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Poetry.

"Her Name."

Then father took the Bible down
And in his clear old-fashioned hand
Upon its record pages brown
He wrote the name as it should stand.

But protest came from all the rest
At giving such a little fairy.
The dearest, sweetest, and the best,
That antiquated name to carry.

And aunts and second cousins cry
"A name so worn and ordinary
Could not be found if one should try,
As that same appellation 'Mary.'"

And o'er and o'er again they laud
Her yellow curls, her baby grace;
"Oh, call her 'Ethelind,' or 'Maud,'
Or 'Christine,' for her angel face."

"But time will change this golden fleece
To match the eyes in duskysplendour,
Far better name her 'Beatrice,'
Or 'Imogen,' serene and tender."

"Oh, name the child for Aunt Louisa,
For she, good soul, is well-to-do.
The compliments is sure to please her,
And we can call the darling 'Lou.'"

Most prudent counsel, all too late?
'Twixt Malachi's and Matthew's pages
Appears unchangeable as fate,
The name beloved of all the ages.

The ancient gem, its purity
Unspoiled shall grace our latest beauty;
Sometime on dearer lips to be
The synonym of love and duty.

And gracious womanhood adorn,
However fortune's gifts may vary,
Till on a day like Easter Morn
She hears the Master call her "Mary."

—*Jennie Colton in the Current.*

Literature.

A MYSTERY INDEED.

1

A great sorrow had come into my life. There is nothing remarkable in that. What heart can be found without its bitterness? But wherein my sorrow differed from most was this, that it was all concentrated in one blow, as if in compensation for the unbroken happiness which had preceded it. For me there had been one day—one long long cloudless day—followed by night which I know can never give place to day again, until the eternal day dawns.

But I am not about to write my own story—it will never be written. Yet but for my own story I should not have the other to tell.

It was this sympathy, born in the darkness of my own despair, which brought me into close relations with Elsa Coningham, and thus gave me the wierd experience I am about to narrate

It was at Zermatt that I first met her. She was staying with her husband and little son at the same hotel as myself, I had come there to charpon my neice, Rhoda Thompson, who was an enthusiastic climber, and had with her made most of the ascents at all possible to women. Mr. Coningham was a member of the Alpine Club, and chose to express admiration of our exploits. We were thrown a great deal together, for we not only made the same party in several expeditions, but, when we were confined to our hotel by the weather, Mr. Coningham would read aloud to us altogether, or, with his boy between his knees, tell one story after another of lively adventure.

At these times Elsa (as I learned to to call her) would appear fully at peace if not absolutely happy; but coming upon her alone I always noticed a look of troubled anxiety on her face. She was a pretty woman—about thirty, I think, but I never was told her age—and she had the most sensitive face in the world. She was French, though her husband was English, and she spoke the prettiest broken English imaginable. Her husband adored her; her child was beautiful and strong. She was evidently a favorite of Fortune.

Yet I certainly detected in her dark, restless eyes a somethi g very like fear. I think that from the first she knew that I saw in her what others did not, and she was gruteful for my unspoken sympathy, for sometimes she would slip her fluttering little hand into mine where it would rest for minutes together, and then she would gaze out at the mountain peaks with unutterable sadness. She never made any of the ascents, being too timid, but remained with her boy.

One evening Mrs. Coningham and I were watching for the return of her husband with his party—my niece and two other ladies were with them. I had remained behind at Mrs. Coningham's request—the first request she had made me. "Mamma is afraid of going to sleep, I think," whispered little Carl. "It makes her so ill to go to sleep sometimes."

I smiled for answer to this odd speech, but even as I smiled, an alarm I could not account for seized me, and I looked towards the child's mother. She had swooned!

I hastily took up a glass of water which happened to be upon the table, and was about to sprinkle her face, when Carl put back my hand with his small fingers, saying with the strangest look I ever saw on a child's face, "No Miss Thompson; it is of no use to try to wake mamma when she goes to sleep *so*. Papa holds her hand till she wakes—she is afraid when she first wakes."

I did make an effort to rouse her, however, which was of no avail.

"I told you so," said little Carl in triumph. "You sit and hold mamma's hand, and when she wakes say 'Elsa' very softly."

I sat down as directed, and took the little delicate hand in mine. How cold it was!

"Carl" I said in alarm, "are you quite sure your mother is often like this, and that she wakes all right?"

"I have told thee so," replied the child with quiet dignity. (He sometimes spoke like his mother.) "And when papa comes you will not say that mamma has been asleep. She will say this to him herself—and he knows it *now!*"

The little fellow nodded at me impressively as if he could tell me more did he so choose. But I did not think it right to question him, much as the mystery excited my curiosity. Moreover, I scarcely think the child would have told me more even had I done so.

I sat still, pondering and continuing to keep the small hand within mine.

In about half an hour I felt the hand vibrate strangely. Carl, who had been watching his mother, whispered, "Say 'Elsa.'"

"Elsa" I said in a voice that I knew had grown very tender since my trouble.

The white eyelids trembled; the sweet eyes were revealed in all their strange, mysterious beauty. Then a smile flickered over her face, and she said "Let it be always 'Elsa.' How I feel myself well with you!"

"You shall be 'Elsa' dear, and I—must be 'Joan'" I made answer. And then I stooped and kissed her.

"You will be near me when they shall return, isn't it? she next said. "They are already late—but they will not yet be here."

They *were* late; I knew it, and I had grown anxious, but had avoided saying anything about it for fear of alarming her.

"But they will all return safely," she added, as if reading my thoughts.

I was completely mystified, but forebore to question her.

I took out from my pocket a little volume of Heine's poems—my constant companion—and asked if I should read something.

"Do please." she answered promptly "Read 'Nacet lihgt auf den fremdne Wegen, and afterwards, 'Der Tod, das ist die kuhle Nacht.'"

I read these, and afterwards others.

"How comfortable is your voice Joan!" she said at last, lingering on my name as it were a pleasure to her to speak it. "If I were going to die I should like you to be near me as now.

I looked at the fair, youthful face, to which the color had returned, glowing and very pleasant to see, and could not imagine her as *dying*, though I had seen her sleep that strange sleep so like to death. She appeared to be in perfect health; the perplexing sadness was, I felt convinced, of the mind. I wished she would confide in me; why didn't she, since she seemed to care for me so much?

Then I remembered my own inability to confide my own sorrow to any ear, and I said, "You must not speak of dying, Elsa; you are altogether too young, too well—"

A glance which passed between her and the child interrupted my sentence. It was a glance of contradiction—of—I cannot say what besides. But little Carl moved towards me noiselessly—he was the quietest child I ever knew and looking gravely into my face with his steady gaze, his eyes so like his mother's, said. "But we shall soon die. Mamma and I shall die together."

I was spaned the pain of taying to dispel this fancy by the return of the anxiously watched-for party. Mr. Coningham was the first to enter the saloon. I could not but remark his paleness even through the glow that mountaineering always produces, He went at once to his wife, who met him with a glad smile. He then took little Carl in his arms in silence. He was usually chatty, and even humerous, so that this silence struck me as very odd.

"We are thankful you have returned" I said "We have been so anxious."

"And with reason, I'll promise you," broke in Mrs. General Bruce, who had entered close on Mr. Coningham's heels accompanied by my niece and others.

"We had such an escape; nothing shall ever tempt me on a mountain again, rest assured." And then, suddenly addressing Elsa, she said "How ever did you get back, Mrs. Coningham? We were all nearly as frozen as the glazier at the fright you gave us; you see, we understood you never went in for climbing. And what ever guide did you get? We had to put up with the veriest imposters for guides. I do believe it was their first expedition. But, however, you saved all our lives, for by changing our course to reach you we discovered that what we were standing on was one of those awful cornices, and it gave way and fell crashing down the precipice the very instant the last of us had left it. We all stood speechless, staring at the gulf that had so nearly swallowed us up; and then you had dissapeared. Mr. Coningham declared you were safe, though how he could knew it I can't imagine." Mrs. General Bruce here stopped for breath and looked round on us all. Elsa had become very pale.

"I can assure you," I began "that Mrs. Coningham has never left the hotel."

"That is impossible!" cried my niece. We all saw her—every one of us;" and she looked for the others to confirm her words,—which they did—in a dogmatic manner bordering on violence.

"There conldn't possibly be another just like Mrs. Coningham," broke in Mrs. Bruce once more; "and presently she will own all about it. In the meantime we ought every one of us to thank her on our knees. "To think," she cried with a shudder, "where we should all be now but for her!"

Every one has a double so it is said," Mr. Coningham remarked in a hollow voice, and with the weakest attempt at a smile I ever saw.

The party dispersed, puzzled and a little piqued, despite their reason for gratitude. They were asked then to disbelieve their own eyes—their collective eyes. It was too much. This was what was plainly visible on every face as they withdrew. As Mrs. General Bruce was departing last of all, and a trifle more "huffily" than the others, I said, "You should allow Mr. Coningham to have an opinion, even if you think my word unworthy of belief—he should know his own wife."

"And he did seem to know her—at the time," she made answer as she went.

I was about to follow and leave them alone, but Elsa called me to her. "Have you any wish, dear? I began as I bent over her chair. "Is there anything you would like me to do?,'

"*Oh, mon Dieu!* but yes, I have a wish; but no, you cannot give me my wish. I wish to be just like other women. Oh it is hard to want to be a woman—like the others, and to be *different! Oh, que je suis malheureuse!*" and she cast herself weeping into her husband's arms.

"You will leave us now, Miss Thompson," he said to me hoarsly. "And"—extending one hand to me—"believe me, I am very grateful to you. I know how you have tended Elsa. I am glad she has so taken to you. Be all you can to her." He spoke brokenly and as if with difficulty.

I bowed my head. I could not trust my voice, I was so strangely moved.

As I went out I heard Carl's childish treble saying those words: "My father, is she to know the secret too?

To be Concluded next week.

The Management of Lamps.

Some one has written a few directions for treating lamps, and it so accords with the experience of another that we present them herewith. To insure good light the burners of petroleum lamps should be kept bright. If they are allowed to become dull the light is uncertain, and, owing to the absorption of heat by the darkened metal, smoke is the result. Once a month place the burners in a pan, covering them with cold water, to each quart of which a tablespoonful of soda should be added, and also a little soap. Boil slowly for one or two hours, and at the end of the time pour off the blackened water. Then pour enough boiling water into the pan to cover the burners, adding soap and soda in the same proportions as before. After boiling again a few minutes pour off the water, rinse the burners with clear hot water and rub dry with a soft cloth. The burners must be perfectly dry before the wicks are introduced. Should the wicks become clogged with the particles of dust floating in the oil and new ones not be desired, they may be boiled in vinegar and water, dried thoroughly and put back in the burners. If wicks have done duty all winter they should be replaced by new ones in the spring. Nickel burners may be boiled as well as brass ones. Time spent in the care of lamps is never wasted. A perfectly clean lamp that gives a brilliant light is a great comfort. What is more cheerless or depressing than an ill-kept lamp, which gives forth an unsteady, lurid, sight-destroying flame? The paper roses, guelder roses and chrysanthemum, so popular for decorative purposes, are admirable for placing in the lamp chimneys to keep out the dust during the day, and the wicks should be turned a little below the rim of the burner to prevent exudation of the oil.

None too Small.

BY THOS. R. THOMPSON.

Dear boys and girls,
I like you all;
You may be young,
You may be small,
But not too small
Or young, I think,
To say you will
Not taste strong drink.
Ask God to help
You, day by day,
And keep yourselves
From sin alway.

Gen. Harrison and the Wine-Cup.

The following story is told of Gen. Harrison, in connection with the public dinner given him on one occasion:

"At the close of the dinner one of the gentlemen drank his health. The general pleged his toast by drinking water. Another gentlemen offered a toast, and said: 'General will you not favor me by taking a glass of wine?' The General, in a very gentlemanly way, begged to be excused. He was again urged to join in a glass of wine. This was too much. He rose from his seat and said in a dignified manner:

"'Gentlmen, I have twice refused to partake of the wine-cup. I hope that will be sufficient. Though you press the matter ever so much, not a drop shall ever pass my lips. I made a resolve when I started in life that I would avoid strong drink. That vow I have never broken. I am one of a class of seventeen young men who graduated together. The other sixteen members of my class now fill drunkard's graves, and all from the pernicious habit of wine-drinking. I owe all my health, my happiness, and prosperity to that resolution. Would you urge to break it now?'"—*Youth's World.*

SPEAK NOT HARSHLY.—One word spoken impatiently or angrily in the morning has sapped the enjoyment of the whole day. There was a silent reproof in all inanimate things, and even in the faces of friends, all through the slow hours. There never was a vision of the angel who stood in the heart with pleading hand, telling us that there was the place of evil centres—there must purity be first, before the eyes could read all life aright! Cleanse the spirit of these little sins which darken the whole day! Get the harsh words so far down in the soul that they shall die and never rise to the lips—and the humanity of your lives will shine forth unhindered and your glorious destiny be apparent.

Family portraits have resumed their old time position on parlor walls.

Things That it is Well to Know

That water may be purified by boiling.

That lemons may be kept by covering withcold water; change every week.

That ceilings that have been smoked by a kerosene lamp should be washed with soda water.

"Good gracious," said the hen, when she discovered the parcelain egg in her nest, "I shall be a bricklayer yet'"

That copperas mixed with the whitewash put upon the cellar walls will keep vermin away.

That rubber bands for cans may be renewed, after they have become apparently stiff and useless, by laying them in a mixture of ammonia and water over night.

An idea steeped in verse becomes suddenly more incisive and more brilliant; the iron becomes steel.

DEADLY PTOMAINES.

A SUBJECT ATTRACTING ATTENTION AMONG MEDICAL MEN.

Some Facts of General Interest—The Poisons Which Are Generated in Food. Risks of Eating Stale Sausage or Fish. A Warning.

Probably no other subject is attracting so much attention in the medical world today as that of ptomaines. A ptomaine, says Professor Victor C. Vaughan, is a basic of alkaloidal body formed during the putrefaction of animal matter. It may, therefore, be called an animal alkaloid. The first definite investigations on this subject were made by the learned Danish physician who presided so ably at the eighth international medical congress in 1884—Dr. Panum, of Copenhagen. Panum found that putrid blood, even after being boiled and after being treated with chemical reagents, which would destroy all germs, retained its poisonous properties. He boiled this poisonous substance for eleven hours and found that it still retained all its virulence. From this he rightly concluded that the poisonous substance was a non-volatile chemical compound. He did not succeed in isolating it, and it has always been referred to as Panum's putrid poison. Panum's work was published in Danish, and did not attract much attention for some years.

In 1868 Bergmann obtained from putrid yeast a highly poisonous crystalline substance to which he gave the name Sepsine. In the following year Zeulzer and Sonnenschein obtained a substance which resembles atropia in its physiological action, and in a medico-legal investigation Rorsch and Fassbender discovered an amorphous body which gave reactions similar to those of digitaline. Bence Jones and Dupre about this time also obtained from the liver a substance which, when dissolved in dilute sulphuric acid, gave the fluorescence of sulphate of quinine, and which was called by them animal chinoline. From putrid meat Professor Brieger prepared a substance, neuridine, which acted as a poison as long as it was contaminated with other products of putrefaction; otherwise harmless. It is closely related to two substances that occur in the human system in its normal condition, namely, neurine, one of the constituents of the brain; and choline, which is present in the bile. By putrefaction, neuridine and the rather harmless choline, are transformed into the highly poisonous neurine. It is a remarkable fact that neurine, which is indentical with muscarine, the poisonous principle of a toadstool, and which is a normal constituent of the human body, should be known, even in one side source.

POISONS FOUND IN CORPSES.

The fact that the poisons of putrefaction are of a chemical nature accounts for the poisons found in corpses. These poisons bear some resemblance to the alkaloids of the hemlock, strychnine, veratrine, etc. A general was supposed to have been poisoned by his servant, in Rome, and a poison was found in his body, bearing a great resemblance to a virulent poison found in the larkspur. But this evidence of murder was overcome by the success of the late distinguished professor of legal medicine in the university, Professor Selmi, of Bologna, in obtaining the same poison from a corpse where every suspicion of poisoning was excluded.

In 1870, Selmi began a series of investigations concerning ptomaines, which was only interrupted by his death. Selmi obtained from putrid flesh extracts which gave reactions similar to those of morphine, strychnine and delphinine. But he did not succeed in isolating completely any ptomaine. Nencki, in 1876, first succeeded in determining the composition of a ptomaine. This substance was obtained from putrid gelatine.

The poisons like those found in corpses, called ptomaines by chemists, are created by the putrefaction of fish, white of egg, meat, cheese, gelatine and yeast. The presence of moisture is an essential condition, hence the moist mixture of sausage filling is especially well adapted to the formation of these poisons. It is a matter of observation that a great many cases of poisoning have followed the consumption of sausage or of fish that have been kept damp. The action of the ptomaines is more virulent when they are introduced into the circulation through wounds, than when they are in the stomach. Hence, it is that cuts received while dissecting corpses often end in death.

PERSONS WHO ARE SENSITIVE.

People are not equally sensitive to these poisons. Some persons are so sensitive that fish seemingly fresh will cause them inconvenience. Others are likely to suffer from a peculiar eruption of the skin after eating crabs or lobsters. In the maize porridge, which is called "polenta," and which is the chief food of a certain class of Italian workmen, there is formed by putrefaction in hot weather a poison which causes "pellagra," an eruption of the skin resembling erysipelas, which grows worse in time and finally causes death.

In every day life the ptomaines give evidence of their presence. The frequent inflammations of the fingers of persons engaged in washing dishes are due to this cause. The best remedies for the evil is washing with soap, which acts as a mild disinfectant.

All food, whether vegetable or animal, must be regarded with suspicion as soon as the first signs of decomposition become noticeable. Especially should great care be taken in times of epidemics. The poisons of putrefaction are odorless compounds, and it must not always be inferred that they do not exist before the odor of putrefaction is perceived. These poisons are not destroyed by boiling.

Four hundred cases of sickness in Szabka have been traced to sausage poisoning from 1783 to 1853. The plague like epidemic that occurred in the Volga district some time ago was traced to the diet of the people in those regions, which consisted almost exclusively of fish.

Ptomaines are divided into two classes—those containing oxygen and those which do not contain this element.—Medical Classics.

Remodelling Our School System.

I expect to meet with much opposition when I declare my conviction that our public school system will sooner or later have to be radically remodeled. It is an academic system—a university curriculum on a restricted scale—similar in kind, differing only in degree. The culture which it imparts is academic, and has but small reference to the life which the great majority of the pupils will have to lead. It kindles an ambition in them which, in nine cases out of ten, is destined to be disappointed, and engenders, as a consequence, discontent and disaffection toward the state which fails to satisfy the expectations it has aided in arousing.—Professor H. H. Boyesen in The Forum.

A Fair Maid's Indifference.

Bolingbroke has just fervently proposed.
Miss Steele—Do you play a good game of billiards?
Bolingbroke—Passable. Why?
Miss Steele—Run up and play me, as I want to see Dick Starr, will you? I kind of half accepted him last night.—Time.