

The Song of a Commonplace Girl.

You may talk about abstractions in a very learned way, Like Plato, the inspired, who had so much to teach and say Of "universals" and "ideas" and other shadowy things, Which still elude the mental grasp—a theory on wings.

I've tried to cultivate my mind in manner transcendental, But ah, its native tendency is to the sentimental, I cannot generalize at all. Alas! 'Tis very plain That such a mental exercise requires a larger brain.

For instance, there is beauty—to conceive it thus abstractly, Is an effort wholly vain, for indeed I see exactly The same identical moustache, the chin with dimple in it, The tender eyes and smile—I'll speak his name in half a minute.

And think of osculation in a manner thus Platonic, It certainly suggests a mode of treatment more laconic And discreet and wise perhaps—but alas! you wholly miss The bounteous satisfaction of an individual kiss.

And the universal man—Both Plato I deny That such a thing exists—for no matter how I try To keep the vague abstraction securely in my head I still am thinking of the one same blessed concrete—Fred.

CASTING A MONSTER CYLINDER.

Forty-five Tons of Molten Metal Successfully Poured Into a Mould.

(From the N. Y. Times.)

What is declared to be the largest steam-engine cylinder in the world was cast yesterday afternoon in the Morgan Iron Works of John Roach & Son, at the foot of East Ninth street. It is 18 feet long, 9 feet 2 inches in diameter, and required for its casting 45 tons, or 90,000 pounds, of gunmetal. It is intended to accommodate a piston stroke of 14 feet. The metal in the thinnest part is 1 1/2 inches thick, and the flanges at the top and bottom are 2 1/2 inches thick by 5 1/2 inches wide. Under the top flange the cylinder has a belt 16 inches wide, another 6 inches wide above the bottom flange, and between these two three more belts, each 6 inches in width. The thickness of the metal at the belts is 2 1/2 inches. A nozzle for the upper steam-chest is cast on the cylinder, with an opening 14 1/2 by 6 1/2 inches, the metal on the top of this nozzle being 1 1/2 inches in thickness, and on the sides and bottom 1 1/2 inches. The casting of this massive piece of work was done in a mould constructed of brick, and lined with loam, the outside being covered with heavy iron plates to prevent the matrix from bursting when the molten metal was poured in. The mould is constructed of one cylinder of brick and loam within another, the space between them being the required thickness of the casting, the flanges, belts and other parts of the work being accurately delineated in the matrix. Over half the mould was sunk in the solid earth which forms the flooring of the iron works. It required the metal 3 hours and 20 minutes to melt, and the 90,000 pounds were then transferred by the labor of 100 men to two huge tank-ladles, each having a capacity of about 15 tons, and two large crane-ladles. The tanks were connected with the mould by pipes, and the crane-ladles were attached to huge cranes. At 1 o'clock John Roach, who personally supervised the casting, gave the order to begin the pouring. The molten metal was turned into the mould from the two tanks on either side, and at the same time the two crane-ladles were swung over, and from all four a red stream of liquid metal began to flow into the matrix. The air in the room became so heated that it was with great discomfort that the few gentlemen invited to witness the casting were able to remain. Among the guests was Mr. Borden, the agent of the Old Colony Steamboat Company, and according to his timing it took precisely two and a half minutes to complete the pouring and fill the mould. The operation was watched attentively by Mr. Roach and his foreman, and when it was completed, both pronounced the casting to have been successful. It will require about ten days for the metal thoroughly to cool, and for several days it will remain red hot. When perfectly solidified, the upper part of the mould will be demolished, and the cylinder will then be dug from its resting place in the ground. It is intended for the engine of a new iron sidewheel steamer.

Can Consumption Be Cured?

The popular belief in the incurability of consumption now seems to be on the road to complete overthrow. This change in sentiment has not been brought about by any new method in treatment, nor has there been a perceptible enlargement in the number of those now living who can claim that they have had and have recovered from this disease; but the evidence upon which the revision in opinion is based is even more conclusive than that which could of any possibility be obtained from either of these two sources. It is simply this, that post mortem examinations have revealed the fact that pulmonary phthisis is a complaint of much greater frequency than has been commonly supposed, and that multitudes of people have had this disease, and have been practically cured of it, who have never so much as suspected the cause of their illness. In a series of examinations made some time since at the hospital at Edinburgh, it was found that the lungs of not less than one-third of those who died when over 40 years of age were in a condition that could be accounted for in no other way than by the supposition that at some period in their lives consumption had existed, and had been afterwards checked or cured. Portions of the lungs had been destroyed, but the cavities formed had been healed by contraction and adhesion of their walls, or the disintegrated substance had been shut in by the formation of fibrous tissue.

—Some one has said that the whisper of a beautiful woman can be heard farther than the loudest call of duty. And yet when a woman wants to call after a man to come back and get a letter to post, she doesn't whisper; she yells like a steam horn, and then half the time the man doesn't hear.

—Chief Justice Hagarty has decided that a boarding-house keeper cannot give beer or wine at dinner to his boarders. It was shown that no extra charge was made for it, and also that the practice was common at farmers' hotels, where a person who paid 25 cents for dinner had the option of tea, beer or water as his beverage.

ALMOST OVER THE FALLS.

Exciting Escapade of Two Youths on Niagara River.

A Buffalo despatch says Eddie Davison, a lad on Mohawk street, son of a ship owner, and a companion went rowing on the Niagara River at Black Rock on Sunday, got caught in the ice and drifted down the river. Nearer and nearer the Falls they floated until darkness overtook them. They could hear the roar of the terrible cataract, and despite their desperate efforts the boat drifted on. They finally resolved to use their efforts in forcing the boat the one way, towards the American shore, regardless of the ice jam. Rain fell, to add misery to the darkness. At one time they gave up, and tears filled their eyes. This but acted as an escape valve to their pent-up fear, and relieved they again took hold of the oars and pulled the boat through the floe more vigorously than before. As the roar of the Falls drowned everything else their boat grounded, but in the thick darkness the boys hardly believed they were ashore, and were not convinced until they had driven the boat half out on dry land. It was late, no lights were to be seen, and they made a shelter of the upturned boat. On Monday morning they found themselves below Lasalle. After vainly trying to row the boat up stream they gave it up, floated it to Tonawanda, and came on by train to gladden their somewhat disturbed households.

ROASTED TO DEATH.

Fearful Fate of a Father and Son in Pennsylvania.

(New Providence [Pa.] Special.)

An accident occurred here at an early hour this morning which resulted in the terrible death of a father and son. David Reese and family resided at about three miles from this place. Between 1 and 2 o'clock this morning their house was discovered to be on fire. The sleeping apartments were filled with smoke and the occupants were awakened with great difficulty. The family escaped from the burning building at the risk of their lives. Mr. Reese and his son then made an effort to save some necessary clothing, when suddenly and while they were inside, the building fell in with a crash upon them, the flaming timbers covering them and roasting them to death. One loud, terrible cry was heard, and then all went over. Mrs. Reese also narrowly escaped with her life, but was terribly burned about her hands and feet while fighting her way out of the flames. Hundreds of neighbors soon flocked to the scene of the terrible disaster, and when the flames had got down the bodies of the victims were removed from the ashes. The cause of the fire is unknown.

AN UNFORTUNATE.

She Asks for Bread and is Given a Stone.

A young girl of very prepossessing bearing named Susan Barton, was placed in the Toronto Police Court dock yesterday morning. Her appearance was unusual, and she immediately attracted general attention. She was charged with being disorderly on the street, and she would probably have been committed had it not been for a mere accident. It was proven that she had pelted stones at a crowd which was following and abusing her. His Worship was about to sentence her when Mr. Bigelow entered the room. He explained the girl's case by informing His Worship that some time ago the prisoner had begun an action against Albert J. Martin, No. 18 Renfrew street, for seduction. Yesterday the girl came to Mr. Bigelow and told him that she was in very bad circumstances and her baby needed nourishment. Mr. Bigelow advised her to go to the father of her child and personally beseech him to help to keep it alive. The girl, cheered by this advice, hastened away to the house, but on reaching there the mother of the young man shut the door in her face and she was stoned and hunted along the street. As soon as the Magistrate heard these particulars he discharged the girl.

Who Should Bow First?

Who should bow first? Some authorities insist that a gentleman should not bow to a lady until she bows to him; the author of the "American Code of Manners" says that this is all wrong: "A gentleman should always bow first to a lady, no matter whether she returns it or not; if he sees by her face that she does not wish to return it, he can refrain from bowing the next time." This is on the ground that "a lady, particularly an elderly one or a society leader, perhaps, has so many acquaintances that she does not remember all the young men who have been presented." This, however, does not seem to settle the question conclusively, for it may be that the young man has quite as many acquaintances as the lady, even if an elderly one. He may himself, too, very likely be a society leader; in fact, a very large number of the leaders of society at the present time are of what would have been considered fifty years ago a comparatively immature age. Our own opinion is, and it has been arrived at after long reflection, that both persons should bow simultaneously; perhaps in the case of very near-sighted persons a little latitude might be given, providing the fact of myopia can be clearly proved by medical evidence.

THE MONKEY AT HOME.—When they are engaged upon any very daring raid, monkeys place sentinels upon the neighboring trees and heights, to give them timely warning of approaching danger; and should they be surprised through any fault of these sentinels, the luckless individual is either severely punished, or in some cases, it is declared, is put to death for his neglect of the public safety. According to some accounts, these raiders will form a long chain, extending from the field or garden they are plundering, toward their own place of abode, and toss the fruits of their robbery from one to the other, till collected together and deposited in a place of safety. By this co-operative system they are enabled to carry off a much larger booty than they could if each one only took sufficient for himself. When leaving the scene of their plunder, however, each takes off with him as much as he can carry. Fruit and eggs are their chief food; in a state of nature, it is believed, they will not touch the flesh of warm-blooded animals; nor in a state of captivity, unless cooked. —Chambers' Journal.

SHORT SIGHTEDNESS IN SCHOOL CHILDREN.

How it is Caused—Alarming Prevalence of Myopia.

(From the New York Herald.)

The results of recent investigations by eminent experts to determine the amount of short-sightedness in school children compelled to use badly printed text books in ill-lighted school rooms are increasingly alarming. An examination made among New York school attendants in 1876 revealed the fact that about one-sixth or more were affected with myopia. But more recent and extensive inquiries abroad show that the evil is much greater than has been feared. The last annual report of the head master of Wellington College, England, states that "a considerable number of boys are short-sighted and others becoming so," while the well known British ophthalmic surgeon Critchett gives the opinion that the public schools "are manufacturing a race of short-sighted people." To Professor Cohn, of Breslau, however, we are indebted for the most comprehensive and conclusive data on this important question. Out of 10,000 children examined by Professor Cohn in German schools no less than 1,004 were found to be more or less seriously affected with short-sightedness, and he ascertained that the degree of the damage done the eyes undergoes a steadily progressive increase from the elementary to the finishing schools. Taking twenty-five German and Swiss gymnasia the percentage of short-sighted pupils rose from 22 in the lowest grade to 83 in the medium grade and 53 in the highest classes. "It is evident," Professor Cohn asserts, "that we are threatened with a great national affliction, which is likely not only to be detrimental to all peaceful occupations, but to impair the military efficiency of our people."

The epidemic of eye disease in the rising generation is largely due to faulty constructed school-room seats, the strained use of the eyes over ill-printed books in defective light and bad air of overcrowded rooms—in fine, to whatever debilitates the scholar. For, as Dr. Agnew, of this city, has shown, general debility tends to induce extensibility of the eye, increasing the ellipticity of the eye-ball instead of allowing it to remain in its normal state of sphericity. The remedy for the evil is to avoid the herding of children in ill-ventilated rooms, and the use of books in which the letters are not distinct, and at least one millimetre (one-seventeenth of an inch) high. But even these precautions are likely to fail to arrest the evil unless, with improved facilities for lighting and airing our public schools, the system of artificial stimulants to proficiency which overtax the energies of the scholar is modified, and wiser measures for building up the general health of the pupil put in practice. Even a good public school education, obtained by the sacrifice of good eye-sight, may be too dearly won.

Flower Garden and Lawn.

It is getting late for starting a lawn, and if the seed is sown now, it is well to mix a small quantity of oats with it, that the cats may shade the young grass from the too great heat of the sun. The lawn mower must be used at least once a week on a well established lawn, and it is well to leave the fine clippings where they fall, to serve as a protection to the grass roots. Any weeds that may spring up should be removed by the root. Most of them can be readily pulled, but if deeply rooted and the soil is heavy, a chisel upon a long handle will be of service. The greenhouse plants for bedding should not go out until all danger from cool nights is over. If evergreens are to be transplanted, the important point is to never let the roots get dry; an hour in a drying wind may put a valuable evergreen beyond recovery. The placing of stones around newly planted evergreens has an excellent effect, keeping the ground moist about the roots, and also serving as an anchor to the tree, that might otherwise be moved to its disadvantage by the winds. There are many places where climbers can be grown with advantage. The piazza and other portions of the exterior of the house may be made very attractive with a few Akebias, Loniceras, and here and there a Clematis and Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia*). Unattractive places may be easily screened by a growth of Morning Glories, Thunbergias and other annual creepers. When the annuals are sown in the beds, care should be taken to preserve the names by using plain labels—a great deal of the interest connected with a variety resides in knowing its name. Lilies, gladioluses and other bulbs can go into the open ground now. Provide stakes so soon as any support is needed. Castor oil plants (*Ricinus*) make a peculiar tropical and pleasing appearance in the garden, and can be had with little trouble or expense by sowing the seeds. The potted plants that are to stand out-of-doors should have a partly shaded place, and, if possible, set them upon coal ashes to prevent worms from entering the pots. Shade for the greenhouse plants can be provided by using whitewash upon the sash or by putting up muslin screens. A plenty of fresh air should be admitted, and water given freely. Insects will thrive unless subdued by fumigation, hand-picking and washing.

A Diamond Ring in a Horse's Hoof.

A wealthy physician of Murfreesboro', Tenn., bought a \$1,500 diamond ring for his daughter. About three years since while riding out, the ring was lost. It was advertised and liberal rewards offered for the recovery, but nothing was ever heard of it. A few weeks ago a child of a blacksmith was taken sick, and the physician referred to called to see it. While at the bedside he had occasion to mention his daughter's name. At this the child's mother took from her finger a ring, handed it to the physician, and asked him if his daughter had recently lost a ring, for the ring contained the name he had just pronounced. The physician said she had not, but that some years ago she lost a diamond ring, and as his eyes fell upon the sparkling object he recognized his daughter's long-lost treasure. The lady said her husband had found it in the bottom of a horse's hoof only a few days before that, while cleaning out the hoof for the purpose of shoeing him. One small diamond was missing.—Richmond (Ky.) Register.

Leonard Grover is to write an original comedy for Minnie Palmer.

TEA TABLE GOSSIP.

—An Oriental tale—The camel's.
—A passing event—Playing euchre.
—A stem-winder—The caterpillar.
—The population of St. Thomas is 9,275.
—His voice is still for war—The Quaker's.
—What the potter said to the clay—Be ware.

—The freebooter kicks when justice is done.
—The tailors are selling coats short this spring.
—A dentist's sign—Drawing, music and dancing.

—A handicap is preferred to a mislaid bonnet.
—The nine for a shaky baseball player—Quinine.
—The man who talks least is most apt to keep his word.

—The new Fontaine engine on the C. S. R. has run a mile in 50 seconds.
—A man may sometimes, but rarely, be a capital fellow without having a cent.

—Everything has to pay up sometimes; even the little chickens have to shell out.
—Some men are never more possessed of a devil than when they are self-possessed.

—The matrimonial fever has broken out, says an exchange. The tie-fuss, probably.
—The best way to prevent your dog from going mad when the hot weather comes on is to shoot him now.

—Josh Billings says the sassiest man he ever met is a henpecked husband when he is away from home.
—There is nothing new under the sun. It is now discovered that Europe stole the familiar barber's pole from China.

—Why does your wife's new spring bonnet resemble a snipe? You are silent. We will aid you. 'Tis nearly all bill.
—Scholar—"Yes, the Orientals salaam to objects they adore, but it is very different from the English salam, to a door."

—The young lady in the novel who "tripped lightly down the stairs" to meet her lover, used court plaster for her injuries.
—When that young man out West hugged his best girl to death was it not a dead-lock?—*Oil City Derrick*. No, sir! It was a dead duck.

—Wilson, the fireman, who was injured by falling from a ladder the other day, is not able to attend to duty yet.
—Seth Green says an acre of water will produce as much food as an acre of land. It is undoubtedly a fish story.

—"I will never marry a woman that can't carve," said M. "Why?" "Because she would not be a help-meat for me."

—A Hamilton girl caught in the act of penning an invitation to her lover to call, very innocently explained that she was writing for the press.

—Two negatives are equivalent to an affirmative and when a man says to you, "Come, come!" the two comes are equivalent to "leave."

—Miss Corson says that "by washing a clean chicken you draw out with the water more or less of the blood, and, consequently, the nourishment which the chicken contains."

—"Why is it," asked a lady, "that people lose their interest in church going nowadays?" "Because they have lost their principle," was the witty reply.

—Josh Billings says that an enthusiast is a man who believes about four times as much as he can prove, and who can prove about four times as much as anybody believes.

—Capt. Hamilton, after a residence of 30 years in St. Catharines, leaves with his family for Winnipeg next week. He and his will be missed there and appreciated in their western home.

—Capt. Carruthers is shortly to retire from the command of the infantry company at Winnipeg, and Lieut. McKeand will be his successor.

—To make mint sauce take two table-spoonfuls of green mint, cut it fine, add to it two table-spoonfuls of sugar and half a table-spoonful of vinegar.

—Breakfast table—Father of family reading: "There is a cat in Cincinnati that drinks beer." Daughter (16)—"Pa, she must be a Maltese cat."

—"You see I have on my winter flannels yet," is the apology everybody makes to-day for blowing like a porpoise and mopping his head every half minute.

—Young ladies graduate from some of the ladies' colleges with the degree of B. A. By close attention to business they can in a few years take the degree MA.

—"Pray, how shall I, a little lad, in speaking make a figure?" Wait till the cucumber season comes, my boy. That will double you up so that you will feel like a cifer.

—A well cooked breakfast will do more towards preserving peace in the family than will seven mottoes on the wall, even though they be framed in the most elaborate of gilt mouldings.

—The Boston Post says some people still cling to the custom of wearing gloves with full dress, but among people of taste the rule to go without them bares the palm. Catch the idea?

—A woman out west became crazy on seeing her husband kiss another woman. The husband was a rascal. No true husband would ever kiss another woman when his wife was looking.

—In California the most popular of the Moody and Sankey songs was "Where is my Wandering Boy To-Night?" which Mr. Sankey said had become well known and loved in every village.

—And some people say it is injurious. She: You smoke an awful lot, don't you? He: Ya-as, awful lot. She: And have you ever found it do anything to your brain—you know? He: Nevah.

—Bancroft, the historian, now more than 80 years old, says that the secret of his good reason is easy of explanation. He eats light meals, walks three or four hours daily in the open air and takes plenty of sleep.

—It is perfectly right to speak of a man's magnificent dome of thought and Websterian brow, but when you speak of a red-headed gentleman as the man with the

gilded dome ten chances to one he will not feel flattered.

—One of our best known and most learned horticulturists, who is valued among his friends as an authority on good living, recently heard many fine dishes prescribed, and when appealed to for his suggestion said: "Well, gentlemen, about the best dish I ever tasted was young beet greens."

—Vanity of vanities: If a girl has pretty teeth she laughs often, if she's got a pretty foot she'll wear a short dress, and if she's got a neat hand she's fond of a game of whist; and if the reverse, she dislikes all these small affairs.—*Unknown Solomon*.

—Lime slacked with a solution of salt in water, and then properly thinned with skimmed milk from which all the cream has been taken, makes a permanent whitewash for outdoor work, and it is said renders the wood incombustible. It is an excellent wash for preserving shingles and for all farm buildings.

—Additional articles of agreement have been concluded between the United States and Canada to afford the public increased facilities for the exchange of letter correspondence, and preventing evasion by publishers of the postal laws and regulations of the United States.

—In his poem "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" Walt Whitman remarks:
Flood-tide below me, I watch you face to face;
Clouds of the West; sun there half an hour high;
I see you also face to face.

Crowds of men and women; attired in the usual costumes, how curious you are to me!
On the ferry-boats, the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are more curious to me than you suppose;
And you that shall cross from shore to shore, years hence, are more to me, and more in my meditations than you might suppose.

—When a merchant became bankrupt he put a sign at the door which read "Not In," and sat in his office to meditate on the uncertainties of business enterprise. One of his creditors looked at it, sighed a quiet sigh, and reading it "No Tin," turned away in despair.

—A Cairo despatch says two pyramids at Sokkara enclosing tombs of the kings of the Fifth Dynasty have just been opened. The mortuary chapels of each contain texts giving details of the religious belief of that age. The Masonic theory and all previous conceptions are entirely upset. Except the finding of the Rotta stone in 1879 no discovery in Egypt equals this in scientific value.

—A woman writer says: "Babies—bless them!—are the sweetest flowers in all the gardens of the world." Yes—"bless 'em!"—but they are much sweeter when they get old enough to pluck from the parent stem. And they are pretty expensive to cultivate, too—"bless them!" Yes, babies are sweet flowers—sometimes—and should be left in their little beds when their parents go to a public entertainment.

—One who has tried the efficacy of advertising on a large and liberal scale gives to other business men advice to the effect that the paper that is most read, the paper that is talked about most, and is, in fact, the best paper, the paper of largest circulation withal, is the one to advertise in. Merchants may throw away money by advertising in small newspapers with the idea of cheap rates. But advertising in the live paper that everybody reads always pays.

Sweet flowers! that from your sunny nooks Give welcome to the vernal sun!
How joyous, as each bright eye looks Aloft, doth seem the life begun.
How eloquent ye seem of days
When lovers near your haunts will chance And the your dainty forms will praise,
And he up soiled cliffs will glance,
And get much verdure on his pants.

—"How do you like the Episcopalian service?" asked Jones. "Never heard it," replied Fogg. "I dropped in at one of the churches last Sunday. It was quite early, and so I began reading the service. I didn't read far, though, before I found that it would never do for me. So I came out."

"Why, what was the trouble?" "Too many collections." "Too many collections?" "Yes, on almost every page it said 'collect.' One collection is all I can afford to respond to. Must be awfully expensive to be an Episcopalian?"

"Of all the poets, darling one, Who've rhymed in love,
Which one evokes your ardent praise All other bards above?"

And as he took her in his arms,
And kissed her o'er and o'er,
She spake in tones of ecstasies,
"Oh, Tommy, give me Moore!"

—A distinguished gentleman whose nose and chin were both very long, and who had lost his teeth, whereby the nose and chin were brought near together, was told—"I am afraid your nose and chin will fight ere long, they approach each other very menacingly." "I am afraid of it myself," said the gentleman, "for a great many words have passed between them already."

—A spring poet writes us feelingly as follows: "You are not so utterly heartless as you are represented; for in declining to publish my last lines, you expressed regrets that you were full, showing that, behind the iron mask of manhood, you possess all the tenderness of a woman." Our correspondent is right. The editor who would lift his pen against a poet, save in the way of kindness, is unworthy of the names which rejected poets are very apt to call him. Whenever we are obliged to say that we are "full" our correspondent will understand that we are full—full of consideration for them—and for our readers, and that we wouldn't wrong either of them for the world.

Mary had an English pup,
Its antics were peculiar,
Its nose was black and turned straight up—
She called her doggie Julia.

What made her name the puppie so?
The question is too silly;
'Twas that kind of a dog you know,
She couldn't call it Willie.

—A lady who dreads the commercial hair restoratives gives the following recipe, which she has tried with beneficial effects: Take a tea-spoonful of dried sage and boil it in a quart of soft water for twenty minutes. Strain it off and add a piece of borax the size of an English walnut; pulverize the borax; shake well together and put in a cool place. Brush the hair thoroughly and rub the wash well on the head with the hand. Then, after a good, hard rubbing, brush the hair well before a fire, so it will become perfectly dry. Never use a fine-tooth comb, as it irritates the skin and consequently inflames the roots of the hair. I have given it to many, and they all have had successful results. It does not color the hair, but restores and preserves it.