

## Don't Forget the Old Folks.

Don't forget the old folks,  
Love them more and more,  
As they with unshrinking feet  
Near the "shining shore."  
Let your words be tender,  
Loving, soft and slow;  
Let their last days be the best  
They have known below.

Don't forget poor father,  
With his failing sight,  
With his locks once thick and brown,  
Scanty now and white.  
Though he may be childish,  
Still do you be kind—  
Think of him as years ago,  
With his master mind.

Don't forget dear mother  
With her furrowed brow,  
Once as fair and smooth and white  
As the driven snow.  
Are her steps uncertain?  
Is her hearing poor?  
Guide her gently till she stand  
Safe at heaven's door.

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## Love Letters.

FROM A LADY'S NOTE-BOOK.

This is an age of reform, moral and political; and as reform is needed in this matter as much as any other, I wish I could say a few words that would sink deep in the heart, and never be forgotten by every unmarried man, in reference to this so often mis-called *romance* of love-letters. They are almost always, indeed, universally, held in derision as nonsensical, love-sick trash, but it is an egregious blunder, for they are most eminently practical; and whenever we hear them so spoken of, especially by our poor old bachelor friend, we long to whisper in his ear that we have not yet forgotten the time, although it has been a score of years ago, when he offered all his heart and half his kingdom to pretty Nelly Bly, and only missed having a happy home and family because Miss Nelly, perverse creature, would marry Tom Brown on his return from sea, and start out with him on a voyage for life—as first mate, for which reason our friend the old bachelor has had a general antipathy to water ever since, and a strong dislike to captains and first mates in particular. We would like to remind him of the valentine, with tender verses attached, that he so adroitly had handed to her without "anybody's knowing."

Truly, love-letters are foolish and nonsensical; a little nonsense, now and then, is relished by the wisest men. But I must come to my reform, for, as I have said before, there is need of it. Let "dear John," the object of a girl's affections, be separated from her by time and space, and what are the results? Let us follow them. The brave Apollo leaves, vowing eternal love and fidelity, with promise to write every day, if not oftener. He feels gay and buoyant, with the prospects of a fair business life ahead: the weeping maiden is left behind to solace herself from "past blessings," and wait for news from the absent one, obliged to learn the hardest of lessons that "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Now the practical part of life commences as the correspondence begins. For a while the letters come and go regularly, and everything is nice; but suddenly the letter comes not: several anxious days and sleepless nights, imagining of all sorts of diseases and disasters. When the truant letter is handed her, quickly is it torn open, to see "What can be the matter, that he has not written before?" when she finds, to her great relief of mind, that "owing to press of business, I carried this letter in my pocket for several days, entirely forgetting I had not posted it; hope the delay caused you no uneasiness of mind." The bare possibility of such an idea, when he must have known it caused her the greatest anxiety; and does he not always close his letters with, "Don't fail to write me on Sunday, or I shall think you are ill!" But she forgives the "dear fellow," and sighs, "Shall we ever meet again?"

For a few weeks the letters reach her regularly; so she takes courage, and presses forward to the mark of the prize of her high calling, which is to be "John's" wife. But it is only for a short season. "Sorrow cometh in the morning." After a wearisome delay, the "long looked for comes at last," which, after reading, makes her feel that "life is all a fickle dream," for if there was anything she was unlawfully proud of, it was John's voice, his beautiful tenor voice. Now he tells her "he unfortunately took a heavy cold; was confined to his bed for several days; there was no danger, but a great inconvenience, as it has settled in his throat, and in all probability would entirely lose his voice."

The time has now arrived when "the girl I left behind me" tries to have her mind prepared for anything or everything in or out of season; but, at last, "forbearance ceases to be a virtue," as she reads in his last:—"On Monday morning, in passing down High street, I barely escaped death, having just passed a building in the course of erection, when it fell, killing one workman, and wounding several others."

She quickly folds the letter up, puts it away, feeling thankful that there is a Providence especially provided to take care of absent lovers who can't take care of themselves. Now, can you tell me of any more trying period in the existence of a woman's life than this very time I have been talking about?

Her, letters I will venture to say, are as regular as clock-work; and, if she did fall and sprain her ankle, or barely recover from a serious attack of the diphtheria, she will be careful not to mention it until the worst is over, for fear of worrying "John," while as to accidents and hair breadth escapes that "might have been," they are never mentioned. All of the foregoing contribute to the *romance* of courtship; but we think it is the most trying period in a girl's experience; for, "as distance lends enchantment to the view," under such circumstances, so it is that imaginary or slight ills are harder to bear, when the loved one is absent from us, than real trouble is if encouraged by each other's presence. But then we should not, for "all the world beside," be without these dear old lovers and husbands, for, "with all their faults, we love them still."

## Vegetables in the Farmer's Family.

In years past some English and Scotch gardeners have been experimenting in the growth of the pea, with marvellous success. Varieties have been produced that should never be absent from the daily board of the farmer's meals. The tomato is equally good as a toothsome condiment. The onion, also, although in many farmers' families considered a luxury, is, according to eminent physicians, a great corrective and alterative of the human system when freely consumed, and a preventative, as well as a remedy, for some affections of the kidneys that are becoming so alarmingly frequent among our active men of middle life. The same influence upon the liver is attributed to the free use of the tomato. Equally effective is the celery plant upon the nervous system. But the great questions of food and economy are the ones which come nearest home. It is of no use to talk of the heart and the moral senses until the stomach is right. To have that right it must be well filled, and if the farmers cannot see their way clear to grow more of these articles on their farms, they must eat more and better vegetables. The list is large, succulent and healthy. They can be grown successfully not only for summer, but for winter consumption. Let our wives and daughters devote a little time to preparing them for winter use in the family. We have so burdened ourselves with business and superfluities that a goodly portion of our vital forces is expended in taking care of things, instead of procuring food and raiment. But, as we must work or starve, why not accept the situation, and when spring opens begin at the garden, and let our tables groan, if need be, with the fullness thereof?

## When Not to Laugh.

Unless you would be set down as vulgar, don't laugh at people's mistakes or misfortunes. There's a time to laugh; but when your schoolmate has slipped down on the ice, and is hurt, perhaps; or by accident the fruit stand at the corner is overturned, and the poor old man's oranges and apples are scattered in the mud; or some lover of a very low quality of fun has pinned a ticket for sale on a person's back as he walks the street; or an absent-minded lady, thinking more of the poor she is

going to visit than herself, has gone out with one boot and one slipper on; or a near-sighted person, whom you never saw before, addresses you as Jane or John, and cordially inquires after your grandma, when you haven't any; or the new boarder next door, in a block of a dozen houses all precisely alike, walks familiarly into your hall and comes to a dead stop on the stairs; or the bashful student comes awkwardly upon the platform and breaks down in an attempt to declaim; or the same sort of sensitive youth, through extreme diffidence, commits in company the very error he was trying to avoid; or whenever anything trying or humble happens to any person—that is not the time to laugh, if you do by others as you would be done by. If you are the person laughed at in such a case, consider that, at least, you are a great deal better than those who laugh at you. The too bashful girl or boy almost always turns out better than the too bold. The people who are always right side out in looks and dress and style, are not necessarily by any means the best or the brightest. Nothing more surely indicates good breeding and a large heart than not seeming to notice a blunder, whether of friend or stranger—unless it is by a word or simple act of kindness to show sympathy or render assistance, when this can spare the feelings or lighten a misfortune.—*Christian Era.*

## A Plea for Boys.

Every boy, if he is in sound health, has an excess of energy which must find an outlet. The mother is alarmed and worried at what she calls his mischievous proclivities. He is always breaking things, is never still, is always in the way, wanting to act outside of household law. He keeps the mother and sister in a constant fever. Their *bete noir* is a rainy day, when Charley can't go out doors to play; a school vacation is a burden hard to be borne; and the result is Charley must be packed off to a distant boarding school, not so much for his education, but to get rid of him.

If, as we hold, the interests of husband and wife are one, and it is essential to train the girl for wifehood in all household duties, it is equally so to train the boy for his part in the same direction. He should be under the law of home order; taught to be as neat and tidy as the girl; to arrange his bed-clothing and furniture instead of leaving it to his sister to do. He should have provided him needles, thread and buttons, and be taught their use, that he may not be subjected in manhood to that terror of nervous men, a buttonless shirt. He should take lessons from the cook, and be capable of preparing a wholesome dinner. He should learn how to do the multitude of little things that are constantly demanding attention in the house. There is no knowledge, however trivial, that will not at some time come into service.

It is said that a "Jack of all trades is master of none," but he need not make himself master. He may know enough of the general principles of mechanics to be able to repair wastes and to keep things in order. If a swollen door sticks, he should know how to ease it. If a hinge creaks, how to get at and stop its music. If a lock or clock is out of repair, how to take it to pieces and arrange it properly. If a pipe or a pan leaks, how to use iron and solder for its benefit. If the seams of a tub are open, how to cooper it. If a glass is broken in a sash, how to set another. How to hang paper on walls, and use brush and paint and putty. How to make a fire and lay a carpet and hang a curtain. Everybody may learn enough of these things to do away with the necessity of calling in a cobbling mechanic to his house when he is a man.

We say, then, teach the boys, or put them in a position to learn how to do for themselves what your experience tells you they will need to know when they are housekeepers. Let them have access to your kitchen, and be friendly with its goddess. Receive with approbation the cup of coffee or steak they have prepared for you. Initiate them into the mysteries of marketing, trust them to make purchases on their own discretion, and don't be hasty to condemn their first ventures. Teach them as to quantity and quality and value. Wink at their failures, and make them feel that they are helping you. Give them tools, carpenters' and plumbers' especially. Give them some little corner for a workshop all to themselves, and you will not only make them useful but happy. You will keep them near you. They will not feel that home is so dull that they must seek entertainment away from your eye, but will delight to be where you should have them, near you, doing you good.