

A SUNSET VIEW.

Bright sunbeams rove
O'er leafy grove,
And a pale, mysterious light
Glow on the ruined castle's height.

All peacefully
Shines the blue sea,
And homewards glide, like swans that float,
Many a little fisher-boat.

Pale silver sand
Gleams on the strand,
And redder here, while paler there,
The waves reflect cloud-pictures fair.

Reeds rustling grow
In even glow,
And wave upon the forelands high,
O'er which white-winged sea-birds fly.

Like fairy scene
Mid umbrage green,
And hidden in the flow'ry dell
Peeps forth a hermit's mossy cell.

A poplar tree
Waves on the lee,
And over-arching oak-boughs gleam
Beside the arcade's rock-bound stream.

In ocean blue
Dies sunset's hue,
And paler wanes the evening light
Upon the ruined castle's height.

Bright moonbeams rove
O'er leafy grove,
And ghostly whispers in the gloom
Rise sadly round the warrior's tomb.

CHIFFON GOSSIP.

Autumn leaves are reddening on the hill sides, and dahlias and chrysanthemums are more glowing than ever, but a heavy black pall stands between them and the light of day. Silks and satins, surahs and velvet are crowded together in the shop windows, but the same dark shadow deepens as it falls over their gaudy tints. Hats decked with the pale blossoms of early summer have replaced these adornments by brilliant, many-colored plumes befitting the change of season; but the eye turns from them instinctively towards bonnets of simple mourning and lingers more naturally in the folds of their black crape veils. Simpering lay figures, bristling with the latest fashion in basques and tunics, look out from their flimsy covering of tissue paper through festoons of bombazine and black cashmere. Even the flaxen-haired dolls are deemed worthy of a badge of mourning. Their saffres of scarlet and blue are changed to black, and their hands are covered with black kid gloves. Red-cheeked apples hide their bloom under bits of crape, and wreaths of violets and immortelles fill the florists' windows. Cockades of black and white are pendant from the ears of the tradesmen's horses, and the jovial boot-black ceases to whistle as he winds black canonic over his implements of trade. Encircled with mourning diaphery, public clocks point fixedly to the hour when time recorded the death of hope.

Genuineness of mourning is probably the rarest thing in the world. Amongst the multitudinous ahams of life, perhaps none are more bare-faced than those relating to the manifestations of woe. Society does well to protect itself against the rude selfishness of its members by imposing certain observances of mourning etiquette which may screen native indifference and heartlessness behind a barrier of conventional decency. Whole families are called on at times to deplore the death of kinsfolk whom they have never seen nor scarcely heard of, the joys of childhood are hushed by the incomprehensible mysteries of a funeral, and the amusements of grown people are cut short by the inexorable law of forced seclusion and mourning habiliments. The tyranny of worldly decorum is often carried too far in these particulars. Young women especially (since the boredom of fashionable exactions falls most heavily on the gentle sex) who belong to a large and well-known connection not infrequently spend a great portion of their precious youth shrouded in black crape and pining in retirement, because remote relatives are constantly fulfilling their destiny by slipping out of this existence. Gratitude dictates that a capitalist who bestows, in addition to his blessing, a large portion of his worldly possessions on a friend or kinsman should be mourned by all the paraphernalia of woe afforded by civilization. But the expense of a mourning outfit is no inconsiderable item to a poor household; so that many social reformers have made the abolition of funeral attire one of their articles of faith. Still, the heart, in its fulness of grief, seeks vent at times in an outer expression of bereavement, and finds in the shelter of a black, impenetrable veil a certain solace and gentle relief.

Civilized countries differ as to the periods prescribed for mourning. In France where manners and customs have received for ages the sanction of universal usage, the outer semblance of grief has been reduced to a system. For parents, one year of mourning is considered proper. The marital relation when severed by death extends its period of woe to two years. Brothers-in-law or husbands' near relatives from two to three months. Further to the South, where the fierce sun dissipates many of the world's artificial distinctions, mourning habiliments are regarded with less favor. In fact, everything pertaining to death is viewed with childish terror. In Roman Catholic countries the Church is ever at hand to mitigate the horrors of sickness and death, both to the living and the moribund. The cares and responsibilities attending deaths and funerals are assumed

more naturally by all connected with the Church, priests and sisters of charity, than in Protestant countries. In Paris, the precise degree of funeral pomp desired for the defunct by his sorrowing survivors is gauged to a nicety. What is termed a first-class burial is an expensive means of display, seldom employed, except in the case of public functionaries of distinction. The price of such dreary magnificence, including eight horses, richly caparisoned, with nodding plumes for the hearse and imposing church decorations, is from fifteen hundred to two thousand dollars. But more modest interments, befitting the claims of private individuals, may be obtained for four or six hundred dollars. But so small an expenditure only insures a third-class burial. The decorations and material used for these pageants, however, are extremely artistic. The portieres of black velvet, trimmed with silver fringe, which deck the entrance to the house of mourning, are generally expressive additions to the other rich and massive adornments. In fact, the many abuses and extortions connected with Christian burial all the world over are a poignant cause of social complaint. The ancient profession of mute at a funeral has never thriven in America. Perhaps the dolorous physiognomy necessary for success has never perpetuated itself under American institutions. At all events, it seems to be a lost art and one not regretted on this side of the water. To be speechless with grief, seems, on the whole, to the practical American, a waste of good material, and the mild melancholy conveyed in the aspect of empty coaches at a funeral is equally a thing to be dispensed with.

In ladies' mourning dress, strange to say, there is a tendency to exaggeration in America. Veils of unusual length and of the densest black crape are donned on the slightest provocation and worn for a longer period than in foreign lands. The faculty of assuming light and graceful emblems of grief, compounded of lace and jet, frequently the most becoming of all costumes, is one little cultivated by American ladies. A brief retreat, too, from worldly cares and pleasures, which oftentimes preserves good looks and promotes good health, is rarely indulged in by fair Americans. There is an evident disposition to drain the cup of bitterness or of pleasure to the very dregs, without seeking to mitigate its intensity, which precludes all brief excursions into the domain of sentimental sorrow, as well as into the vortex of wild gaiety. *Tout ou rien* is the device inseparable from a youthful nation, the dress and general habits of which attest the truth of the motto.

ARABESQUE.

A FEMALE BASE-BALL CLUB.

The only attempt on record of Danbury trying to organize a female base-ball club occurred last week. It was a rather incipient affair, but it demonstrated everything necessary, and in that particular answered every purpose. The idea was cogitated and carried out by six young ladies. It was merely designed for an experiment on which to base future action. The young ladies were at the house of one of their number when the subject was brought up. The premises are capacious, and include quite a piece of turf, hidden from the street by several drooping, luxuriant, old-fashioned apple-trees. The young lady of the house has a brother who is fond of base-ball, and has the necessary machinery for a game. This was taken out on the turf under the trees. The ladies assembled, and divided themselves into two lines of three each. The first three took the bat, and the second three went to the bases, one as catcher, one as pitcher, and the other as chaser, or, more technically, fielder. The pitcher was a lively brunette, with eyes full of dead earnestness. The catcher and batter were blondes, with faces aflame with expectation. The pitcher took the ball, braced herself, put her arm straight out from her shoulder, then moved it around to her back without modifying in the least its delightful frigidity, and then threw it. The batter did not catch it. This was owing to the pitcher looking directly at the batter when she aimed it. The fielder got a long pole and soon succeeded in poking the ball from an apple-tree back of the pitcher, where it had lodged. Business was then resumed again, although with a faint semblance of uneasiness generally visible.

The pitcher was very red in the face, and said "I declare" several times. This time she took a more careful aim, but still neglected to look in some other direction than toward the batter, and the ball was presently poked out of another tree.

"Why, this is dreadful!" said the batter, whose nerves had been kept at a pretty stiff tension.

"Perfectly dreadful!" chimed in the catcher, with a long sigh.

"I think you had better get up in one of the trees," mildly suggested the fielder to the batter.

The observation somewhat nettled the pitcher, and she declared she would not try again, whereupon a change was made with the fielder. She was certainly more sensible. Just as soon as she was ready to let drive, she shut her eyes so tight as to loosen two of her puffs and pull out her back comb, and madly fired away. The ball flew directly at the batter, which so startled that lady, who had the bat clinched in both hands with desperate grip, that she involuntarily cried, "Oh, my!" and let it drop, and ran. This movement uncovered the catcher, who had both hands extended about three feet apart, in readiness for the catch, but being intently absorbed

in studying the coil on the back of the batter's head, she was not able to recover in time, and the ball caught her in the bodice with sufficient force to deprive her of all her breath, which left her lips with ear-piercing shrillness. There was a lull in the proceedings for ten minutes, to enable the other members of the club to arrange their hair.

The batter again took position, when one of the party, discovering that she was holding the bat very much as a woman carries a broom when she is after a cow in the garden, showed her that the tip must rest on the ground and at her side, with her body a trifle inclined in that direction. The suggester took the bat and showed just how it was done, and brought around the bat with such vehemence as to almost carry her from her feet, and to nearly brain the catcher. That party shivered, and moved back some fifteen feet.

The batter took her place, and laid the tip of the bat on the ground, and the pitcher shut her eyes again as tightly as before, and let drive. The fielder had taken the precaution to get back of a tree, or otherwise she must have been disfigured for life. The ball was recovered. The pitcher looked heated and vexed. She didn't throw it this time. She just gave it a pitching motion, but not letting go of it in time it went over her head, and caused her to sit down with considerable unexpectedness.

Thereupon she declared she would never throw another ball as long as she lived, and changed off with the catcher. This young lady was somewhat determined, which augured success. Then she looked in an altogether different direction from that to the batter.

And this did the business. The batter was ready. She had a tight hold on the bat. Just as soon as she saw the ball start, she made a tremendous lunge with the bat, let go of it, and turned around in time to catch the ball in the small of the back, while the bat being on its own hook, and seeing a stone figure holding a vase of flowers, neatly clipped off its arm at the elbow and let the flowers to the ground.

There was a chorus of screams and some confusion of skirts, and then the following dialogue took place:

No. 1. "Let's give up the nasty thing!"

No. 2. "Let's."

No. 3. "So I say."

No. 4. "It's just horrid."

This being a majority, the adjournment was made.

The game was merely an experiment. And it is just as well it was. Had it been a real game, it is likely that some one would have been killed outright.—*Danbury News.*

MR. FERGUSON'S GRAVEYARD.

An old gentleman named Hutchings, who lives in Hudson, N. Y., was at my house the other evening. He was full of reminiscences of the past of our village, and told many interesting stories. One of them I have thought best to preserve in this column, as a picture of a phase of human weakness that is not, I am thankful to say, common.

The time of the incident was the building of our railroad, some twenty years ago. A man named Ferguson lived then in Perkinstown, on the route. He was a farmer, and owned a piece of land in a ravine through which the road was to run. This piece was so situated that the company could not avoid crossing it with their line, unless by making a turn at a very great expense. There was scarcely a half-acre in the piece, and it was a mound of rocks. It might have been worth to the company about forty dollars. If any one else had offered twenty-five dollars for it, the Perkinstowners would have thought that he was going to put up an asylum for the insane, and stock it himself.

The commissioner who was instructed to deal with Mr. Ferguson made him the liberal offer of fifty dollars for the land. Mr. Ferguson declined it. He had his own ideas of the matter. Railroads were not common. They did not even come once a year, and it was very reasonable to believe that another would not take in Perkinstown during Mr. Ferguson's lifetime. It was his idea to make the most of this one.

Mr. Ferguson said he would see the commissioner the next day. He wanted to sleep on the matter over night. But he didn't sleep much that night. Mrs. Ferguson was dead. She had been dead a couple of years or thereabouts. She had been a sickly woman for the last years of her life, and not exactly a helpmeet to Mr. Ferguson, who had been obliged to hire a woman to do the work that would have otherwise been done by the late lamented. Mr. Ferguson fell to thinking of that while brooding over the railroad matter, and looking out of his kitchen window upon the clump of peach-trees beneath which reposed his dead wife.

The result of his ruminations was that "Martha would 'a' done better if she'd had the chance; but she wasn't able." He believed that an opportunity for her to be useful had now arrived, and knowing well her willing disposition, he felt it would be a downright favour to her to put her in the way of using the chance.

That night, with the aid of his hired man, he dug her up and transplanted her on the rocky bit of land in the ravine. Then he was ready for the commissioner when that individual appeared.

He told the commission that he had been thinking of the matter very carefully, weighed all the phases of it, and he had come to the con-

clusion that he could not give up that piece of land for less than a thousand dollars. The shock was so great to the commissioner that he fell over in his chair, and the place where his head struck the door jamb was shown for years after. When he got his feet and his breath, he told Mr. Ferguson that the demand was preposterous, that the company would not entertain it for an instant, that fifty dollars was a tremendous price for the piece.

"I admit," said Mr. Ferguson, gently, "that fifty dollars is a good price for an ordinary piece of land like that, but this is a far different case. That is a private graveyard, and that makes a great difference."

"A graveyard! What's buried there?" bluntly inquired the incredulous commissioner.

"My wife, sir," gravely answered Mr. Ferguson, "my late lamented and dearly beloved wife lies resting there." And Mr. Ferguson wiped from his eyes a moisture that did credit to his heart. "My long-suffering wife's remains repose in that spot."

"Why, I did not know that," said the somewhat bewildered railroad man.

"It is a fact, sir. I laid her in that retired spot because she loved it so much. Her last words to me were, 'Husband, bury me there!' I did. Her wish was sacred to me. That spot is sacred to me. The railroad cannot run over her poor body. I should have to move her if the company take the land. It is not a pleasant matter to disturb the dead. You are a husband yourself, perhaps. You can understand this, sir."

The commissioner said he was not prepared to deal with the question in this new light, and would have to consult the company; with that he retired.

Before negotiations were renewed the affair came to the knowledge of the neighbours, and they started up such an uproar about Mr. Ferguson's ears, that that bereaved man took up his wife, and put her back under the peach-trees without charging the railroad company a cent.

And yet when they came to settle for the land, that ungrateful company would not allow him but thirty dollars for it, and he had to take it.

Truly, corporations have no souls.—*Danbury News.*

HUMOROUS.

"I WISH I was a pudding, mamma." "Why?" "Cause I should have a lot of sugar put into me."

THAT boy was not without a feeling for historical accuracy who described King Arthur as having a "nice little round table."

REV. MR. PEPPER was once called upon to marry a man to his fourth wife. As he approached the couple he said: "Please to rise." The man wriggled about in his chair a moment, and finally spoke: "We've usually sat!"

A MAN came into an editor's room with a large roll of manuscript under his arm, and said, very politely, "I have a trifle here about the beautiful sunset yesterday, which was dashed off by a friend of mine, which I would like inserted if you have room." "Plenty of room. Just insert it yourself," replied the editor, gently pushing the wastepaper basket toward him.

CHINESE COURTSHIP.

The festive Ah Goo
And Too Hay the fair—
They met and the two
Concluded to pair.

They "spooned" in the way
That most lovers do,
And Ah Goo kissed Too Hay
And Too Hay kissed Ah Goo

Said this festive Ah Goo,
As his heart swelled with pride,
"Me heap likee you,
You heap be my bride!"

And she looking down
All so modest and pretty,
"Twixt a smile and a frown,
Gently murmured, "You bettee."

LITERARY AND ARTISTIC.

THE French Government intend to make some alterations in the Luxembourg Museum.

THE death is announced of Dr. Porter, the author of "The History of Fyde."

THE death has taken place of Ludwig Cantor, M.D., LL.D., well known as a Privat docent of metaphysics at Berlin.

It is settled that the next annual exhibition of the Society of Painter-Etchers will be held in London next March, and not in New York.

THE Government of Crete has offered a prize of 40,000 groshen for the best history of the island in modern Greek.

VICTOR HUGO has joined the Council of the International Musical, Dramatic and Literary Association.

LANGUAGE can but feebly describe the pangs of rheumatism. This malady is one of the most obstinate which tortures humanity, and yet there is a specific which will overcome it and prevent its recurrence. The name of this sovereign remedy is Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, a combination of six of the best known medicinal oils, the remedial efficacy of which is not weakened by evaporation, since it contains no alcohol to render it volatile. On this account as on many others, it is superior to all other liniments, lotions and other remedies used externally, and has this further advantage that it is used internally as well. It is an incomparable specific for lameness, stiffness, burns, bruises, frost bites and other bodily troubles treated outwardly, and is a grand medicine in throat and lung diseases. Used for man or beast. Sold by all dealers. Prepared only by NORTHROP & LYMAN, Toronto, Ont.