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**Autumn.**  
The dying leaves fall fast,  
Chestnut, willow, oak, and beech,  
All brown and withered lie.  
Now swirling in the cutting blast,  
Now sudden underfoot—they teach  
That one and all must die.

The Autumn of the year  
Comes sadly home to my poor heart,  
Whose youthful hopes are fled.  
The darkening days are drear,  
Each love once mine I see depart  
As withered leaves and dead.

But is it all decay?  
All present loss?—no gain remote?  
Monotony of pain?  
Ah no! I hear a lay  
The robin sings—how sweet the note,  
A pure unearthly strain.

And, of all flowers the first  
Beneath these leaves in spring shall blow,  
Sweet violets blue and white,  
So all lost loves shall burst,  
In springlike beauty, summer glow,  
In Heaven upon our sight.

—Macmillan's Magazine

**THE WEDDING RING.**

It was an odd-looking old ring, set with a single opal. Not the sort of ring, by any means, usually chosen for a wedding ring. But it had been in the Redfern family for ever so many years, and on the bright summer morning when Jack Redfern was to make pretty Phyllis Dukehart his wife, he brought the opal ring, and with it a string of old-fashioned, pinkish-tinted pearls.

"I have always heard that opals are unlucky," said Phyllis. "Why didn't you get a plain gold band, Jack?"

The young man's eager face clouded.

"The fact is," he said, "it has been in my family so long, I don't like to be the first one to set it aside. It was my mother's wedding ring, and my grand-mother's, and my great-grandmother's, and may be even further back than that."

Phyllis flung her arms about his neck.

"Forgive me," she said, "I was foolish to feel superstitious. There was nothing to harm one in an opal, after all."

A year had sped by. In the waning brightness of departing summer, Phyllis sat in the old trysting-place alone. The quaint opal ring glittered on her finger. She touched it caressingly, turned the stone to catch the sunlight, her pensive eyes full of unshed tears, a tender smile parting her lips, as she thought of the happy bridal morning, only a short year ago.

For Jack was gone! Gone off over seas; never to return, perhaps. He had left in anger; left without a last kiss, or even a tender word!

Her knitting lay, unthought of, on the corner of the stone fence, and twirling the old opal on her finger, she sat and thought of her forebodings when the ring was first given to her. She did not wait, as in days gone by, for Jack's coming. She had no hope of that. But when the afternoon sun struck the summit of the green pine forest, Old Duff the postman would go by in his spotted nag; and maybe he would bring her a letter! The old man had known her since she was a child, and had a hint of her trouble, too; if the letter came he would not fail to deliver it. So Phyllis sat and waited, as she had waited so many afternoons, through that dreary summer.

Jack was gone, and not one word or line had come since that terrible night of his going. But she waited and hoped, with that faith which is born of deathless love.

Jack, fond and proud of her, in his masculine fashion, had been prone to be jealous—without cause, as he confessed himself; but the morbid, miserable failing seemed to be a part and parcel of his nature. He could not bear to think that his wife found pleasure in any society, or even in the simplest pleasures, when he was absent.

And Jack was a seafaring man. From his very infancy he had followed the water for a living.

During that brief, bright year of married life, however, his voyages had been "few and far between," and on one or two occasions he had taken his pretty bride with him.

Early in the spring there was a talk of his vessel being ordered abroad, and circumstances, beyond the control of either husband or wife, forbade Phyllis to accompany him. Jack was greatly troubled.

"I shall not go, Phyllis," he said, one morning when the rumor bade fair to be a certainty. "It would go hard with me to leave you any time now; it is out of the question. I'll go down to-day, and see what arrangement I can make."

His wife put her white arms about his neck, and whispered her thanks in his ear, and Jack went his way.

Left to herself, Phyllis made her little home as tidy as a band-box, got up a tempting little dinner, made a pretty toilet, and then, in the cool of the after-

noon, went out into her garden to weed her flower-beds.

The tulips were just beginning to show bright glimpses of the gaudy splendor imprisoned in their green tubes; and the hyacinths, already in bloom, filled the air with sweet, suggestive fragrance, carrying one back to departed days.

But busy little Mrs. Redfern, if she were at all susceptible to any such mystic influences, was in no mood for them that sunny afternoon. She only thought of Jack, and her verbera beds, and worked away with a will.

"Phyllis?" called a pleasant, lazy voice.

She dropped her rake, and looked up. It was only Bob—her cousin, Rob Dukehart.

"Why, Rob, how you startled me!" she said. "Will you come in! But I'm very busy."

The young man sauntered in.

"You're always busy, it seems to me, Phyllis, when I'm about," he said, with a smiling sort of impudence. "Won't you shake hands with a fellow, for the sake of old times?"

A flush, almost as bright as the tulip streaks, rose in the young wife's cheeks; but she gave Rob the tips of her fingers.

In her girlish days Phyllis had been a good deal admired, for her own sweet face and winning ways, for the most part; but, in a few cases, the fact that she would one day inherit the old Dukehart homestead served to enhance her attractions.

Her cousin Rob was one of her most assiduous admirers. He followed her like a shadow, and, even after her engagement with Jack Redfern, was a little disagreeable by his marked attentions.

After her marriage, on one occasion Cousin Rob had excited Jack's jealous anger, by making himself over-attentive to Phyllis, and some pretty sharp words had passed between them.

"Never do it again, Rob, as you value my regard," Phyllis said. But Rob would not promise.

He took the finger-tips she offered, held them an instant, and then carried them to his lips.

"How dare you!" cried Phyllis, snatching her hand away, and flushing hot with anger.

Rob laughed audaciously.

"Don't blaze off like a rocket, Phyllis, there's no occasion. We are cousins you know, and I haven't seen you in an age. Does that bluebeard of a husband keep you under lock and key?"

With a toss of her pretty head Phyllis picked up the rake, and went on with her wedding.

Rob stood and watched her, admiration and regret in his eyes. Why could not she have been his wife, instead of Jack Redfern's?

"Let me do that for you, Phyllis," he said, after a minute. "If you were my wife you shouldn't drudge like a slave."

Phyllis gave him a blazing glance.

"But I am not your wife, and glad enough I am of it," she replied, "Go away Rob, I don't want you here, when Jack is absent."

Rob laughed an ugly, provoking sort of laugh.

"I suppose not, Phyllis. You're afraid he'll come and find me here, the jealous brute. But I'm not going."

"Then I'll go myself," said the young wife, with dignity, and left the garden. Rob stood irresolute a minute, half-regretting what he had done, half-inclined to follow his cousin and beg her pardon. Something glittering in the mold at his feet chanced to catch his eye. He stooped and picked up the old opal ring, which had always been a little rare to his cousin's finger. His first impulse was to return it to Phyllis at once; his second was to keep it, and pay her off for treating him so scornfully.

He slipped it in his vest pocket, and took his way to the village tavern. This place possessed a great charm for Rob. He ordered a bottle of champagne, and then brandy and seltzer, and by sunset he was not quite himself. Lounging on the tavern porch, he saw Jack Redfern coming down the road, and a wicked thought flashed through his over-excited brain.

"He's coming in. Now boys," he cried, "look out for fun."

Jack came in to leave a message with the bar-keeper, and, having delivered it, was going out again, when a loud voice caught his ear.

"Here's to pretty Phyllis Redfern!" it said.

He wheeled around like lightning. Rob was just in the act of draining his glass.

"How dare you trifle with my wife's name?" demanded Jack.

Rob laughed merrily.

"When a woman shows a fellow a favor he dares everything," he answered, and held up his right hand.

On the little finger gleamed the opal

ring. Jack saw it, and his dark face flushed crimson. He cleared the distance between himself and the speaker one bound; and before the breathless bystanders could interfere, he had felled Rob where he stood.

"Stand back, neighbors," he panted, as he tore the ring from the prostrate man's finger. "I'll have his life for it."

"But the bystanders interfered, and Rob was got out of the way."

Jack went home, with all the brightness of his life dashed out. His young wife met him at the door, in the silver shine of the twilight. He caught her and held her at arm's length.

"Phyllis, he said angrily, 'where is your wedding ring?'"

She looked down at her finger, with a start, her heart failing her at his tone.

"Why, Jack, I'm flushing, and speaking with embarrassment, 'it was on my finger. I hope I have not lost it.'"

Her husband threw her from him with a muttered exclamation, and strode out of the house without a word.

All through the spring night, from the rising to the setting of the stars, Phyllis waited, but Jack did not return. She fancied his ring was missing, and wept herself ill over his cruelty.

Morning came at last, and Mrs. Redfern, Jack's mother, appeared. She had the opal ring on her finger, and a letter from Jack in her hand.

"Your husband has returned the opal by me," she said, in a severe voice. "His letter will explain the rest."

Phyllis read the letter, and then, with the pathetic cry, "Oh, Jack!" came back to me," fell at Mrs. Redfern's feet in a swoon.

The tulips had bloomed, and were withering on their stalks in the garden, when she woke from that awful trance of death. On her white, thin finger gleamed the old opal. Hearing of her illness, and bitterly remorseful for the evil he had wrought, Rob had told the truth about the ring. But it was too late. Jack had gone.

"I'll find him and bring him back to her, if it costs me my life," said Rob, in remorse, and with a last look at her death-like face he departed.

Months came and went, and the cry of a little new-born babe was heard in the cottage.

"Jack's little baby," said Phyllis, as it lay on her breast; "he may never see it."

And now, in the early autumn, she sat by the old stile waiting for the postman's arrival. She had waited so many, many times; but surely this letter would come to-day; the letter from Jack, assuring her that he loved her still.

The shifting sunlight fell about her fair head; a golden leaf fluttered here and there across the green turf at her feet; the birds chirped, and the crickets chirped in the old stone fence. Wife and mother in one her bosom thrilled with tender longing. Phyllis looked at her wedding-ring, and waited.

A quick, resolute tread on the white, country road below. Could that be the postman's nag?

Phyllis looked up, with her heart in a wild flutter. It was not the postman, but a tall bronzed man.

"Oh, Jack! oh, Jack!"

Her cry of rapture startled the birds into silence, and hushed the chirping crickets.

In a twinkling, Jack had her in his strong arms, and his tears were on her cheeks.

"Oh, Phyllis, can you forgive me?" he said with a choking voice.

"There is nothing to forgive," she sobbed, clinging to him. "See, Jack, I have got my ring! How I have wanted you, Jack! You can never know how my heart has hungered for you. Jack," hiding her hot face in his breast, "there's some one besides me to welcome you. Can't you guess, Jack? A little wee baby, Jack, with his father's own eyes. I thought, once you would never see him, Jack; but, thank God! you have come."

He could only hold her close to his heart, and had no words to answer her.

"Jack, how did you know?" she asked at last, when the first rapture of the reunion was over. "Did you get my letter?"

"No," he answered, hoarsely. "It was Rob. He followed me across the ocean, found me, and told me everything. Phyllis, can you forgive me?"

"Jack," she said, softly, "you are my baby's father. What God has joined together, no man has power to put asunder. Let us go home."

And in the autumn twilight they went, hand in hand.

Bismarck had himself weighed in a scale chair at Kissingen, recently, and found that his weight was something over 245 pounds, a gain of thirteen pounds since last year. "Too much, too much!" he growled, as he gave the man a thaler.

"Guessing" as a Talent.

"When found, make a note of," said Capt. Cuttle to young "Walt." We wish our readers to note three facts in the life of Kepler, the great astronomer of the seventeenth century. The facts are these:

First. His dull might prevented him from being a good astronomical observer, while his awkward hand thwarted his desire to become an experimental philosopher. Yet—

Second. His astronomical discoveries, known as Kepler's three laws, form the basis of modern physical astronomy.

Third. His success as a discoverer, which illustrates that a man with two or three talents may—if he will use what he hath, instead of sighing for what he hath not—do as serviceable work as a man with five, or even ten talents.

Though destitute of keen vision and mechanical skill, then thought indispensable to an astronomer, Kepler had a vigorous mind, a fertile imagination, and great patience in hard labor. These he so thoroughly worked in searching after the hidden things of the heavens, that he stands next to Newton in the rank of discoverers.

Though Albert Kepler had not the keen sight of Galileo, or the mechanical skill of Tycho Brahe, he was the first astronomer who made a scientific use of the imagination. While refusing to concede it as an infallible guide, he trusted it as a valuable aid in searching out astronomical laws. It invented hypotheses concerning the motion and orbits of the planets. These suppositions—"guesses," the Yankee vernacular would call them—were tested by ascertaining whether they would explain known astronomical facts.

Hypothesis upon hypothesis were invented, hunted down, and abandoned, because they would not fit in with the facts. A locksmith tries his bunch of keys, one by one, until he finds the key which opens the lock. With a sublime patience, Kepler kept his imagination at work searching out hypotheses. His reason tried each supposition. One after another failed to open the door for ages had looked out man from the secret chamber of the planets. Yet each trial, as it laid aside an erroneous assumption, advanced the explorer of the heavens, slowly but surely, towards the one key which opens the closed door, should permit him to see the paths in which the Earth, and Mars, and Jupiter, and Saturn, whirl around the sun.

In 1601, Kepler began a series of inquiries to ascertain the laws which govern the motions of the planets, whose orbits were then supposed to be circular. For eight years he guessed, and guessed, as a Yankee would say, or, in the language of science, tried hypothesis after hypothesis. At last, in 1609, his imagination supplied him with the true hypothesis. With it he unlocked the door of the heavens, and saw the planets moving in elliptic instead of circular orbits, and describing equal areas of space in equal times. These two planetary facts are known as Kepler's first and second laws.

**Charities of New York.**

Some of our men and women "do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame." The private gifts of some of our people are very large. Men and women whose names are not on the public roll are very open-handed. Many leading ladies keep missionaries in their employ and blend charity with treats and Bibles. They send out medicine, coal, rent, clothes and other things needful for the body. Others say to women and to men, "When you find a deserving case let me know." Many of our so-called ladies of fashion are uniting in their methods of charity. A gentleman was on one of the principal streets. He saw an old lady who seemed to be dazed. He found that she was blind and had lost her way. He took her in hand and made all right. On her way to her little room she told her story. She seldom ventured so far from home; she could easily find her way back. On entering her cozy room she added, "This is my home. My husband was a salesman. We were quite comfortable while he lived. On his death the merchant in whose employ he was called to see me. He said, 'Your husband's pay was not large, but he was faithful. I will see that you do not want. These rooms are yours—the furniture is all yours. I will add a small pension monthly, and that will keep the wolf from the door.' This merchant is the third merchant in the city in point of business in his line. He has no great outside reputation for liberality, yet this poor blind pensioner is not the only household he has on his hands."

—Correspondent Boston Journal.

When swallows fly low, wet weather may be expected, because the insects which the swallows pursue in their flight are flying low to escape the moisture of the upper regions of the atmosphere.

**TIMELY TOPICS.**

India has lost nearly a million and a half of people during the past year by the famine that has prevailed within her borders, and the deaths from starvation in China probably number as many more.

C. E. Putnam, of Madison, Conn., has a child which has attracted the attention of Barnum. When the child was born he weighed but seventeen ounces, and now that he is a year old he weighs only forty-eight ounces.

The bull-fighting season is over in Madrid. There were thirteen performances—four poor, four passable, two good, three very good—and ninety bulls and 143 horses were killed and eleven other horses are recovering from their wounds.

Aside from hereditary congenital deformity, which may itself have originated in this practice, there is no one cause so productive of malformation of the bones of the mouth, and irregularity of the teeth, as the habit of thumb-sucking in infancy; the different positions of the thumb giving rise to different kinds of deformity.—Prof. Chandler.

Mr. Neff, of Alexandria, Pa., awoke the other morning to find his well dry and its bottom fallen out. He procured help, and descended 291 feet into an immense cave stretching in every direction. Flowing streams and stalactites lent their aid to the romance, and a specimen of nickel ore was brought away that has proved to be of superior quality.

A Mr. Benton is traveling through California taking contracts to destroy the squirrels which have hitherto been so formidable a plague to farmers. The Los Angeles Herald says that at "the rancho of Mr. B. T. Buell he killed 13,470—7,400 in one day; at Mr. J. S. Bells, 10,000; at the Sturgis Brothers', 4,000; at S. P. Stowe's, 6,000; at W. W. Hollister's, 2,700.

A gambler from Buffalo, N. Y., had a memorable experience a few days ago. He went on board a schooner, and shipped for Bay City, Mich., on condition that he should work his passage, but should not be called upon to go aloft. The weather was pleasant and work light, and the men began playing cards in the fore-cabin. They were soon "cleared out" by the gambler. Soon a storm arose, and the captain, rigging a pump through the center-board box, set the gambler at work pumping the lake up. They kept him at this till they reached Bay City, and then took from him all the money he had won and kicked him ashore.

Mr. Garrick Mallory has published a paper on "Common Errors respecting the North American Indians," among which he enumerates:—1. Color, alleging that they are not red or copper-colored, but brown; 2. Religion, showing that, while all are superstitious, none of them entertain any idea of an all-powerful God; 3. Numbers, demonstrating that there never were "15,000,000 Indians," as at first estimated, nor even 1,000,000, and that, while the whole number on the continent may have slightly diminished, it is now on the increase, and is about 300,000; 4. Medicine, showing that our savages know very little about curing disease and never use poisoned arrows. He might have added one other correction—namely, that the North American Brown Men are not Indians at all and never saw India. This would make his list of amendments pretty complete.—Graphic.

**Velocipede Riding in England.**

While bicycling has fallen into disrepute in this country, it still retains its popularity in England. A deputation, representing the bicycling clubs and the trade throughout the kingdom, called on the authorities recently to ask that the highways bill should be so framed as not to make its operation towards bicycle riders oppressive, and to get the bicycle declared a carriage within the scope of the new act. The deputation stated that five years ago the bicycling industry was represented by the Coventry Machinists' Company alone, making five bicycles a week; now there were fourteen makers in Coventry, and some 120 scattered throughout different towns. The present weekly wages paid to makers of bicycles in Coventry ranged from £1,500 to £2,000. The amount of capital invested in plant and machinery might be estimated at about a million sterling, and the value of bicycles throughout the country at between £600,000 and £800,000. In London there were upwards of 10,000 bicycles, and in the country, 60,000.

**Oil on Troubled Waters.**

Although the effects of pouring oil upon the troubled waters scarcely enters into the mind of man beyond a figurative sentiment, there are a few modern instances of its wonderful power at sea in cases of impending shipwreck.

A New York skipper, who had been at sea twenty-eight years and master for ten years, said that he saved the vessel under his command twice by oiling the sea. He says when a ship is disabled and cannot get out of a storm, and the master has to make the best of a gale, if he has oil on board he should start two or three gallons over the side, to windward; this will smooth water. The oil allowed to drip slowly out is all that is required; the ship is in smooth though heaving water as long as the oil runs. In 1864, in the heaviest gale of wind he ever experienced, he lost all sails, and then the rudder followed; and he knew the vessel could not have ridden the sea for an hour longer if he had not had some oil. Five gallons lasted fifty-six hours, and thus saved the vessel, cargo and lives. He recommends that ships of heavy tonnage should have two iron tanks of forty gallons each, one on each side, with the faucets so arranged that the oil can be started at any time into small vessels—say ten-gallon casks; and in all ships' boats, tanks of five gallons each well filled, so that in case the ship founders or burns, the boats will have oil to smooth the sea in a gale. With these tanks, and a good master who knows the law of storms and handles the ship so as to get out of the center of it, the danger of foundering is greatly reduced.

Captain Betts of the King Cenrie, of one thousand four and ninety tons, which lately arrived at Bombay from Liverpool with a cargo of coal, used common pine-oil in a heavy gale of wind to prevent the sea breaking on board, and with perfect success. The gale continued for nearly five days, and raged with determined fury. It had, lasted some time, when the chief officer, being thoughtful of a plan he had seen tried upon some occasions when in the Atlantic trade to prevent the sea breaking in. He got out two canvas clothes-bags; into each he poured two gallons of oil. He punctured the bags slightly, and hung one over each quarter, towing them along. The effect was magical. The waves no longer broke against the poop and sides of the ship; but yards and yards away, where the oil had slowly spread itself over the water and in the wake of the vessel, was a large space of calm water. The crew were thus able to repair damages with greater ease; the ship was relieved from those tremendous shocks received from the mass of waters which had burst over her quarters and stern, and the danger was considerably lessened. The two bags lasted two days; after which, the first rage of the storm having expended itself, no more oil was used. Four gallons of oil, scarcely worth thirty shillings, perhaps here saved the King Cenrie, her cargo and the lives and property of the crew.

The philosophy of the operation is simply that the thin covering of oil floating on the waves prevents the wind from entering under the surface, and therefore greatly reduces the roughness of the sea, and probably the height of the waves, the crests of which are thus prevented from breaking, which is one of the principal causes of danger. There is, however, nothing new in the application of oil for such purposes. Pliny mentions that in his day divers used to throw oil to lessen the roughness of the sea, in order that they might more readily discern objects at the bottom.

**Indian Longevity.**

There is an Indian woman now living at Josefa Peter's, near San Luis Rey, in this country, who is at least 124 years of age. Many years ago her hair turned snowy white, but within recent years it has undergone renewal, and is now as black as a coal. She is now in her second childhood—speaks and lives, and has all the mental characteristics of a child. Some fifteen years ago this woman's memory was good, and she recollected and told distinctly of the time when the Mission Fathers began building the San Diego Mission and tried to civilize the Indians. At that time—1769—she was a young woman and living with her tribe near the Yalle de los Viejos. The missionaries sent their soldiers and vaqueros after the Indians to corral them and bring them into the missions, and treated the Indians with great severity and cruelty. The old woman used to relate that one of these vaqueros threw a lasso over to catch her, and in so doing strangled to death the infant that was on her back. S. W. B. Couts and other old residents of San Luis Rey know this venerable woman well, and have often listened to her relations of past times and are perfectly convinced that she is 124 years old.—San Diego (Cal.) Union.