

LITTLE FEET.

Patter, patter, little feet,
Making melody so sweet.

Patter, patter, little feet,
Chasing butterflies so neat.

Patter, patter, little feet,
Among the roses blooming sweet.

Patter, patter, little feet,
Straying where the brooklets meet.

-Theodore D. C. Miller in New York Weekly.

TWICE TEN YEARS.

I remember it as well as if it were yesterday. The carriage stood at the door that was to take me back to school for the spring term.

A month or two later—it was in June, I think—after a hard struggle one afternoon with some figures, all about a ship and a cargo and the profit and all that, I went out to join the boys.

Next to the school there was a pretty cottage separated from the school house by a board fence. The two houses were not 100 feet apart, and I could look right through under the trees, and there on the croquet ground stood a girl, a trifle younger than myself, looking straight at me.

Now, when a boy suddenly finds himself observed by a girl he feels very queer. I remember that very well. My hands went right into my pockets, but remembering that was not the correct thing to do in the presence of a girl I took them directly out again.

"If it's your knife you've lost," I heard a little voice say. "It isn't there. I picked up a knife there a week ago, but it was all rusty and no good."

"Oh, never mind," I said, looking up into two eyes away back in a sunbonnet, "it wasn't much of a knife anyway, and I've got another."

"Are you one of the boys at the school?"

"Yes."

"What reader are you in?"

"The Fourth."

"Do you study geography?"

"Yes."

"What's the capital of the United States?"

I scratched my head.

"I don't remember that," I admitted reluctantly. "I'm first rate on capitals, but I can't recollect that one."

"Why didn't you go off with the boys?"

"I was behind with my sums. I expect they've gone to the river. I like the woods pretty well, they're full of squirrels."

"And snakes," she added.

"I'm not afraid of snakes."

"And lizards."

"Nor lizards. I suppose you're afraid to go there."

"No, I'm not."

"If you want to go there now, and are afraid, I don't mind going along, just to keep off snakes and things."

She looked wistfully out at the wood. I can see her now leaning on her wallet, deliberating—if such a process can be called deliberation where the conclusion is predetermined—the straight, lithe figure poised between the mallet and one foot, one little leg crossed on the other—peering out at the forest. Suddenly, without any warning, she dropped the mallet and started for the wood.

We were not long in crossing the field and were walking in the dense shade when she stopped, and looking at me with her expressive eyes said:

"How still it is in here! It seems to me I can almost hear it be still."

"Yes, it is pretty solemn," I replied.

"Let's go on; the river winds around down there and we can see the water go over the dam."

I heard a distant voice calling "Julia." It was very faint; she did not hear it; I stood a moment hesitating.

"Come, let's go," I said, starting forward.

"Julia," I heard again, more faintly than before.

I hurried her on, fearing she would hear the voice and turn back.

Presently we emerged from the wood and stood by the river. I was familiar with the ground, and led my little friend directly to the dam.

"Most of the boys are afraid to walk out on that dam," I said.

"I'd be afraid."

"But you're only a girl; a boy oughtn't to be afraid." With that I started boldly out, occasionally standing on one foot and performing sundry antics to show what a brave boy I was. Then I came part way back and called to her to come.

"Oh, no," she said; "I'm afraid."

"Afraid! You little goose! With me to hold on to!"

Between her fear and a disposition pliable to a boy older and stronger than herself, it was not long before I was leading her out on the dam.

"Don't you see it's nothing?" I said.

She shrank back as I led her along. I determined that she should go to a point where the water poured over a portion of the dam lower than the rest. I turned my back to step up on the post. It was but a moment, I heard a cry, and saw Julia in the pool. The expression that was in her eyes is to this day stamped clearly on my memory—an expression of mingled reproach and forgiveness.

I could scarcely swim a dozen strokes, but not a second had elapsed before I was in the flood.

I swam and struggled and buffeted to reach her; all in vain. An eddy whirled me in a different direction. My strength was soon exhausted. I was borne down the river, sinking and rising, till I came to a place where I caught a glimpse as I came to the surface of a man running along some planks extending into the river and raised above the water on posts. My feet became entangled in weeds. I sank. I heard a great roaring in my ears, then oblivion.

When I came to I was lying on my back. I remember the first thing I saw was a light cloud sailing over the clear blue. There was an air of quiet and peace in it that contrasted with my own sensations. Then I saw a man on his knees beside something he was rubbing. I turned my head aside and saw it was a little figure—a girl, Julia. She was cold and stark.

My agony was far greater than when I had plunged after her into the stream. Then I hoped and believed that if she were drowned I would be also. Now I saw her beside me lifeless, and I lived.

Then some men came, and the man who was rubbing Julia said to them, "Take care of the boy; the girl is too far gone." They took me up and carried me away and laid me for awhile on a bed in a strange house. Then I was driven to the school.

The next day my father came and took me home. I was ill after that, too ill to ask about Julia, but when I recovered what a load was taken from my mind to know that by dint of rubbing and rolling and a stimulant she had been brought to and had recovered. I also learned that the man who cured for us had seen Julia fall and had rescued her. When I saw him running along the planks it was to his boat chained to the end.

That summer my father removed with his family to the Pacific coast. He was obliged to wait some time for my recovery, but at last I was able to travel, and left without again seeing the little girl whom I had led into danger. I only heard that I had been blamed by every one.

Two years passed, during which I was constantly haunted by one idea; that was to go back to New England, find Julia and implore her forgiveness. The years that I must be a boy and dependent seemed interminable. At last I came of age and received a small fortune that had fallen to me, and as soon as the papers in the case were duly signed and sealed I started east.

It was just about the same time of the year and the same hour of the afternoon as when I first saw Julia that I walked into the old school grounds. I had fully intended to go in next door and call for her, but my courage failed me. I had heard nothing of her for years. Was she dead? Was she living? Was she in her old home, or far away? These thoughts chased each other through my mind and I dreaded to know.

I was standing at the school entrance with my hand on the bell when I heard a door in the next house open and then shut. From that moment I could feel that Julia was near me. She came out of the house a slender, graceful girl of nineteen, and picking up a croquet mallet commenced to knock the balls about I wanted to make myself known, but dreaded the horror with which she would regard me when she should know who I was.

"I beg pardon," I said, raising my hat, "can you tell me if the school is still there?" pointing to the house.

"It was moved some years ago," she replied, regarding me with the old honest gaze.

"I was one of the scholars."

"Indeed!" She spoke without any further encouragement for me to go on.

"I see the wood has not been cut away," I added, glancing toward it.

"No, it does not seem to be."

"Were you ever there?"

"Oh, yes, often."

"And is that old dam still across the river?"

"I believe it is."

"Were you ever on the dam?"

She looked at me curiously. I went on without waiting for a reply:

"Would you mind showing me the way to it? It is a long while since I was there."

She drew herself up with a slight haughtiness. Then thinking that perhaps I was unaccustomed to the conventional ways of civilized life, she said pleasantly:

"You have only to walk through the wood straight back of the house and you will come to it."

"Thank you," I replied. "but I hoped you would show me the way."

She looked puzzled.

"Miss Julia," I said, altering my tone. "I once met you when I was a boy here at school."

"I knew a number of the scholars," she said, more interested; "who may you be?"

I dreaded to tell her. "If you will pilot me to the dam," I said. "I will inform you."

She thought a moment, then turned and looked out at the wood. With the quick motion with which she had made the same move as a child she started forward.

We walked side by side to the wood, through it and out on the river bank. There was the water and the dam; everything as it had been.

"Did you ever try to walk out there?" I asked.

"Once, when I was a child, I came here with a boy, and we walked to where the water pours over. I met with an accident. I fell in."

"The boy overpersuaded you, I suppose?"

It was difficult for me to conceal a certain trepidation at the mention of my fault.

"No, I went of my own accord."

"He certainly must have been to blame. He was older and stronger than you."

"On the contrary," she said, with a slight rising irritation, "he jumped after me like the noble little fellow that he was."

I turned away on pretense of examining a boat down the river.

"At any rate he must have begged your forgiveness on his bended knees for permitting you to go into such a danger."

"I never saw him again. He went away."

I fancied—at least I hoped—I could detect a tinge of sadness in her voice.

"I have often wished," she went on, "that he would come back, as the other scholars sometimes do, as you are now, and let me tell him how much I thank him for his noble effort."

"Julia," I said, suddenly turning and facing her, "this is too much. I am that boy. I led you into the wood. I forced you to go out on the dam with me. I permitted you to fall in."

"And more than atoned for all by risking your life to save me!"

Ah, that look of surprised delight which accompanied her words! It was worth all my past years of suffering, of fancied blame; for in it I read how dearly she held the memory of the boy who had at least shared the danger for which he was responsible.

I do not remember if she grasped my hand or I grasped hers. At any rate we stood hand in hand looking into each other's faces.

I blessed the Providence that ended my punishment; I blessed the good fortune that had led me to a knowledge of the kindly heart beside me. Of all the moments of my life I still count it far the happiest.

Then we walked back through the woods, over the intervening field, and stood together leaning against the fence between the old school and her home.

We did not part after that for another ten years. Then she left me to go whence I can never recall her. Yet there is a trysting place in the woods, through which we once passed as children, and often afterward as lovers. There I watch the fleeted sunlight and mark the silence; and it seems to me that I can "hear it be still." More than that, I know the pursuod looks at me through the honest eyes.—F. A. Mitchell.

A Positive Hint.

A man can be more politely insulted in Paris than in any city in the world. A gentleman who undertook to speak in public there expressed himself in such a low tone of voice that the audience were unable to hear him.

Presently one of the audience rolled up his map in the form of a very long attenuated lamplighter, inserted the small end in his ear and turned the other end toward the speaker.

In two minutes, however, every map in the audience was turned into an ear trumpet, and the speaker saw himself confronted with a sort of mammoth porcupine, whose nearest quills almost touched him. He at once spoke louder.

—Exchange.

A Conscientious Oysterman.

Tourist—I have always understood that oysters are not good in months without an r.

Oysterman—Well, most generally they ain't.

Tourist—When do you begin gathering them?

Oysterman—In August.—Good News.

ABYSSINIAN MONKS.

They Retain Third Century Customs and Have Most Remarkable Beliefs.

Abyssinia is a country of queer customs, and a strangely interesting land. The people are, for the most part, dirty and immoral, inferior in many respects to the Kaffirs of South Africa, but they are Christians and have retained in its ancient simplicity the religion that was taught them in the third century.



MONASTERY OF DEBRA BIZEN.

Among Abyssinians the man who kills a lion is a popular hero and is awarded the proud privilege of wearing about his head the mane of the beast he has slaughtered, a privilege that is prized as highly as knight-hood among Europeans and makes its possessor a man of mark to the end of his life.

Some interesting, rare and exceedingly valuable relics they are possessed of, too, or think they are. Here is an account of a visit to the monastery of Bizen by J. Theodore Bent, who recently returned from Abyssinia.

We started off at break of day to visit the monks. It took us three hours to reach the summit, where the monastery of Debra Bizen, or "the Church of the Vision," is placed, and truly the name has been well bestowed, for no more lovely vision could be imagined than the one which lay before us.

We could easily see Massowah and the Red sea coast line, and the folds of rich blue mountains to the right and left of us as we stood on the pinnacle of the sacred mountain were glorious to behold.

My wife and I reached the holy precincts unobserved. We were seeking out for ourselves a spot where we could repose when down came the monks, mute with horror at a woman having approached so near. In vain we expostulated and pleaded fatigue; in vain we said we were English and determined to hold our ground.

The monks sat around weeping and exclaiming, "Better for us to die than to permit a woman to stay here." Seeing their genuine distress, my wife permitted her objectionable and weary person to be removed about a quarter of a mile away.

The church is round and built of wood. It has inside two corridors around it where the vulgar may penetrate, but in the square holy of holies not even the kig may enter. The mysterious relics kept by the Abyssinians in these innermost recesses claim exceedingly bold origins. In one place they profess to have the original ark of the covenant, in another a bag full of wind blown by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

At Debra Bizen our interpreter told me they kept the picture of the madonna which Menelek, the son of Solomon by the queen of Sheba, brought back with him from Jerusalem.

The life of a monk at Debra Bizen must be enjoyable enough. He wanders about all day long in his white flowing robe and yellow cap, enjoying air of the most perfect freshness. He has his little stone cell or wooden hut beneath the shadow of the rock. He has his refectory, where he meets his fellows twice a day at mealtimes—that is to say, when there is no fast on, and fasts in the Abyssinian calendar are many and rigorous. On festival days he is very busy chanting and dancing in the church. He never marries. He knows nothing of the world or its vicissitudes. His existence is a negative one—he does neither harm nor good to his fellow creatures.

The Figure "4" in Grevy's Life.

The figure "4" was curiously associated with the life of the late French president. M. Grevy died after four days' illness, four years after his removal from the presidency, at the age of eighty-four. He lived under four sovereigns in the earlier part of his life. Then came the revolution of 1848, and four governments then succeeded each other before he was elected president. Lastly, he died under the fourth president of the present republic.

M. Grevy, when in practice at the bar, received the largest fee ever paid counsel during this century. He held the lucky brief for his friend, M. Dreyfus, in the great guano lawsuit, and was paid altogether £40,000. Not even the aggregate fees paid Sir John Duke Coleridge (now Lord Coleridge) in the Tichborne trial approached this splendid fee.—London Tit-Bits.

Enterprising Advertising.

A firm on Fourteenth street, in the busiest shopping neighborhood, has introduced a novel advertisement. A painted theatrical ocean is constructed on the roof of one house, while the roof of the adjoining building, being a little higher, serves as the shore. On this shore a man attired as the lion tamer sits and industriously goes through the pantomime of fishing.

Now and then he works the lines of a miniature sailboat, causing the latter to skim the mimic sea. All of this attracts the attention of thousands of people on the opposite walk. For fear, however, that some might go by without seeing it, a hired confederate of the lion fisherman saunters along the walk and gazes upward. It is human nature to stop and look at anything anybody else is looking at. Result, crowds of curious gazers.—New York Herald.

A Turtle's Nest.

In the town of Patten, a place distant from tidewater over ninety miles, there is a great curiosity, known as the "turtle's nest." For fifty-two years a turtle has come annually to the nest to deposit her eggs. Over half a century ago she selected her nest, then in an open field, but now in a yard in front of a residence. A relative of the owner of the house branded the date 1841 upon the turtle's back, and it can be plainly traced now. She comes about the same date each year, and her first few days are passed in inspecting the ancient nest, the yard and surroundings.

Later she digs a hole in the ground and there deposits her eggs. This year she left forty-two eggs, but as many were carried away and the others often disturbed, only about a dozen of the eggs hatched out. The owner of the house has ten of the little turtles, none more than twice the size of a postage stamp. The old turtle always departs after laying the eggs; the warm sand and sun serve as an incubator.

This turtle has been seen at the Drew Dead Water on the Mattawankeag river, fully fifty miles away from the nest. Her weight varies from thirty to thirty-five pounds, and it is said she was as large when branded as she is now. Each June she comes to Patten, and is always welcomed by old and young.—Bangor (Me.) Letter.

Hats Off to the Synagogue.

The vexed question of "hats on" or "hats off" during public worship was settled at the annual meeting of the Anshe Chesed congregation, at the temple on Scoville avenue. The old Jewish custom of the male members of the congregation wearing their hats during public worship has always been in vogue in this congregation. A number of the younger and more progressive members have objected to the custom, and it has caused more or less discussion for several years. The older members held tenaciously to their hats, and the younger ones bided their time until they should have a sufficient majority converted to their views to change the custom.

The matter was brought up at the annual meeting, which was very largely attended. The hat question was discussed at great length, and several very warm speeches were made on both sides. It was finally put to a vote, and the members who are opposed to wearing hats were victorious by a decided majority. The decision was that hereafter the congregation shall worship with hats off, but those who desire to retain their head covering will be permitted to do so.—Cleveland Leader and Herald.

Walking Back to the Big City.

Wrecks of the early winter theatrical season are already seen in New York—managers whose ventures have failed after a few nights out of town, tired looking actors who seem to have walked home, and bedraggled looking women, whose faces tell plainly of their disappointments. It is the old story of poor plays, poor houses and the refusal of the guest to do his weekly little pedestrian act. And yet in the main the theatrical outlook is very good, for with big crops comes plenty of money and an army of people to be amused. But it is the survival of the fittest. The poor plays are not patronized, and the managers of many come to grief. There are many familiar faces on the Rialto today, men and women who started off a month ago filled with hope. Some of them will be glad to shovel snow for a living before spring.—Foster Coates in Mail and Express.

A Bad Place for Wrecks.

When a vessel sinks in the channel through Lake George flats, near Sault St. Marie, there is plenty of trouble. The value of the vessels delayed by a wreck there recently is estimated at \$14,000,000, and that of their cargoes at \$4,000,000. At one time seventy lake steam vessels were anchored on the east side of the blockade and sixty on the west side, and a new channel had to be cut through the flats to allow them to continue their ways. Four dredges worked day and night to make a channel 700 feet in length, 60 in width and 50 in depth. It is said that the only way to prevent accidents like that which caused the wreck is to limit the speed of vessels in the channel. There was the same trouble at the St. Clair flats until men were stationed at the ends of the channel to time the vessels.—New York Sun.

A Wonderful Underground Lake.

An underground lake has been discovered three miles from Genesee, Ida. It was found by a well digger. A depth of sixteen feet clear, pure lake water ran out over the surface for a few feet, then settled back to the earth's level. The most curious part of it is that fish were brought to the surface on the overflow. They have a peculiar appearance and are sightless, indicating that they are underground fish. The spring has attracted much attention, and many farmers in the vicinity fear that their farms will drop into the lake.—Boise (Ida.) Statesman.

Bobbed While Asleep.

A queer case was tried in the circuit court of Louisville Friday. The defendant was a man who was captured in the act of committing burglary. The defense set up the plea that the defendant was a somnambulist and was asleep at the time he committed the deed and was, therefore, unconscious of wrong doing. The jury believed and acquitted the man.—Philadelphia Ledger.

A Good Example.

Mrs. Goodwin—You shouldn't eat so many peanuts, Johnny. You'll be having dyppepsia.

Johnny—Do the policemen have dyppepsia, mamma?—Life.