saluted as an 'April-fool!'

It has been said that "what compound is to simple addition, so is the Scotch to English April-fooling." The people living in Scotland are not content with making a neighbor believe some single piece of absurdity, but practice jokes upon him *ad infinitum*. Having found some unsuspecting person, the individual playing the joke sends him away with a letter to some friend two or three miles off, for the professed purpose of asking for some useful information, or requesting a loan of some article, while in reality the letter contains only the words:

"This is the first of April,
—Hunt the gowk another mile."

The person to whom the letter is sent at once catches the idea of the person sending it, and informs the carrier with a very grave face that he is unable to grant his friend the favor asked, but if he will take a second note to Mr. So-and-so, he will get what was wanted. The obliging, yet unsuspecting carrier receives the note, and trudges on to the person designated, only to be treated by him in the same manner; and so he goes on from one to another, until some one, taking pity on him, gives him a gentle hint of the trick that has been practiced upon him. A successful affair of this kind will furnish great amusement to an entire neighborhood for a week at a time, during which time the person who has been victimized can hardly show his face. The Scotch employ the term "gowk" to express a fool in general, but more especially an April fool; and among them the practice which we have described is called "hunting the gowk."—Wide Awake.

The Afghans.

The Afghans are tall, of large and well-knit frames, muscular and hardy. Their strong, heavy features and dark skins give them a fierce expression of countenance; their black eyes—"their lids tinged with antimony to add force, beauty, and dazzling brilliancy to them"—are full of fire, so that their swift, bold, and flaming glance is very impressive. They wear their hair shaved from the forehead to the top of the head, the rest falling in black thick masses to the shoulders. The dress of the people is of cotton, or of cloth called "barek," made of camel's hair, and is worn in two long and very full robes the material used by the wealthy classes being of silk or cassimere; blue or white turbans with slippers complete the costume.

The garments of the young chiefs are often quite gay with gold-lace or gold-thread embroidery. This ornamentation is done by the women in the harems, who are very skillful with the needle.

Comte de Gobineau in his "Romances of the East" thus describes a young Afghan chief, whose name was Mosh-en, meaning "beautiful." "His complexion was richly tawny, like the skin of fruit ripened by the sun. His black locks curled in wealth of ringlets round the compact folds of his blue turban striped with red; a sweeping and rather long mustache caressed the delicate outline of his upper lip, which was cleanly cut, mobile, proud, and breathing of life and passion. His eyes, tender and deep, flashed readily. He was tall, slender, and broad shouldered. No one would ever dream of asking his race; it was evident that the purest Afghan blood flowed in his veins."

The beauty of young Afghans is frequently spoken of by Eastern writers;

but it would seem from the very nature of things as though this glowing description must be overdrawn; just as the handsome, pensive, young Uncas of our well-beloved West Indian romance, James Fenimore Cooper, can hardly be recognized in the modern Modoc. Still, abundant testimony claims a dark and hardy beauty for the Afghan in his prime.—Harper's Magazine.

Hawthorne's Ways and Work.

Of Nathaniel Hawthorne as a young man, Colonel Higginson gives a pleasant picture in *The Literary World*.

"I first met him," he says, "on a summer morning, in Concord, as he was walking along the road near the Old Manse, with his wife by his side, and a noble looking baby-boy in a little wagon which the father was pushing. I remember him as tall, firm and strong in bearing; his wife looked pensive and dreamy, as she indeed was, then and always; the child was Julian, then known among the neighbors as 'the Prince.' When I passed Hawthorne lifted upon me his great gray eyes, with a look too keen to seem indifferent, to shy to be sympathetic—and that was all. But it comes back to memory like that one glimpse of Shelly which Browning describes, and which he likens to the day when he found an eagle's feather. Again I met Hawthorne at one of the sessions of a short-lived literary club; and I recall the imperturbable dignity and patience with which he sat through a vexatious discussion, whose details seemed as dwarfed by his presence as if he had been a statue of Olympian Zeus."

Mrs. Hawthorne told me that her husband grappled alone, all winter, with the 'Scarlet Letter,' and came daily from his study with a knot in his forehead; and yet his self-mastery was so complete that every sentence would seem to have crystallized in an atmosphere of perfect calm.—Ez.

Christian "Giving Up."

It is a pitiful sight to see a young disciple going about and asking everybody how much he must "give up" in order to be a Christian.

Unfortunately, many of those who take it upon themselves to instruct him and give him the same impression of Christian discipleship—that it consists chiefly of giving up things that one likes and finds pleasure in. But a man in solitary confinement might as well talk about what he must "give up" if he is pardoned out of prison, or a patient in consumption about what he must "give up" in order to get well. The prisoner must give up his fetters, and the invalid his pains and his weakness—these are the main things to be sacrificed. It is true that the one has the privilege of living without work, and the other the privilege of lying abed all day; these are privileges that must be relinquished, no doubt. And so there are certain sacrifices to be made by him who enters upon the Christian life, but they are "not worthy to be compared" with the liberty and dignity and joy into which the Christian life introduces; and to put the emphasis upon this negative side of the Christian experience, as so many are inclined to do, is a great mistake. *Sunday Afternoon* for February.

After the virgin snow melts and silently steals away forever, many ugly and repulsive objects appear upon the surface of the earth which we did not suppose had any existence. So it will be in the great day of eternity, when God, by the silent operation of absolute law, will reverse the decisions of all corrupt judges, and, by a vindication of his divine government, melt away and absorb all hypocritical pretenders, and at that time uncap the hearts of all men, and reveal secret sins so ugly and so debasing, that we shall be overwhelmed with surprise to think they ever had an existence.