

A Midnight Call.

Last Summer I lived on the outskirts of the town, where I could keep chickens and not have them roosting in the bedroom window of my next door neighbor. Therefore I kept them—not for profit—but for the pleasure of having my garden seeds scratched up every morning before sunrise: it was good exercise to plant them over every day, you know.

One night, about half-past eleven o'clock, I was gently aroused from my peaceful slumbers, by the blunt end of Mrs. Acker's left elbow seeking for my short ribs, with her mellifluous voice sounding in my ear:

"Wake up! Wake up! Some one is stealing our chickens!"

I slid out upon the floor in the dark, and reached for my clothing. In my haste I hopped and floundered around, like a shark on dry land, upsetting the wash-pitcher and bowl—one taking a carrom on my best corn, and the other dropping, gracefully upon the top of my boot, making a trout-pond of the interior. After tumbling over a chair, wash-stand, towel-rack, etc., I sat down on the floor—not through any desire of my own—but because of the tangled condition of my wearing gear and legs. Soon, however, I had myself in condition to sally forth—minus boots—accompanied by my shot-gun.

The night was darker than the mind of the benighted heathen, and I groped my way along as quietly as possible, hoping to surprise the stealer of fowls.

All of a sudden I stretched myself at full length upon the ground, and began to murmur, soft and low, a little article of prose, which arises irresistibly to my mind at times. While repeating the words, I took my left foot in both hands, and detached a piece of glass from the heel of my stocking.

Mrs. Acker came rushing out, and began to urge some one not to kill me, but take the chickens in welcome. So much interested was I, in repeating the little story, that I may have been somewhat abrupt in my remarks to her—for she closed the door with a bang, after saying:

"I don't care if you do get murdered! and the chickens stolen, too! So there!"

This reply arousing my ire, I sprang up and rushed in the direction of the hen-house, urged on by the loud clamor of the hen community.

In my hurried progress I encountered the dog-kennel, upset it, and sought the bosom of mother earth; sprang up again, with the dog fastened to my trousers; tried to coax him into the belief that I was his master, by persuasively using the butt end of my gun; succeeded in tearing loose after he had gone the length of his chain, and finally reached the door of the hen-house.

I cocked my gun, opened the door, and, in my most commanding tone, ordered the thief to come out and be shot.

I received no reply, save a monotonous "squawk! squawk! squawk!"

I became bold, stepped inside the door, closed it, and determined to have revenge for my mishaps.

I struck a match, and saw—the old rooster dangling, head downward, from the perch, having slipped his foot through a small knot-hole, lost his balance in his struggles, and now being unable to extricate himself.

I returned to the house repeating my little prose lesson, put a court plaster on my heel, and retired.

In the morning I serenely watched Mrs. Acker obliterate Towser's trade mark from my pantaloons.—*N. Y. Acker.*

Wedding Anniversaries.

For the benefit of a large number of lady friends we publish a list of wedding anniversaries:

First anniversary.....	Iron
Second.....	Paper
Fifth.....	Wooden
Tenth.....	Tin
Fifteenth.....	Crystal
Twentieth.....	China
Twenty-fifth.....	Silver
Thirtieth.....	Cotton
Thirty-fifth.....	Linen
Fortieth.....	Wollen
Forty-fifth.....	Silk
Fiftieth.....	Golden
Seventy-fifth.....	Diamond

Weaving The Web.

"This morn I will weave my web," she said
As she stood by her loom in the rosy light,
And her young eyes, hopefully glad and clear,
Followed after the swallow's flight.
"As soon as the day's first tasks are done,
While yet I am fresh and strong," said she,
"I will hasten to weave the beautiful web
Whose pattern is known to none but me!"

"I will weave it fine, I will weave it fair,
And ah! how the colors will glow!" she said;
"So fadeless and strong will I weave my web
That perhaps it will live after I am dead."
But the morning hours sped on apace,
The air grew sweet with the breath of June;
And young Love hid by the waiting loom,
Tangling the threads as he hummed a tune.

"Ah! life is so rich and full," she cried,
"And morn is short, though the days are long
This noon I will weave my beautiful web,
I will weave it carefully fine and strong."
But the sun rose high in the cloudless sky;
The burden and heat of the day she bore;
And hither and thither she came and went,
While the loom stood still as it stood before.

"Ah life is too busy at noon," she said;
"My web must wait till the eventide,
Till the common work of the day is done,
And my heart grows calm in the silence wide!"
So, one by one, the hours passed on,
Till the creeping shadows had longer grown;
Till the house was still, and the breezes slept,
And the singing birds to their nests had flown.

"And now I will weave my web," she said
As she turned to her loom ere set of sun,
And laid her hand on the shining threads
To set them in order, one by one.
But hand was tired, and heart was weak;
"I am not as strong as I was," sighed she,
"And the pattern is blurred, and the colors rare
Are not so bright, or so fair to see!"

"I must wait, I think, till another morn;
I must go to my rest with my work undone.
It is growing too dark to weave!" she cried,
As lower and lower sank the sun.
She dropped the shuttle; the loom stood still;
The weaver slept in the twilight gray.
Dear heart! Will she weave her beautiful web
In the golden light of a longer day?

—*Julia C. Dorr.*

Stout Men of Genius.

Ought a man of genius to be fat or lean? The latter, if the proverbs are to be credited, which assert that the blade uses the scabbard, and that the mind breaks the body. A philosopher remarks that men of genius had a yellowish and parchment look formerly, because they, being underpaid, were consequently underfed. That type has disappeared as effectually as the race of King Charles' dogs or the dodo. No "litterateur" of the nineteenth century wears shoes without soles, none resemble Scudery, who flavored his crust with a morsel of bacon prigged from a mousetrap. Balzac was so stout that it was a day's exercise to walk round him; the Riot Act could not disperse him, and he was encircled with bandages, as if a hoghead. Rossini was a veritable Jumbo, since six years he never saw his knees; ordinarily he was called by the small boys hippopotamus in pantaloons. Jules Janin, the prince of critics, broke every sofa he sat upon; his chin and his cheeks protruded beyond his beard and his whiskers. Lablanche was charged three fares wherever he travelled, and it was in a horse-box, elegantly fitted up with all the comforts of a home, plus an opening outside, that he voyaged before his death; when he appeared on the stage the wags swore the latter had to be specially propped up, just as is the case when elephants don the sock and buskin. Dumas