THE KEEPERS OF THE SEAL.

I sing the song of labor, of the lowly smelling soil,
The whirling of the spindle and the whirring of the wheel;
The hand that guides the plowshare and the rugged son of toil—
The sinews of the country and its weal.

For the pulses of the Nation beat within the sturdy arms
That are bared before the anvil, or they wear an humble guise;
And the sentinels of liberty, the shields from war's alarms,
Are wholesome hearts and honest seeing eyes.

Those who feel the sweat of labor ere they break the wage of bread,
Nor covet goods beyond the pale that bounds an honest reach;
But give to God the glory, and the thanks that they are fed,
And rather live a principle than preach.

Ah! God of Heaven, pity for the chilling drops that creep
In tortuous threads, where living strength should swell the Nation's veins;
The sloth that cumbers progress, and the useless drones who steep
The curse that follows idle hands and brains.

I sing a song of labor, for the keepers of the seal,
For a new day broke in radiance on the warders of the land;
Clearer thought to those who ask it, heaping store to those who kneel;
To the sons of stalwart heart and horny hand.
—Youth's Companion.

CECILIA'S ROMANCE

"I ALWAYS thought that fate had reserved me for better things," sighed Cecilia Maynard, as she sat on the Spa at Seamoor and watched the fashionable crowd drift idly to and fro, "and now—and now——"

"And now," said her friend, Mrs. Melville-Graham, putting the obvious finish to the broken sentence, "you know it."

Cecilia Maynard was the beauty of the family. That is not saying much for her, but she thought it was, and so did the family. People are apt to set a fancy value on themselves. As a matter of fact, she was a pretty girl—neither more nor less—but her family thought her a beauty, and never tired of impressing the fact on her and on their friends. This pleased them and amused their friends, and hurt nobody but Cecilia. It is not a wise thing to persuade a girl that she is altogether superior to the state of life into which she has been called; but people are at times very unwise in their generation.

It was a sacred and jealously cherished belief in the Maynard family that Cecilia would make a brilliant match. They looked upon it as a certainty. They always said, "When Cecilia makes her grand marriage, we shall do so and so;" not "If Cecilia makes her grand marriage, etc., etc." Cecilia shared their belief, and wasted hours and hours in idle dreaming of the life that she would lead when the fairy prince had rescued her, like Cinderella of old, from her present surroundings.

Now at last the fairy prince had arrived on the scene, and this is the history of his coming.

Every year the Maynards were in the habit of spending a month at some fashionable seaside place, and this year they had chosen Seamoor, and established themselves at the Regal Hotel, which is, as everyone knows, the most select in the town. Cecilia had six large dress baskets with her, and arrayed in their contents, she dazzled the Seamoor world—or imagined that she did so, which, after all, was just as gratifying to her vanity. Imagination is a fearful and wonderful thing. She imagined herself the cynosure of all eyes, and the admired of all beholders, whereas, in reality, she was neither the one nor the other. If she had known that she would have been miserable; but she did not know it, and so she was happy. This is a strange world! When the Maynards had been at Seamoor a week, a fresh arrival threw the Regal into a state of great excitement. As a rule, fresh arrivals were not much thought of there, for people were always coming and going; but this particular fresh arrival was something quite out of the common run. He—for, of course, it was a he—really deserves a descriptive paragraph all to himself.

To begin with, he was a very remarkable looking man, 6 foot 4, and broad in proportion; a magnificently built specimen of the human race. Then he had a most insinuating manner. He did not say so very much, but he looked volumes, and he had a trick of dropping his voice and murmuring confidentially into his neighbor's ear, that wrought great havoc in the ranks of the opposite sex. Added to that, he had a certain amount of swagger on, and threw his money about right and left with a lordly disregard for the principles of economy. His name was so fascinating, too, Auriel de Vismes. What woman could withstand such a name? It was all very well for Shakespeare to write:

What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.

But either Shakespeare left women out of his calculations or times have changed since his day. Auriel de Vismes would not have been half so interesting a personage if he had been called John Jones. Auriel de Vismes! It was so poetical, so refined and so mysterious. Who were the De Vismes, everybody asked. But nobody knew. Everybody felt sure that they were somebodies, but nobody had ever heard of them. De Vismes himself gave no clue to his identity, though he made it plain that he was accustomed to what the penny-a-liners call "the highest grades of society." He talked casually of people whom he knew, mentioning well-known names in an off-hand manner that deeply impressed the Maynards and their set, but that was all.

Cecilia had a theory of her own. She was convinced that the distinguished stranger was a duke, or at the very least, the heir to a dukedom. The great point of women's theories is that they are seldom affected by such trivial details as facts and probability.

The growth of mutual love is, according to the poets and novelists, a beautiful thing; but it is not every one who has the privilege of beholding it. The inmates of the Regal Hotel were thus privileged, and it is to be hoped that they were appreciative.

Auriel de Vismes and Cecilia Maynard fell in love with one another, and the affair progressed rapidly up to a certain point. They walked together, talked together and drove together in a smart mail phaeton, with a pair of stepping cobs that De Vismes hired from the most expensive livery stables in the town. They were always accompanied by a discreet chaperon, for Seamoor, as we all know, is a place given over to gossip and scandal. The discreet chaperon, however, was an adept in the art of effacing herself on occasion, and Vismes had plenty of opportunities of asking a certain tender question—if he had chosen to avail himself of them. But he did not choose to avail himself of them. That was the perplexing part of the whole matter. He made love to Cecilia, that is to say, he murmured confidentially in her ear, and looked unutterable things, but there it ended. He did not progress beyond that point. Cecilia did her best to lead him in the way that she thought he ought to go, but all to no purpose. He looked love, but he did not speak of marriage.

And this unsatisfactory state of affairs lasted up to the end. De Vismes left the Regal one day as suddenly as he had come, and without committing himself in any way. True, he held Cecilia's hand for quite two minutes at parting, while he gazed eloquently into her eyes and murmured a hope that she would not forget him, but what was that? Poor Cecilia! The blow was a hard one. For three weeks she had thought of herself as an embryo duchess, and now she had to begin all over again and think of herself once more as the third Miss Maynard, with no prospects worth mentioning.

Mrs. Melville-Graham, who really felt sorry for her, was very kind.

"It's a pity you're so romantic, Cis," she said practically, "but you're not altogether to blame for that. It's your family's fault, I'm afraid. They wouldn't let you be sensible. However, it's no good thinking about that now, we have other fish to fry. Things have gone against you, and you've got to face them and make the best of them. I'll tell you what you shall do. You shall come and spend the winter with me in town, and ten to one you'll meet somebody who will put Auriel de Vismes' image out of your silly little head. Cheer up, and buy some new frocks. You shall make your grand match yet."

But Cecilia shook her head, and put her handkerchief to her eyes.

"I shall never marry now," she sobbed. "I have lived my life and had my romance, and—and—it's very kind of you, Norah, but I would rather stay quietly at home."

"Nonsense," Mrs. Melville-Graham returned, imperturbably, "you haven't lived your life, and you are not going to stay quietly at home. You're going to spend the winter with me in town, and—who knows?—you may meet Auriel de Vismes again, and it may all come right in the end. The world is very small you know, and the course of true love never runs smooth."

Mrs. Melville-Graham was a clever woman, and generally managed to gain her point. She gained it on this occasion.

Cecilia looked up and mopped her eyes.

"I'll come," she said meekly. "Thank you, Norah; it's very kind of you to trouble about me."

October saw her comfortably established in the Melville-Graham's luxurious home in Park Lane, and then began the round of winter gayeties. Mrs. Melville-Graham's set hardly consisted of the creme de la creme, but it was a very festive one. Entertainments and amusements of every kind followed one another in bewilderingly quick succession, and Mrs. Melville-Graham hoped that in the whirl Cecilia would soon learn to forget; but she did not. Auriel de Vismes was too striking and attractive a man to be easily forgotten by a romantic, impulsive, sentimental girl. Cecilia watched and waited, as many women have done before, and as many women will again, hoping for a sight of the man she loved; but she watched and waited in vain.

At last there came a day when she rushed into Mrs. Melville-Graham's room in a state of uncontrollable excitement.

"Norah," she exclaimed, breathlessly, "Norah, have you ever had a presentiment?"

Mrs. Melville-Graham looked up from the novel on her knees, and smiled her most practical smile.

"Never, my dear," she answered, "and if I had I shouldn't know what to do with it."

"Well, I have one now," Cecilia announced, in the same breathless tone, and then she struck quite a dramatic attitude. "I have one now," she repeated. "I have a presentiment that I shall meet Auriel de Vismes to-night. I feel it—I know it! I shall meet him!"

Mrs. Melville-Graham smiled again.

"I'm sure I'm very glad to hear it," she replied, returning once more to her book; "I hope he will be able to give some satisfactory explanations of his conduct at Seamoor, and I think you had better put on your new frock."

The Melville-Grahams' engagements for that particular evening numbered four, and included a dinner, two receptions and a dance. Cecilia's presentiment did not specify at which entertainment she was to meet her recalcitrant lover, but that was a detail.

The dinner, of course, came first on the list. It was given by Lord and Lady Clayburn, new acquaintances of the Melville-Grahams, and Cecilia arrived at their house in a state of nervous excitement that it took all her strength to control. The presentiment was growing stronger every minute.

The Melville-Grahams were the last to arrive, and Cecilia looked anxiously at the large party assembled in the drawing room, but he for whom she looked was not among them. It was a great relief to her overstrung nerves when the solemn butler announced dinner, and they all filed into the dining room.

Cecilia's cavalier was elderly, and his conversational powers were somewhat limited. He sounded his companion on one or two subjects, with very little result, and then took refuge in silence and the elaborate menu.

Left to her own devices, Cecilia began taking stock of the guests assembled at table. She was getting quite amused and interested in this occupation, when all at once a startling sound fell on her ears—a sound that thrilled her like an electric shock, and made her heart beat wildly.

It was Auriel de Vismes' confidential murmur. There was no mistaking it. She would have known it anywhere. De Vismes must be in the room, that was plain. But where? He was not at the table, and yet she could hear that never-forgotten murmur so plainly. It was coming nearer, too. What did it mean? What could it mean? Nearer and nearer. Now it was at her elbow.

"Turbot, ma'am?"

With a start of horror, Cecilia turned her head. There by her side stood a gigantic footman, a gorgeous, powdered flunkey, resplendent in the Clayburn full-dress livery of crimson and gold, with plush knee breeches and white silk stockings. He held a plate in his hand, and his voice dropped to its most insinuating key as he began to repeat his question.

"Tur——"

At that point his eyes met Cecilia's. The next moment Lady Clayburn's pet footman, in a state closely bordering on apoplexy, was picking up fragments of the oldest Crown Derby in England.—London Truth.

The Duke of Wellington.

Wellington on one occasion started, Sir Herbert Maxwell tells us, at 7 a. m., rode to a place twenty-eight miles distant, here held a review, and was back at the place from which he had started for dinner between 4 and 5 p. m. He galloped twenty-six miles and back to see whether damage had been done to the pontoon train. He rode seventeen miles in two hours from Freneda to Ciudad Rodrigo, where he dined, gave a ball, and supper; was in the saddle again at 3 a. m.; galloped back to Freneda by 6 and was doing business again at noon. He rose regularly at 6, and wrote till 9, and after dinner wrote again from 9 till 12.

It must be essential to every General and indeed to every man who is bearing a heavy load of anxious business, to be a good sleeper. Napoleon was a first-rate sleeper; so was Pitt; so was Brougham; so was Mr. Gladstone; so was Wellington. At Salamanca Wellington, having given his order for the battle, said to his aid de camp: "Watch the French through your glass, Fitz Roy. I am going to take a rest. When they reach that copse near the gap in the hills, wake me." Then he lay down, and was fast asleep in a minute. In the midst of the critical operations before Waterloo, feeling weary, he laid himself down, put a newspaper over his face, and took a nap.—Goldwin Smith in the Atlantic.

Fashionable Chirography.

Gladys Helene Montague, her transparent gold ochre hair glittering in the sunlight, sat at her mahogany desk writing her answer to Reginald Fitzmaurice's proposal. Gladys' chirography was of the fashionable young ladies' seminary style, with three characters to perform the duties of twenty-six.

My Dearest Girl—Your answer has made me the happiest man in the world.

How did I dare hope that you would stoop to bless such as I? I pray God that I may be worthy of you, my darling.

I long to press you to my heart. Ever thine. REGINALD.

My Dear Miss Montague—On Wednesday I sail for Europe. If at any time you should change your mind, a word from you will bring me to your side.

My address will be Brown, White & Co., London. Faithfully yours,
REGINALD FITZMAURICE.

Dear Gladys—After a sleepless night spent in the vain endeavor to decipher your note, I have written these two answers.

Will you kindly return immediately the one which does not fit the occasion.

I cannot stand this strain much longer. Your anxious REGINALD.
—Detroit Free Press.

Many Miles of Hard Sledding.

The distance from the farthest point of polar discovery to the pole itself is 400 miles.

The man who sits down with folded arms and hopes is the biggest kind of a fool.

OVERRUN BY BANDITS

BAD STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE ISLAND OF CUBA.

Planters Pay Well to Prevent Destruction of Their Property—Most Successful Practice a Kind of Blackmail, but Ostensibly Within the Law.

Banditry in Cuba is to all intents and purposes a well-recognized profession. They have a habit of holding up people of means that differs in some respects from the mode of the Italian brigands, but leads to the same results.

A gentleman who has lived in Cuba nearly all of his life states that it is in large part due to the moneyed men themselves that tribute is paid to gangs of robbers, who have a polite way of doing things. This gentleman said:

"I know of one man in the province of Cienfuegos who has been compelled to pay vast sums annually in order to prevent the destruction of his property. This money has been paid to a man who figured prominently in the last revolution and who has a plan all of his own for forcing money from wealthy people. This man, who makes the collections, is supposed to have a large following in that province, and for this reason it is an easy matter for him to intimidate those who feel that they have not the protection which the law should give.

"He will go to the owner of a large plantation and ask to borrow $500 or $1,000 for a few weeks. The owner of the plantation knows that it is useless to refuse, and he knows, too, that the money paid out in this way will never be paid back to him. It is a tribute which he feels he must give to those who are supposed to have some influence because of their connection with the late revolution. The money is paid without a protest, and it is not long before another request for funds is made.

"It is largely due to the lack of moral courage on the part of those who are held up that these bandits, for such they are, are able to continue their work. The man who has money feels that if he does not comply with their demands he will have his property destroyed and in this way lose a great deal more in a single day or night than he will be asked to pay the bandits in a lifetime. If the property owners would get together and refuse the demands of these scoundrels they would have some chance of putting an end to their work. But they are afraid to do anything, and for this lack of confidence which they have in those who are intrusted with enforcing the law they must pay a tribute. This is what makes the life of the Cuban bandit such a prosperous one. Of course the men who hold up property owners in this way do not consider themselves bandits. In fact, they are never afraid of the law, as they operate in a way to keep on the safe side. They do not make any threats. It is not necessary for them to do so, for it is understood by the man who is held up that they will do him injury if he does not comply with their demands."

The story of the gentleman quoted above is doubtless a true version of the matter. But it is a fact, too, that there are bandits in Cuba who operate in a manner which brings them more closely under the definition of the term bandits. These bandits have been operating in Cuba to some extent during the past year, and it appears that they are increasing rather than diminishing. This is due largely to the utter inefficiency of the rural guards in the past.

The Czar's Forests.

Russia has elaborated a system for the protection of her forests as stringent in its provisions as if it were instituted for the protection of human beings. Only so much wood may be cut down annually in each locality as will be compensated for by the growth of the remaining trees, and all the clearances made are immediately replenished by young plants, says a writer in Pearson's Magazine. Even private owners of forests are not permitted to cut down their trees except under government inspection. No absolute ownership in trees is now recognized, in fact, but that of the state. As a matter of fact, a very large part of the Russian forests belong entirely to the state. The largest private, or rather semi-private, proprietor is the administration of the imperial appanages, which possesses numerous estates, the revenues from which are devoted exclusively to the support of the members of the Russian imperial family.

The total area of these estates is a good deal over 20,000,000 acres. Being situated in the most diverse districts, an extraordinary variety of subtropical and temperate natural productions is cultivated, including sugar, tobacco, cotton, wine, tea, fruit, roses, as well as grain of every kind. The principal culture, however, at any rate in extent, is timber, forests, covering nearly 15,000,00 acres of the total. In the exploitation of these forests the greatest care has to be given.

Cool Costume in the Philippines.

The mode of dress in the Philippines is simple and cool in the extreme. The ordinary costume among the well-to-do of all classes is made of white sheeting. A coat and trousers made to order costs but $2. The coat buttons up closely about the neck. A thick felt hat of broad brim, a pair of white canvas shoes, a light under vest and socks, and there is your Philippine costume all the year round. About eighteen of these suits are sufficient for a newcomer in ordinary standing, but he must expect often to wear two a day.

Many a man who lives next door to a church is unable to describe its interior arrangement.

LAST TRACE OF THE MISSION.

Monument in China Outside the Gate of Singaufu.

Here is a picture of the oldest Christian monument in China. It dates from the eighth century. Few Americans probably are aware that missionaries penetrated China as long ago as that.

This is the Nestorian tablet or Syro-Chinese monument which stands one mile outside the gate of Singaufu in Shensi. The story it tells is that of the fortunes of the Nestorian mission in China between the years 636 and 781. It sets forth that the dogmas of Christianity record the history of Christian effort in China and adds a sort of metrical thanksgiving to God and to the emperors who favored the Christian cause.

CHRISTIAN MONUMENT IN CHINA 1,100 YEARS OLD.

All trace of the mission has vanished except only this monument, says the New York World. It was unearthed in 1625 and copies of its inscription were sent to various capitols of Europe, exciting great interest at the time, and nowhere more than in London. Two lines of Syriac run down the left and right side of the Chinese. There is also Syriac writing at the foot. Recent visitors have found that the stone is in good preservation, and rubbings which have been taken attest its perfection.

In 1859 a Chinaman rebuilt the tablet into the brick wall where it had once stood outside the city. The material is a coarse marble. A considerable controversy has raged round this interesting relic, but the weight of evidence now inclines toward the conclusion that it is genuine.

HAD LIVED TO SEE 109 YEARS.

Death of Bernard Morris, the Oldest Inhabitant of New York.

Bernard Morris, the oldest inhabitant of New York, who died recently at the age of 109, was known as the "dean of the human race." He used to be a gardener in Prospect Park, and for several years past he has been living peacefully in retirement.

B. MORRIS.

Barney attributed his remarkable longevity to his lifelong abstinence from spirits of all kinds and from tobacco. He was born in the County Cavan, Ireland, June 10, 1792. There he lived until he was 32, and then he came to America and entered for a coachman. At this trade he worked for six years, and then secured a position as keeper in Prospect Park.

He leaves a widow, who was his third wife and whom he married when he was 68 and she 21. She fell in love with him at first sight and was never from his side a single day.

THE UP-TO-DATE SUNBONNET.

The ideal of simplicity and sweetness. It has been adopted by society for outing use, and may become almost as popular as the shirt waist.

Excused.

Lawyer—Do you know anything about this man's private life?

Witness—No, sir.

"But haven't you been associated with him in business?

"Not in the way you mean? I was one of the directors of the bank in which he was teller."—Detroit Free Press.

Slaughter of Elephants.

Sixty thousand elephants are annually slaughtered in Africa for the sake of their ivory.

HOME OF GREAT FINANCIER.

Little Village Boasts Three Names and Residence of J. P. Morgan.

Just to the south of West Point there is a little village on the Hudson that glories in three names. It has had two names for years, but the third is a recent and confusing addition. By its residents it is called Highland Falls. This name is derived from that handsome cataract sometimes called "Buttermilk Falls," which comes tumbling down through the mountains to make a final leap over a huge rock into the Hudson. The north of the falls is a great cliff. It was on this cliff a number of years ago, says the New York Times, that a hotel was built by a man named Cranston. The village of Highland Falls lies back of this cliff, and very little of it is discernible from the river. As Cranston owned the property to the river's edge, the West Shore Railroad Company was obliged to secure land for its station from him. He also owned the dock where the steamboats tie up. So both the railroad station and the dock became known as Cranston's, although there was of Cranston's only the hotel, while the village of Highland Falls numbers several thousand people.

For years Cranston's Hotel was a fashionable resort. Fashion left it and it was closed. Recently the building, grounds and dock were purchased by the Franciscan Sisters, who have turned it into a seminary for young ladies. When this was in readiness for scholars the sisters decided to call it Ladycliffe Academy, and they accordingly changed the name of the dock to "Ladycliffe."

And so it happens that if you want to go to the village of Highland Falls by boat you get a ticket for "Ladycliffe," and if you go by train your ticket reads to Cranston's.

This little village with the surplusage of names is the home of J. Pierpont Morgan, the world's greatest combiner. Perhaps some day he may be induced to syndicate Cranston's, Highland Falls and Ladycliffe under a new name.

COUNTESS TOLSTOI.

Wife of the Noted Russian Reformer and Her Rare Devotion.

Countess Sophia Andrerona Tolstoi, wife of the great Russian reformer and author, is a meek, mild woman, whose entire life has been spent, since her marriage, in ministering to the wants of her husband, and in rearing her numerous offspring. The Tolstois have had three children, and for these until they were 10 years old the Countess has made all the wearing apparel. She acts as secretary and critic to the Count and chiefly concerns herself with the table desires of her lord and master. Countess Tolstoi is one of the most cultured women in all Europe. When she was 17 she received a diploma from the University of Moscow. One year later she married the Count after a romantic courtship, which has been reproduced word for word in that of Levin and Kitty in "Anna Karenina." Among her manifold duties is that of looking after her husband's copyrights and royalties, and it is said not a penny escapes her. In describing the Countess' devotion to him the famous sociologist says: "If I were a clarinet my wife would spend all her time polishing and burnishing the keys."

COUNTESS TOLSTOI.

Check for Four Cents.

It is not often that a business man gets a check for money that he would rather be without, but that is what happened to a wholesale lumber dealer of this city the other day, says the New York Sun.

The check was sent to him by the receiver of a defunct Boston hardware concern, and he was entitled to the money as a creditor. Made out on a Boston bank it called for the payment of 4 cents as the first "and final" dividend.

After recovering from his surprise the recipient sat down to reckon it all out. There was the 2-cent revenue stamp and a 2-cent postage stamp on the letter. That meant 4 cents to send it to him, not counting the cost of paper and envelope and printed form of acknowledgment. To acknowledge its receipt and cash the check would involve an outlay of about 12 cents more, as banks charge for out-of-town collections.

He was still thinking it over when a friend entered the office and offered twice the face value of the check to secure it as a curio. He sold it in a hurry.

Noblesse Oblige.

Mrs. Newrocks—And I'm so subject to seasickness! Still, we must have a yacht.

Mr. Newrocks—Well, why must we?

Mrs. Newrocks—Because we have the money.—Puck.

In order to become a successful hypocrite a man must work at it every day in the week.