

A WINTER NIGHT STORM.

Wounding the boughs that have no leaves,
The northeast blast assaults these eaves,
Whomst I dread I hold my breath,
As though I heard the voice of Death.

And 'neath the cloud strewn tortured sky,
Where yet a moon's ghost wanders by,
The pine form, on yon hillside lone,
As 'twere, an arc of some strange zone.

The serment of some circle vast
From mystic gloom upheast,
Here only visible to sight,
'Mid the tempest's smoking might.

Hush! Is my pale lamp listening
To secrets that these wind flutes bring?
A speech I know not, yet can fear,
As close it whispers to mine ear!

—William Struthers in Boston Transcript.

NAUTICAL OXEN.

Among his neighbors Job Haines was considered a pretty fair sort of a man. He had settled in the little town in the southern part of Kansas, where he lived as an immigrant from New Hampshire, and he brought his Yankee sharpness with him, but as he dealt fair and attended to his own business he passed. The only member of the family besides Job and his wife was Ike, a nephew whom Job had taken to bring up, as he had no children of his own. Ike was a typical New England boy about fifteen years old. He had been brought up in one of the coast villages of Maine, and had a great love for the sea.

Job, like the majority of Yankee farmers, was a firm believer in cattle, and did most of his work with oxen. One day he said to Ike: "Ike, if you'll take that pair of yearling steers and break them to work you can have them." Ike was exceedingly well pleased at that, and at once assumed charge of his new possessions. If ever a pair of young oxen were well taken care of they were. He groomed them as carefully as the horses, so that their sleek coats shone as glossy as silk, and he was so kind with them that they were as gentle as sheep. He named them Jack and Billy.

In his western home Ike never forgot the far off ocean. It had been the one hope of his life to be a sailor, but his being sent west had destroyed it. When his uncle gave him the steers to break, the idea came to him that though he could never expect to tread the deck of his own ship, he could use ship phrases in the education of his oxen, and thus always be reminded of his own home beside the sea. Thus it was that Jack and Billy were educated to work, "broken" totally ignorant of the usual commands by which oxen are managed. "Gee" and "haw," "git up" and "whoa" had no meaning for them whatever. It was "haul away" and "port" and "starboard" and "belay." "Stern all," was back. The oxen grew and waxed strong, and his uncle often remarked that he never saw a team that could do more work than those oxen and Ike. No one but Ike ever thought of handling them.

The nearest neighbor to the Haines was Deacon Merwin, a good man and pillar of the church. The good deacon saw that Ike's yoke of oxen were workers, and a desire came over him to possess them. He offered to buy them several times, but Job always said that they belonged to Ike and were not for sale. The deacon asked Ike if he would sell them, but met with such an indignant refusal that he felt angered, but did not give up the idea of possessing the cattle. Finally he went to Job and said:

"Neighbor Haines, if them cattle'll work good every way I'll give you \$400 for 'em. They're too much property for a boy like Ike to have, and it is apt to create in him a bad spirit and make him feel above his elders."

"Well, I don't know, deacon. The boys sets a deal by them cattle, and a promise is a promise. I gave them to him if he would break 'em, and he has, so I'm bound to keep my part."

"That's all true enough, neighbor Haines, but Ike's only a boy, and then, remember, \$400 ain't offered every day for a yoke of cattle. Why not sell those and give him another pair to break: that 'ud do him just as well."

The deacon's \$400 and persuasions finally weakened Job's scruples, and he gave in. The deacon was to try them, and if they worked all right was to have them for \$400. How to tell Ike what he had done was a poser to his uncle. His aunt declared it a downright mean piece of business, and told Job plainly what she thought of him.

It was finally decided not to say anything to Ike until after the sale had been made and the cattle gone. In order that Ike might not be on hand to see his pets sold he was given a holiday, and went to spend the day at a neighbor's, a couple miles away, where there was a boy of his age who was sort of a chum of his.

The next morning Ike was off bright and early, and the deacon was on hand shortly after. It would not be fair to Job to say that he did not have any misgivings. He would have backed out of the bargain at the least chance, and he really hoped that the deacon would not be satisfied with them. The oxen were brought out and yoked to the cart without difficulty, though the deacon remarked that they did seem "kinder stooped." Job and the deacon climbed up into the cart.

"Gee up!"

The oxen turned their big eyes round inquiringly. "Gee up, there!" repeated Job; but they did not move a hoof.

"That don't appear like good breaking," remarked the deacon.

"They're broke all right," replied Job.

"Come, gee up, there!" at the same time

he gave each a prod with the goad. In response to the prodding the cattle walked off toward the open gate, in which direction their heads happened to be turned. Job did not want them to go in the road, so he shouted out, "Hoy! hoy!" to turn them around, but the oxen had no idea what "hoy" meant, and so kept going straight ahead. Job shouted louder and struck Billy with the goad. They quickened their gait into a trot and turned out into the road. Then Job shouted, "Whoa! whoa!" but they did not mind that either.

"They don't appear to be as well broke as I reckoned on," remarked the deacon, as he stood in the cart and viewed the proceedings.

"They're broke well enough," replied Job, rather nettled, "but I'm strange to them; nobody but Ike ever drove them."

"Well, turn them about," said the deacon.

But they paid no heed to any command, and finally, exasperated, Job struck them both with the goad, and they started at a full run down the road. Clattery bang! the cart went, and both Job and the deacon were compelled to hold on the cart stakes to prevent being bounced out of the cart.

"Stop 'em! Stop 'em!" shouted the deacon. "I want to get out. Whoa! whoa! whoa! ye varmints!" But the oxen only tossed their heads and ran the faster. "Stop 'em, can't ye?"

Job was downright mad by this time. "Stop 'em yourself, you old fool!" snapped he; "you know as much how to stop 'em as I do."

"We'll be chucked out and killed!" shouted the deacon, as the cart banged over a stone.

The oxen were now thoroughly frightened and snoring away for fair, and both men were badly scared and holding on for dear life. All at once an idea struck Job.

"Say, deacon, can't you talk some sea talk to 'em? That's what I've allers heard Ike talk to 'em," he called out as the cart bumped along.

"Brother Haines, such sea talk as I've heard ain't proper for a pillar of the church to repeat, and I'll call meesin' on you for this if we git out alive," replied the deacon, with as much dignity as he could assume while holding to the stake.

"Do try, deacon!" shouted the terrified Job: "it may save our lives."

Just then the cart gave a fearful lurch, and the deacon banged his head against the stake he was holding to with considerable force. This made him boiling mad in addition to his fear. "Splice the main brace! Shiver my timbers! Pipe all hands to grog!" and then, as that had no effect on the frantic team, "Boat ahoy!" and then losing all control of himself, "Ahoy! Ahoy! drat ye, ye blankety blank brutes!" and the deacon let out such a string of profanity that Job turned a shade or two paler.

While this was going on the oxen had gotten over considerable ground. The people along the road gazed in open mouthed astonishment to see two such staid citizens going along so furiously with an ox team, and were terribly scandalized at their apparent hilarity.

Ike, totally unconscious of what was going on at home, was plodding along toward his chum's, when he heard a fearful clatter coming behind him. He turned, and could hardly believe his eyes. There came his pets Jack and Billy at a furious pace, and his uncle and the deacon in the cart.

"Stop 'em, Ike! stop 'em!" shouted his uncle when he saw Ike.

Ike stepped to one side of the road, and as the cattle dashed up called out, "Belay, Jack! Belay, Billy!" At the sound of the familiar voice and command they stopped at once, and went quietly up to their young master.

"I'll have the law of you for this, Job Haines," snarled the deacon, as he painfully descended from the cart.

"And I'll call church on you!" retorted Job as he rubbed his bruises. "I won't belong to any church with a man that kin swear like you kin. A purty deacon you be!"

"If I had a bent like that I'd skin him alive!" roared the deacon as he glared at the bewildered Ike.

"Issac, take them cattle home at once," said his uncle. "As for this wicked man here, I shall never notice him again."

Ike took the cattle home. His uncle walked. He said told him about the contemplated sale, and though he expressed commiseration for his uncle it is doubtful if he felt any. His aunt said it served them just right. Ike kept his oxen.—Texas Siftings.

The center of population in this country, which at the close of Jefferson's term was forty miles northwest of Washington, is now twelve miles east of Columbus, Ind.

Suicide is less common among miners than any other class of people, and self destruction, strangely enough, is said to be most prevalent among soldiers.

Early in the fifteenth century a Paris firm annually sent to other parts of Europe over 1,000 dolls, dressed in the latest styles, to serve as models of fashion.

If we could penetrate the earth's surface to a distance of two miles we would find the place where water could not exist except in the state of steam.

The overflow of the Nile begins in June every year and lasts till August. During that time the river is a turbulent stream twelve miles wide.

The Jewish synagogue at Brighton is stated to be one of the few places of worship illuminated by the electric light.

AFTERMATH.

I think I have read the riddle right.
This is the desolate end.
An incident told amid laughter bright.
The last hard clasp of "a friend."
Oh, never his eyes or his tone spoke praise
But speech would hurry after.
To thrust a sting in the honeyed phrase
Or hide the look with laughter.

The air of the room is close! Let me breathe!
How my heart beats, dull and slow!
The smile is checked, that my pallid lips wreath—

Dear God, is it always so?
Thus ever a glimpse of the sun's swift ray,
That hides in the clouds and rain:
But never one long, sweet comforting day
After joyless nights of pain.

Was it the wine in my heart and brain
That so stirred a pulse long still?
The sweeter wine of a voice, did I drain?
Or —? Let it be as it will—
It has all gone under the clouds again.
The glint of the sun on me;
While all that remains are the drops of rain,
Through which I can hardly see.
—Cora Stuart Wheeler in Once a Week.

An Ordinary Life.

Birth, growth, maturity, decay, death—such is the normal history of man. The three periods of life should sustain a certain proportion to each other, twenty years of growth, sixty years of maturity, twenty years of decay. This is what might be counted upon as the ordinary course of human life but for the fact that we labor under a load of ancestral transgressions of physical and moral law, supplemented and intensified by our own personal delinquencies and follies.

How pleasant is the picture! Twenty years of happy childhood and youth, sixty years of intellectual progress and achievement, with domestic and social joys, and then twenty years of slow, almost unobscured decay, characterized by serenity of mind, pleasing memories and joyous anticipations of a grander life beyond the grave.

Sadly different is human existence as we see it. We look with wonder upon Gladstone, past eighty, still vigorous in body and mind, still strong and wise to lead the great Liberal party of England. We accept threecore and ten as life's natural limit, and expect only labor and sorrow if this limit is passed.

We are doomed, we think, by our inheritance, and to some extent this is true. But we should remember the law of recuperation. The torn flesh heals; the broken bone reunites. Diseases tend toward recovery. The weary toiler rises from sleep strong for new labors. The wise physician bases his hopes upon this law.

And this tendency of nature to heal herself may be greatly assisted by careful and intelligent living, so that it is always possible that the man of unfortunate ancestry may secure for himself a good old age and start his posterity upon an ascending plane.—Youth's Companion.

How to Raise Mushrooms Easily.

It is not very difficult to raise mushrooms by hand if one will take a little pains intelligently. They are grown in enormous quantities in France in caves, largely for export, being picked while yet they are only buttons and at their most delicious stage. Collect a quantity of fresh horse droppings as free from straw as possible, and lay them in an open shed in a ridge shape heap. While the pile is "heating" it should be turned from time to time, and when the heat has mostly subsided it should be packed in a very solid bed, over the surface of which pieces of straw, which may be bought at the seedman's, may be put into holes three inches deep. Two or three weeks later cover the heap with an inch of loam, patted gently with the spade, and the mushrooms may be expected in about six weeks. Earth dug from about the roots of growing mushrooms will always furnish spawn for planting.—Washington Star.

Couldn't Pick a Quarrel.

General Fournier was an apostle of the unique in duelling. The mayor of Perugia was his bitter enemy, but as they moved in widely different social circles the general found some difficulty in picking a quarrel. His opportunity came one day as he was showing off before some ladies his expertise with the pistol. The mayor passed, with a rose in his mouth. It was a considerable distance from the general's balcony to the mayor on the other side of the street, but the old fighter knew his skill. "Just notice, ladies," he said, "how I will pick the mayor's rose." He raised the pistol. The women shrieked that he should desist, but too late. The hammer fell, and the rose and the mayor dropped—the latter, only from fright. The general's expertise defeated his purpose. The soreness of his aim terrified the mayor out of sending the desired challenge.

An Electric Retouching Pencil.

A device designed for the service of photographers is an electric retouching pencil. A miniature motor is mounted on the end of the pencil and gives to the pencil point—which is attached to the armature shaft and not to the holder tube—a very rapid motion. The pencil is suspended by a spring in the photographer's cabinet, within easy reach of the negative. The spring relieving the operator from the weight of the apparatus, it is only necessary for him to apply it to the proper point on the negative, and the little instrument will do its own work. Such an arrangement is also expected to become applicable to dentists' tools.—New York World.

A Tale of Heroleau.

"I went for a bath yesterday," said an Auvergnat. "I had been in the watersome time when I suddenly perceived an enormous shark advancing toward me with its jaws open. What was I to do? When he was a yard off I dived, took out my pocket-knife and ripped up the belly of the monster."

"What! Then you are in the habit of bathing with your clothes on?" said one of the listeners.—Courrier du Midi.

A Definition.

"What is meant by the 'bone of contention'?" asked young hopeful, looking up from his book.
"The jawbone, my son," replied his father solemnly—"the jawbone"—Exchange.

ROYALTY ON HALF PAY.

Exiled Monarchs Who Are Forced to Dead Lines of Economy.

Royalty without a civil list or a large private fortune is about the most trying situation to which a human creature can be subjected. I have come across in my day not a few illustrious personages to whom this test was applied by fate, and do not remember one, unless the late king of Hanover, who went through it like a first rate man or woman, though some of them bore reverses better than most persons of far lesser rank known to me, who had fallen in the world and prided themselves on having seen "better days."

Don Juan of Spain, father of Carlos, and husband of the beautiful and splendidly dowered Archduchess Beatrice of Este-Modena, was a lazy old loafer. When "at home" he lived in the Regent's park with a lady who was not at all archducal and seven or eight children, who unfortunately for themselves were every inch Spanish Bourbons. When on the continent Juan was sometimes "Mr. Johns," sometimes "Mr. King," or "M. le Roy," and again, "Mr. Bliss" (a translation of his wife's name), lived generally en garni and dined at cheap tables d'hote. His breath used to smell of mutton ragout, a dish that sticks to the breath like garlic.

The king of Naples also loafed through life, but in a harmless, gentlemanly fashion. He has hopelessly lost his bearings since the Italian confectioner at the corner of the Place de la Bourse was through having given credit too freely to the king's followers, obliged to shut up shop. The poor confectioners supplied dinners for an age to one of the king's brothers, and will have to wait for payment until the Neapolitan Bourbons are restored. Going to lunch at that confectioner's, which he always did on foot, enabled Francis II to get through several hours every day, and afforded him an easy walk to and from the hotel in the Rue Bossy d'Anglais, in which he has lived ever since he came to abide in Paris. He shares so little the tastes of his wife, who goes in for race horses, as in point of fact to live alone, though en ménage with her. The august pair rather camp than reside here.

The Duke of Aquila, having run through his own and his wife's fortune, was ages ago obliged to quit the beautiful villa in which he lived for some years in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, and he is now a pensioner of King Humbert to the amount of \$400 a year (10,000 lire), and also lives en garni. He, however, makes up well when he goes to dinner parties, and has a touch of usual frankness that is pleasant. He drew a good pension so long as the Brazilian empire lasted as its lord high admiral and filled a corresponding situation in the kingdom of Naples before 1860. I do not suppose that he is much of a seaman, but he was formerly always entertaining or being entertained by naval officers, and his manners took a color from theirs. He manages to keep up jovial spirits under depressing circumstances, which I think creditable to him.

Comte de Bari, his nephew, has found consolation for personal and family losses and crosses in marriage with a lady of the corps de ballet, and has adopted a son who is nearly his own age, to the great disgust of the ex-king. In Italian law the adoptee is a member of the Bourbon family, whatever he may be in blood, and is supposed by it to be a grandson of the illustrious Archduke Charles and of Ferdinand II of Naples.—Paris Cor. London Truth.

The Eyes of a Bee.

Every bee has two kinds of eyes—the two large compound ones, looking like hemispheres on either side, and the three simple ones which crown the top of the head. Each compound eye is composed of 3,500 facets—that is to say, an object is reflected 3,500 times on its surface. Every one of these facets is the base of an inverted hexagonal pyramid, whose apex is fitted to the head. Each pyramid may be termed an eye, for each has its own iris and optic nerve.

How these insects manage this marvelous number of eyes is not yet known. They are immovable, but mobility is unnecessary because of the range of vision afforded by the position and the number of facets. They have no lids, but are protected from dust and injury by rows of hairs growing along the lines at the junctions of the facets. The simple eyes are supposed to have been given the bee to enable it to see above its head when intent upon gathering honey from the cups of flowers. Probably this may be one reason, but it is likely there are other uses for them not yet ascertained.—Pearson's Weekly.

Fate of a Dress Critic.

Friar Conecte was accustomed at the close of his sermons to take a staff and go through his congregation battering to pieces any headress that came under his displeasure. Conecte's crusade was continued in every country in Europe till, reaching Rome, he attacked the clothes and morals of the cardinals, was accused of heresy and burned at the stake.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Too Considerate.

"Are Charleton, Hicks & Gormley liberal with their employees?"
"Very. Why, they had Lawson's resignation from their employ typewritten at their own expense and sent to him, just to save him time, postage and trouble."—Harper's Bazar.

"Plots" Are Very Scarce.

James Payn recently told this anecdote to illustrate the difficulty of securing good plots:

"Trollope was at one time almost alone in not seeing the necessity of having any 'story' in his books. Wilkie Collins once said to him, 'Your fertility, my dear fellow, amazes me: where do you get—they are not much, but still you have to find them—your plots from?' 'Well, my good sir, to tell you the truth, from you. A very little bit of one of your plots—and, you see, you never miss it—does for me.'"

"The fact is, a good plot is a difficult thing to get. A very clever acquaintance of mine, a divine who had distinguished himself in literature, once controverted this. He said he had himself quite a talent for plots, only being in the theological line, they were of no use to him. 'Well,' I said, a little irritated, 'you are always wanting money for your chance (I had never heard so, but I knew the cloth, and the shaft went home), and for every good plot you give me, if it is only in ten lines, I'll give you ten pounds.' After a while—not the next day, as he had led me to expect—he sent me a dozen. 'I didn't find it quite so easy as I thought,' he admitted in his letter, 'but here they are.'"

"Six were as old as the hills and the other six not worth a farthing. I have had hundreds of plots—or the hint of them, which is all that is required—given me in the course of my literary career, but only two good ones, and one I bought. They are very rare and valuable articles."

How an Old Phrase Originated.

The phrase "That beats bobtail" is not uncommon even now in many parts of the country, especially in the south. Its origin is traceable to a race which occurred about 1840 or shortly before that year on the famous Fairfield track on the Mechanicsville turnpike, near Richmond. In those days Bob Poin-dexter lived in Richmond. He was a sporting man, wore fine clothes and owned a number of horses. Among his animals was one he named Pizarro, a plain bay gelding, with black mane and tail, the latter bobbed short.

There was nothing extraordinary about the horse, and nobody looked upon him as a racer. But Poin-dexter took a notion that he could run. He used to drive Pizarro about Richmond hitched to a buggy. On the day that he was advertised to appear on the track a great crowd was present and excitement ran high, for a good deal of money had been put on the other horses. To the astonishment of everybody Pizarro beat every horse on the track, and the people went fairly wild.

Bobtail Pizarro never made much of a record. He won two or three races, and then went to pieces. For years afterward, when anything extraordinary happened in that section it was said of it, "That beats bobtail."—Baltimore American.

She Took Them All Back.

They had quarreled, and the high spirited girl said she handed him a package: "There, Mr. Ferguson, are the presents you have given me. Now that all is over between us, sir, there should be no reminders of the foolish past."

"You are right, Miss Keezer," he said humbly, "and I suppose I must return the gifts you have presented to me."

"I never gave you anything, sir, that I remember."

"Indeed you did."

"Sir!"

"Miss Keezer—Katie!" he exclaimed, with something that sounded like a sob. "I value them beyond everything else in the world! It would break my heart to return them; but there is nothing else left for me to do."

"Will you kindly tell me, sir, what you are speaking of?"

"I am speaking, Katie, of the kisses you have given me! They are not mine now. It's my duty to restore them. Forgive me, darling, but I cannot go away without!"

"Oh, George!"

When the clock struck eleven, about three hours later, George was still returning them.—London Tit-Bits.

Church Chimes Are Common.

Within the last sixteen years only two new chimes have been put up in this city—those of St. Michael's church and those of St. Andrew's. In 1876 there were three chimes—those of Trinity, Grace church and St. Thomas. At that time a writer in one of the prominent magazines expressed surprise that there should be "a chime away off in Eureka, Cal., three sets in Troy, N. Y., one in Hartford, one in Birmingham, Conn., and one in Savannah."

There are many chimes now "away off in California," and all the large cities have them. That there are only five full chimes in New York is good evidence that only five churches care for them, for a good set can be bought for less than \$10,000, and dollars are not scarce in the New York churches.—New York Sun.

A German biologist says that the two sides of a face are never alike. In two cases out of five the eyes are out of line; one eye is stronger than the other in seven persons out of ten, and the right ear is generally higher than the left.

Under the old blue laws of Connecticut "any man who shall stand by and see two dogs fight and not try to separate them shall be deemed guilty of a breach of the peace, and shall lie in jail the length of seven days and nights."