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## Poetry.

### THE CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Around the Christmas-tree we stood,  
And watched the children's faces,  
As they their little gifts received  
With childish airs and graces.  
We grown folks had our share of fun  
In making woe ones merry,  
And laughed to see the juveniles  
Kiss 'neath the "holly berry."  
Beside me sat sweet Bessie Moore,  
A lovely dark-eyed maiden,  
While near her stood our little Eve,  
Her arms with love-gifts laden.  
Until around the room she went,  
The blue-eyed baby, shyly,  
And, blushing red, into each lap  
Her offerings dropped shyly.

But when to me the darling came  
All empty-handed was she,  
And when I asked, "Why slight me thus?"  
She answered, "Oh, because we—  
We dinna know you tumming here!"  
And then, with blue eyes shining,  
To Bessie's side she went, her arms  
Her sister's neck entwining.  
"But something I must have," said I,  
"My Christmas-night to gladden."  
A shade of thought the baby face  
Seemed presently to sadden.  
Till all at once, with gleeful laugh—  
"Oh! I know what I do, Sir!"  
I've only sister Bessie left,  
But I'll div' her 'to you, Sir!"

Amid the laugh that came from all  
I drew my new gift to me,  
While with flushed cheeks her eyes met mine,  
And sent a thrill all through me.  
"Oh! blessed little Eve!" cried I;  
"Your gift I welcome gladly!"  
The little one looked up at me,  
Half wonderingly, half sadly.  
Then to her father straight I turned,  
And humbly asked his blessing.  
Upon my Christmas gift, the while  
My long-stored hopes confessing.  
And as his aged hands were raised  
Above our heads, bowed lowly,  
The blessed time of Christmas ne'er  
Had seemed to me so holy.

[Harper's Magazine for January.

### A Remarkable Small-Pox Remedy.

A correspondent of the Stockton (Cal) He-  
rald, writes as follows:

"I herewith append a recipe which has been  
used, to my knowledge in hundreds of cases.  
It will prevent or cure the small pox, though  
the pittings are filling. When Jenner dis-  
covered cow pox in England the world of  
science hailed an avenger of fate upon his  
head, but when the most scientific school of  
medicine in the world—the of Paris—pub-  
lished this receipt as a panacea for small pox,  
it passed unheeded. It is unfailing as fate,  
and conquers in every instance. It is harmless,  
when taken by a well person. It will also  
cure a scarlet fever. Here is the recipe as  
I have used it, and cured my children of  
scarlet fever; here it is as I have used it to  
cure the small pox; when learned physicians  
said the patient must die, it cured; Sulphate  
of zinc, one grain; fox glove (digitalis), one  
grain; half a teaspoonful of sugar; mix with  
two tablespoonfuls of water. When thoroughly  
mixed, add four ounces of water. Take a  
spoonful every hour. Either disease will  
disappear in twelve hours. For a child, smaller  
doses, according to age. If countries would  
compel their physicians to use this, there  
would be no need of pest houses. If you  
value advice and experience, use this for that  
terrible disease."

## Interesting Tale.

### WITHOUT ANY COURTING.

Peter Patterson was ill—at least he thought  
so, and depressed; he had headaches, and, he  
hated the dusty street, in which the summer  
heat burnt, and the summer sun shone before  
the green leaves had draped the trees, and  
the equis of grass and western vines and  
spotted geraniums which have come to be so  
universally popular everywhere lent their sum-  
mer's freshness.

What shall I do, doctor? he said to the  
white-headed old physician. You say nothing  
ails me, but I can tell what my feelings are  
better than you can. I know I shall be down  
with something soon. I rode in a car with a  
dozen dirty children the other day—going to  
small pox hospital. I haven't a doubt—very  
red and nasty looking, all of 'em; and while  
I was buying something in a store the other  
day, a horrible old woman begged of me be-  
cause her husband was bad with the typhoid.  
No doubt I've caught both diseases, and it's  
the complication that puzzles you. Could I  
relish my coffee this morning, left my milk  
untouched. Hateful life, that of a bach-  
elor at a hotel. Oh dear me!

Why don't you marry then, said the doc-  
tor.  
They need so much courting, said Mr. Pat-  
terson. You spent six months or so, at least,  
dangling at a woman's apron strings. You  
must go to the theatres and the opera if she's  
gay, and to church or meeting if she's pious.  
At fifty a man likes his slippers and easy  
chair of an evening. It was just stepping  
over to the clergyman's and getting married,  
putting a ring on her finger and saying or  
singing. Yes, two or three times, why I wouldn't  
mind it, you know.

Ah, well, courting is the fun of it all, in my  
opinion, said the old doctor, but every one is  
to his taste. And my advice to you is to go  
into the country.  
To another hotel and more mercenary wait-  
ers? said Mr. Patterson.

No, said the doctor, go to a nice private  
house. I know one—a motherly widow lady  
who cooks a dinner fit for a king. River be-  
fore the house, woods behind it, orchard to  
the left, kitchen garden to the right; no fever  
and ague; no mosquitoes. Heavenly! I am  
going up there to-morrow and I will see if she  
I'll take you.

Very well said Mr. Patterson, I think I'll  
try it.  
And you must take plenty of milk, and eat  
plenty of nice home-made bread, said the doc-  
tor.

Yes I will said Patterson, overjoyed at last  
by hearing something that sounded like a pre-  
scription. And you would advise milk?  
Quinn of it every day, said the doctor.  
I'll make note of it, said Patterson. And  
if I should be very ill she'll nurse me?  
S. kindly, said the doctor, and went his  
way.

Mr. Patterson thought the matter over, and  
thought better of it every day, and when the  
little note, informing him that the widow  
would be willing to take him and do for him  
reached him, and had his trunks and portmanteau  
already packed, and was all ready to  
start that afternoon. As for the widow the  
doctor had prepared her for her boarder's  
peculiarities thus:

Nice fellow; solid; plenty of money;  
thinks himself ill, but isn't, ought to be mar-  
ried; told him so, but he hates the idea of  
marrying off hand some day, no doubt.  
Will you have me?

Yes. Call in a clergyman; over. Very  
peculiar old bachelor; but then old bachel-  
ors are peculiar generally.

The widow was what the Yankees call an  
amazing smart woman. She had married at  
sixteen, and had never failed to have her  
washing over when other people were just  
hanging out theirs. Her bread always rose,  
her cake was always good and her butter was  
always sweet. At forty-five she had married  
off all her daughters, and was well to do,  
buxom and happy.

Her son and his wife boarded with her,  
and she added to her plentiful savings by  
taking a summer boarder or two, if they  
happened to offer.

Fifty and a bachelor, said Mrs. Muntie,  
looking in the glass. Well, it seems a pity,  
but then when elderly gentlemen marry, it is  
generally some bit of a girl, that leads them a  
terrible life, and it's likely for the best.

Then she looked in the glass again, for the  
widow was but a woman after all.

Mr. Patterson came to the widow's and  
obeyed the doctor's prescription carefully. He  
ate bread and drank milk, robbed the orchard  
like a school boy, and de-limed over the  
strawberry short-cake after a fashion that  
would have made his reputation at the bar.  
Then, too, Mrs. Muntie did not smile at his  
aches and pains, and insist that he must be  
perpetually well because he had a fresh com-  
plexion and dimples in his cheeks. She had  
savoury herb teas and potions, which she pro-  
duced when he complained of "feeling misera-

ble," and she had that blessing to hypochon-  
driacs, an homoeopathic box and book in the  
house. There were remedies in that box for  
everything; and it was pleasant to find that  
when there was crawling sensation in your  
flesh, or a kind of uneasy feeling in your legs,  
there were dear little globules to be had just  
suited for the symptoms, that to find yourself  
very angry about nothing indicated pulmonary,  
and that even for unrequited love there was a  
medicine.

For two months and more Mr. Patterson  
boarded with Mrs. Muntie, and happier months  
he had never lived through. Then he went  
back to the city for a few weeks; returned in-  
urgent need for more milk, more fresh air, and  
more pellets from the medicine chest, and  
stayed until the last pink corymbium was  
blooming on its wild branches. He had grown  
so fond of his little room, with its white cur-  
tains and fresh green bleached linen, of the  
country good things, and of the cozy nursing  
of Mrs. Muntie, that he could scarcely  
bear the thought of parting with them alto-  
gether.

After all, why could he not buy a house,  
and try to get Mrs. Muntie to keep it for  
him? Perhaps she would. He would offer  
her a high salary, and would have plenty of  
servants. Then, indeed he might have his  
friends to dine with him, and be as happy as  
possible.

If only he could approach his hostess  
showing her as he did so, that he considered  
her his equal and a lady, and all that was  
certainly was—a little countrified, of course,  
but a clergyman's daughter and the widow of  
a country doctor.

After much consideration he finally must-  
ered courage for the effort, and walking into  
the parlor, sent the servant to ask Mrs. Mun-  
tie to step there for a moment, if she please.  
Graci! I thought Mrs. Muntie. What  
can he want?

She then blushed brightly, settled her  
necktie, took off her apron, and walked de-  
terminely in.

Be steady, ma'am, said Mr. Patterson. Please  
to sit here. Allow me to sit near to you. I  
have something to say which may require  
some consideration.

Oh dear, it's coming! thought Mrs. Mun-  
tie. I suppose you know that I'm a man of some  
little means, ma'am, said the old bachelor,  
able to buy a nice house, furnish it well and  
live comfortably?

So I've understood Mr. Patterson said the  
widow.

And of course it is pleasant to live that  
way than in bachelor lodgings or at a hotel,  
said Mrs. Patterson.

I should judge it might be, said Mrs. Mun-  
tie cautiously.

You judge rightly, said Mr. Patterson;  
but you know a bachelor must be in the hands  
of servants if he keeps the house. A gen-  
tleman don't want that; he wants a lady to  
superintend things for him—some one of taste  
and refinement, and all that. Common peo-  
ple don't understand his feelings, and merce-  
nary servants are a poor dependence.

I know that, said Mrs. Muntie.  
You are almost as much alone as I, aren't  
you Mrs. Muntie? said Mr. Patterson coaxing-  
ly.

The doctor knew him. He's going to do it,  
just as he said he would; if he ever did, said  
the lady to herself. Aloud she answered:  
Well sir, I am pretty free, it is true. All  
my children are married.

I know money would be no object to you,  
said Mr. Patterson. You've enough. But if  
I were to tell you that I had bought a house,  
house, and wanted a house, I think you  
would have pity on me. I'll buy a beautiful  
house, and you shall have complete control of  
everything; only to make my strawberry  
shortcake for me all my life.

He paused and looked at the lady.  
That's delicately put, he thought. Now  
will you hire out for a housekeeper? in that  
I fancy.

It isn't romantic, thought Mrs. Muntie;  
but still, we ain't young, either of us, and it  
gets to be just that with the most sentimental  
after a while.

Don't refuse me, pleaded Mr. Pat-  
erson. Well, Mr. Patterson, I won't say Mrs. Mun-  
tie. And no doubt I shall never regret for  
I think you've a fine disposition, and I under-  
stand your ways and tastes.

Mr. Patterson listened. He saw what he  
had done proposed and been accepted, without  
having any idea what he was about.

He looked at Mrs. Muntie, who was very  
nice an Irish and comely, and ten years his  
junior, at least, if she was forty. He could  
not have done a better thing, and he would  
be married without any troublesome courting.  
So he put his arm about Mrs. Muntie's waist,  
and said:

Thank you, my dear. I consider myself  
very lucky.

He wrote to his good doctor in about a fort-  
night's time to tell him he had taken both his  
prescriptions, was a married man, and intend-  
ed to bring his bride home about Christmas.  
—Mary Kyle Dallas.

## ANIMAL LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Africa is a land of strange contrasts. It is pre-  
eminently the land of burning sahara and sterile  
deserts; and yet its animal and vegetable life is  
abundant beyond all conception. The beneficent  
Creator has provided those means by which the  
teeming myriads of animated beings, which "wait  
upon him," obtain "their meat in due season."  
Through his wise arrangements, the great ocean is  
ever supplying those vapours which, being wafted  
away on the wings of the wind, descend in gentle  
dews and refreshing showers in the far interiors of  
mighty continents. It is thus that "He watereth  
the hills from his chambers;" and even in the  
most inaccessible regions of Africa, "He sendeth  
the springs into the valleys," by which he gives  
joy and gladness to the countless millions of ani-  
mals which inhabit this continent.

Naturalists say that Africa can enumerate five  
times as many species of quadrupeds as Asia, and  
three times as many as America. The most col-  
ossal of land animals are the denizens of her re-  
cesses. Her upland pastures and unbragous  
forests are the haunts of the most gigantic quad-  
rupeds. There are birds of every variety and, of  
the most glorious plumage, including the crown-  
bird, the most beautiful of the feathered tribes;  
the tiny sugar-bird, the nectarian of naturalists;  
and the wonderful honey-bird. The mountains  
and rocks are the haunts of the lion and panther  
—the rivers the abode of the crocodile, the hippo-  
potamus, and the rhinoceros. Her inland  
streams are alive with crabs and tortoises; her  
pools vocal with the hoarse notes of enormous  
frogs; whilst in the solitude of her parched  
deserts the serpent-eater and the ostrich find a  
congenial home. Even in those desolate and  
desolate tracts, which seem to appal these soli-  
tary birds, the earth teems with animated be-  
ings, rejoicing in the life that God has given them.  
There, thousands of lizards and sand tortoises are  
found basking under the torrid rays of a tropical  
sun; whilst the termites, in numbers inconceiv-  
able, are engaged, with wondrous skill and artifice,  
in erecting their conical habitations.

Wonderful, however, as is the profusion of animal  
life in every grade, we desire to draw attention  
to the larger and nobler animals which, in  
numerous herds, are found browsing in unre-  
strained freedom of their nature among the knolls,  
or glens, and valleys of South Africa.

Huntmen and travellers speak with unqualified  
rapture of the numbers and variety of what they  
call, the large game, which congregates in the  
neighbourhood of the drinking fountains in those  
sunny regions. These fountains are the meeting-  
places of elephants, buffaloes, giraffes, and num-  
berless species of antelopes. "The wild are also,"  
—the quagga of travellers—"quench their thirst"  
at these reservoirs, which a beneficent God has  
provided, even in burning Africa, "to give drink  
to every beast of the field."

Among all the impressive spectacles witnessed  
in these regions, the migrations of some of the an-  
telope tribes are not the least astonishing; and  
there is, perhaps, no other natural phenomenon  
which affords a more striking example of the won-  
derful fecundity of animal life. At certain periods  
the springer antelope migrates in myriads from  
unknown districts in the interior towards the  
abodes of civilization. A writer who more than  
once had an opportunity of witnessing these mi-  
grations, was so astonished with the sight, that he  
seems unable to convey any adequate idea of the  
hordes which pressed onwards in countless suc-  
cesses. He says that, "The vast quantity of the  
species of birds of South America which produce  
the guano in sufficient abundance to be an article  
of commerce—the flocks of pigeons of North  
America—the locusts of Africa—are not more  
striking than the herds of springboks."

And on one occasion he passed through one of these migra-  
tory swarms pouring in from the north in such in-  
credible myriads, that no one could venture on a  
computation of their numbers. But as they pressed  
onwards, hand following hand, they seemed to  
widen the whole expanse of country, far as the  
eye could reach. And, taking the very lowest es-  
timate, he affirms that within view there could not  
be less than thirty thousand of these elegant crea-  
tures.

It would, of course, be altogether beyond our  
present purpose to enter on the general question  
of the migration of animals. This subject, in it-  
self, presents unquestionably some of the most re-  
markable phenomena manifested in the whole  
range of natural history. We have only adverted  
to it as serving to illustrate our present subject—  
the marvellous exuberance of animal life. The  
migrations of the springbok afford perhaps, the  
most extraordinary evidence of this fecundity;  
but there are also some varieties of the equine  
species which supply very striking examples of  
the same phenomenon. The quagga, a kind of  
wild ass, migrates in bands of several hundreds,  
from the neighbourhood of the tropics towards the  
south. The bands follow in regular succession,  
and though the number of each is somewhat

limited, the aggregate of the whole host is numer-  
ous beyond all computation.

Whatever induces either the quagga or the  
springbok to move, at certain periods, from one dis-  
trict to another, it is unquestionably a fact that  
these migrations are of essential service to the  
inhabitants of the desert. It is said that the sea-  
son when the quagga migrates is the harvest time  
of the Bushmen. The lions, which follow the  
migratory bands, add the natives in the work of  
destruction. During this season the Bushman  
looks towards the heavens the first thing in the  
early morning, and if he spies a vulture hovering  
in the air, he knows that underneath he is sure to  
find a quagga that has been slaughtered by the  
lions during the night. By a beneficent arrange-  
ment the very depredations of prey are made to minister  
to the wants and necessities of man.

The number and variety of the animal creation,  
as manifested in these southern regions, are so in-  
dicative of the wisdom and goodness of God, that  
in the words of that grand creation anthem, the  
104th Psalm, we may well exclaim—"O Lord,  
how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou  
made them all; the earth is full of thy riches."

## VARIETIES.

A MOTHER AND A MULE.—An officer at-  
tached to the staff of General Custer, having  
his wife and child with him, just before a sharp  
fight with the Indians, gave them in charge to  
a friendly Indian to take beyond the line of  
the enemy. The Indian procured a mule and  
started. On reaching the river, he proposed to  
the mother to take over the child first, and re-  
turn for her. When half way over the mule  
suddenly stopped, and began slowly to sink,  
until only the Indian, and child disappeared. The  
mother, on reaching New York, met Mr. Bergh,  
and, with tears in her eyes, related her  
sad story.

"Oh, Mr. Bergh," she exclaimed, "words  
cannot tell what I suffered as I saw my poor  
child perish within my sight! Fancy, if you  
care, what were the feelings of a mother on that  
sad, sad occasion!"

"Yes," said Mr. Bergh, "of course it is  
very sad; but, madam, fancy the feelings of  
the mule!"—EDITOR'S DRAWER, in Harper's  
Magazine for January.

An exchange remarks that this is the kind  
of weather when a Christmas draws close to  
the stove and wishes every poor labouring man  
on the face of the earth was a clerk in a store.

A young man in San Francisco found an  
old deacon he knew "bucking the tiger" in a  
gambling hall. "What," he exclaimed, "deacon,  
you here?" "Yes" was the reply, "I am  
bound to break down this evil institution."

The New York Times has a long editorial  
attacking poor coffee. A journal base enough  
to assault an article so universally used as  
coffee is bad, and it would, if it could, on-  
dermine the railroad breakfast system of this  
country.—[Mobile Register.

Josh Billings says: "Macrel inhabit the  
sea generally; but those which inhabit the  
grocery I've taste to me as though they had  
been larded on salt. They want a deal of  
freshening before they're eaten, and also arter-  
ward. If I kin have plenty of mackerel for  
breakfast, I can generally make the other two  
meals out of water."

A lover on presenting a lace-collar to his  
amorous, said jocularly, "Don't let another rumple  
it." "No, dear," said she: "I'll take it off."

SKELETON OF BAUSSEBOUSSE.—The dis-  
covery of a human skeleton in a cave on the  
Italian frontier near Mentone, by Dr. E. Riviere,  
has excited great interest among ethnologists,  
in view of its association in point of time with the  
remains of extinct animals, being one of the best  
authenticated occurrences of the kind on record.  
At the time of the discovery Dr. Riviere was en-  
gaged in the exploration of bone caves, under  
the authority of the French government, and had  
obtained numerous remains of birds, gigantic stags,  
hyenas, rhinoceroses, and other animals.

The cavern in which the discovery took place  
(Baussebousse) is near the line of railway from  
Mentone to Ventimille, and the skeleton was found  
beneath a layer of earth several yards in thick-  
ness. It is of the ordinary size, and entire, with  
the exception of the ribs, which were broken by  
the pressure of the superincumbent earth. The  
teeth and lower jaw are in a good state of preser-  
vation. The skull differs from the rest of the  
bones in being of a deep-brick-red color. From  
the attitude it would appear as if the man had  
died in his sleep, and was carefully covered over  
without disturbing the earth beneath. Stones  
were placed at the back and sides, as if to indicate  
the outline of the grave. Numerous small shells  
and deer teeth, all pierced with a hole, were found  
around the skull, as if they had been twined in  
the hair or formed part of a head-dress. Around  
the skeleton were found many stone implements  
and bone needles. Associated with these were  
bones of various animals.—[Harper's Magazine.