

An Old Favorite

SIGNS OF RAIN

By Dr. Edward Jenner



THIS ingenious poem, known also by its subtitle "Forty Reasons For Declining an Invitation to an Excursion," was written by Dr. Edward Jenner, who won immortal fame by his discovery of vaccination as a preventive of smallpox.

THE hollow winds begin to howl; The clouds look black, the sky is low; The cool fairs down, the squalls are deep; And spiders from their webs creep.

Bits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws; Through the clear streams the fishes rise; And nimble catch the insectious flea; The glowworms, numerous and bright.

A Town of Bank Cashiers. The little town of Owenton, Ky., boasts of 121 men born within its limits who have become cashiers of banks.

The Timber Line. The impression that British North America is covered with valuable timber is fallacious. Black walnut, red cedar and white oak are not found north of Toronto.

The Discoverer of Cologne. Count Mauritius Fraupont was the discoverer of the process of combining alcohol with odoriferous substances and thereby presented us with a hundred aromatic flavors, toilet waters and cosmetics.

Stories Without Foundation. Speaking of cremation, the London Lancet expresses the opinion that the chances of a living body thought to be dead being reduced to ashes are too indefinitely remote to merit attention.

Glaciers Doomed. According to experts who have been studying the question, the death and total extinction of the prehistoric glaciers is only a matter of time.

Why Mosquitoes Bite. Why do mosquitoes bite human beings? According to Dr. Santos Fernandez of Cuba, it is because the females cannot form their eggs without sucking some warm blood.

The State Capitals. The only states which have capitals in large cities are Massachusetts, Indiana, Virginia, Minnesota, Georgia and Colorado.

Our Naturalized Citizens. But 8.3 per cent of the German born males in the United States have failed to become naturalized, while 13 per cent of the English, 35 per cent of the Russians, 53 per cent of the Italians and 80 per cent of the Japanese are still aliens.

A Wonderful Clock. The Grand Palais in Paris possesses a wonderful clock which was shown in the Paris exhibition of 1855. It is claimed that it does not vary more than the hundredth part of a second in a year.

Our Diplomats and Consuls. The consular service of the United States employs over 1,000 men, whose duties are mainly commercial. Those of the diplomatic service number less than 100.

Plant and Animal Life. Plant life is much more tolerant than animal life of extremes of temperature, growth having been observed in some instances as low as zero and in other instances as high as 72 degrees C.

Cotton and Its Origin. The cotton plant first came to America from Asia. Now the greater part of the central Asian crop is grown from American cotton seed.

WHEN SHORTY'S CHANCE CAME

[Copyright, 1903, by C. D. Lewis.]

Around Fulton market and all along Front street they knew Shorty O'Higgins. His given name was John, but as he was a trifle less than five feet high he was always called Shorty. There was only one thing to console Shorty in his struggles to keep a dunce's suit of clothes on his back and prevent hunger from gnawing at his vitals. He couldn't sing, play the fiddle or dance a hornpipe, but he could sneeze. The fame of Shorty's sneeze extended clear down to the Battery and up to the Brooklyn bridge.

One day Shorty picked up a bit of news and was at once interested. No one could remember when he had been interested in anything before. The Cubans had suddenly braced up and sailed into the Spaniards with new vigor, and the junta had raised a large sum of money in the States to send over a cargo of war material. Shorty learned what craft would take the cargo and her date of sailing, and it came about that he was included in the crew, though the mate bestowed a kick upon him as an "N. G." almost before the ropes were clear of the snubbing posts.

The steamer at length headed in for the appointed rendezvous, but when ten miles off the shore two things happened. A gunboat was sighted bearing down on her, and darkness had scarcely come when a thick fog settled down with it. Shorty wasn't to blame for either the gunboat or the fog, but the mate swore that he was and gave him some more of the same old tonic. No living man had ever heard Shorty O'Higgins utter threats of vengeance; no one had ever known of his striking back. Had the fish dealers of Fulton market been told that he thirsted for revenge after that last bouncing about they would have stood amazed.

The flibuster had reefs to look out for and an intricate channel to thread. As the fog came down she had to grope. A little later she came to a standstill. The Spaniard came up to within half a mile of her and began to play her search light. No good. Then she crept forward, fathom by fathom, with her crew at the guns.

The order had been "lights out" and no talking aboard the flibuster. Everything that could creak and groan was lashed fast, and such men as were forced to move about removed their shoes. The pall was so thick that a man standing amidships could not see stem or stern. The hare crouched in her form while the hound hunted to and fro. Presently, as the ocean was as quiet as a graveyard, Shorty found himself beside the mate. The mate wasn't thinking of bouncing anybody just then, but Shorty was reviewing the past. He reviewed for five minutes and then whispered in the mate's ear: "Mr. Davis, I'm goin' to sneeze."

"If you do, I'll throttle you!" replied the mate as he turned on him. "Mr. Davis, I'm goin' to sneeze, and you can get ready to go to the bottom of the sea and be hanged to you!" The mate had heard of "the Shorty sneeze," and even as he reached out to grasp the originator and sole proprietor by the throat and choke him into a state of limpsness he turned pale and his heart pounded his ribs. He failed to get to Shorty's neck in time. The sneeze came, and it was a sneeze that would have set 500 pedestrians along Front street wondering what tug had exploded her boilers. They could have heard it aboard the gunboat had she been four times as far away. There was a prompt hail in reply, and then, as the flibuster captain ripped out an oath and the mate drew his leg back for a kick, the Spaniard let go with his port battery and three big shells crashed into the steamer. A minute later she was a sinking wreck and taking half of her thirty-six men to the bottom of the sea with her.

Next day at noon Shorty O'Higgins was swept ashore on a log of wreckage. He crawled up on the beach and fell down and slept the sleep of exhaustion. Ten hours later he woke up to find a dozen long haired, wild eyed men grouped about him. "The steamer and the cargo—where are they?" was asked. "Under twenty fathoms of the blue," he answered. "But why so? How was it?" "Oh, I sneezed and sent 'em there!" M. QUAD.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

How It May Be Prettily Trimmed at Small Expense.

Your tree selected, you can trim it for as much or as little money as you please. If your tree is very tall it will be well to trim the upper branches before placing it in a perpendicular position lest they be too high to be easily reached. First of all you want some attractive and appropriate ornament for the summit or "tip top" point of your tree, says the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. If you desire to trim it at very little cost a small figure of Santa Claus may be bought for 10 cents or you may substitute for that patron saint of Christmas a cardboard figure of a boy or girl in winter garb or one of an angel with a trumpet blowing out Christmas tidings.

A surprising quantity of pink and white popped corn can be bought for a few cents, and if strung upon strings and festooned on the upper branches it will look very pretty, as will also cranberries similarly used. Snowballs of white cotton festooned to the ends of the boughs and small pieces of the same scattered all over the tree give a very pretty snow effect.

A yard of turlan costs 10 cents, and little stockings cut from it sewed with gayly colored yarn and filled with candies are a great addition. Colored candles, 6 cents a dozen, and tin holders for them at 8 look very pretty. In this way a tree may be attractively trimmed at from \$1 to \$2.

Sprays of red berried holly tied here and there on the tree tend to brighten it. The box that holds the tree may be covered with thick moss, bits of broken mirror being interspersed to represent water. A box of tin soldiers, a Noah's ark or a wooden village, a gift for one of the children, might find its first use in populating this miniature landscape at the foot of the tree.

If you want an expensive tree nothing is prettier in the way of ornament than the colored balls of the shops. Hang these numerous from every branch and have festoons of smaller ones from branch to branch all around the tree from top to bottom. Use plenty of the tinsel representing frost and icicles and the little balls like frozen bubbles from a liquid rainbow. Then the shops have a close imitation of festoons of snow, which you can attach to every twig, branch, bow and needle. This snow is made of fine tissue paper and comes packed in boxes. Gift stars, sold at any stationer's, should be used in abundance, as should also cardboard, china and candy angels, cherubs and children. A tree thus trimmed costs from \$10 to \$25.

How to Wrap Up Christmas Gifts. A dainty gift deserves dainty covering. The foremost idea in a gift bestower's mind is to please its recipient and as first impressions are always the most lasting the manner in which the remembrance is got up oftentimes goes a long way in the pleasure of it. A quantity of pure white wrapping paper can be bought for a small sum, and with one or two pieces of baby ribbon in white, light blue, pink or green, which can be had as low as 10 cents apiece, each containing ten yards, you can do up a multitude of your Christmas offerings in a way that will be delightful, says the Philadelphia Record. A more elaborate idea, new this year, is to tie them up in cracker bonbon style in crumpled tissue paper and ribbon. This costs a little more than the first way named, but is very effective, and the cost can be reduced by crapping the paper yourself and tying with baby ribbon instead of the wider one.

Unfortunate. Moneybags—How did your banquet go off, Banklurk? Banklurk—Not as well as it might, you know. The toastmaster called on a gentleman who had lost an arm and a leg to answer to the toast "Our Absent Members."—New Yorker.

Political Economy. "Children," asked the school committee man, "what is political economy?" "Political economy," answered the precocious son of the district boss, "is getting men to vote for you as cheap as you can."—Green Bag.

The Rarest of Goldfishes. One of the rarest and most expensive of goldfishes is the brushtail, a pair of which sell for \$1,000. Probably there is no other living thing of its size and weight that is worth so much money.

Decifitful Man. "Didn't you think that was a beautiful girl with me today, Arthur?" "What girl, my dearest?" "Why, she was with me when you met us in front of the church." "Was there a girl there, dear? I didn't notice. I was looking at you." And then she loved him all the more.

An Old Favorite

ALICE RAY

By Sarah Josepha Hale

THE birds their love-notes warble Among the blossomed trees; The flowers are sighing forth their sweets To wooing honey-bees; The glad brook o'er a pebbly floor Goes dancing on its way,— But not a thing is so like spring As happy Alice Ray.

An only child was Alice, And like the blast above, The gentle maid had ever breathed An atmosphere of love; Her father's smile like sunshine came, Like dew her mother's kiss; Their love and goodness made her home, Like heaven, the place of bliss.

Beneath such tender training, The joyous child had sprung, Like one bright flower, in wild-wood bowers, And gladness round her hung; And all who met her blessed her, And turned again to pray That grief and care might ever spare The happy Alice Ray.

The gift that made her charming Was not from Venus caught; Nor was it Pallas-like, derived From majesty of thought; Her healthful cheek was tinged with brown, Her hair without a curl— But then her eyes were love-lit stars, Her teeth as pure as pearl.

And when in merry laughter Her sweet, clear voice was heard, It wiled from out her happy heart Like carol of a bird; And all who heard were moved to smiles, As at some mirthful lay, And to the stranger's look replied, "Tis that dear Alice Ray."

And so she came, like sunbeams That bring the April green; As type of nature's royalty, They called her "Woodbury's queen" A sweet, heart-lifting cheerfulness, Like spring-time of the year, Seemed ever on her steps to wait,— No wonder she was dear.

Her world was ever joyous— She thought of grief and pain As giants in the olden time, That never would come again; The seasons all had charms for her, She welcomed each with joy,— The charm that in her spirit lived No changes could destroy.

Her heart was like a fountain, The waters always sweet,— Her pony in the pasture, The kitten at her feet, The ruffling bird of Juno, and The wren in the old wall, Each knew her loving carefulness, And came at her soft call.

Her love made all things lovely, For in the heart must live The feeling that imparts the charm,— We gain by what we give.

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