

The Spirits are Rapping.

The spirits are rapping, the spirits are rapping—
But not on the table, and not on the floor,
Good spirits and bad spirits are tapping and tapping—
Of every heart they are trying the door.

There's the spirit of envy, the spirit of malice,
The spirit of meanness, the smallest and worst;
The spirit of pride with his visage inflated,
Puffing up empty hearts until ready to burst.

But Oh! there are spirits from heaven descended
Who gladly a home in each bosom would gain;
Let your heart strings with these be in harmony blended
And false ones to enter shall struggle in vain.

There's the spirit of love! and the spirit of beauty!
Twin sisters that never were sundered apart;
To gladden the world is their joy and their duty,
Ah! give these twin sisters a place in your heart.

There's the spirit of charity, long hath it been striving
To enter stern breasts that make justice their boast;
And mercy her claims to attention's reviving—
Ah! let not their earnest entreaties be lost.

The spirit of peace and the spirit of gladness
Do ever the other good spirits attend,
And with them at times comes the spirit of sadness—
It comes but with soothing, it comes as a friend.

Oh! be not engrossed by the spirit of pleasure,
For ruin and madness oft lurk in her train;
But welcome the spirit of joy as a treasure,
Through life's toilsome journey thy steps to sustain.

The spirits are rapping, the spirits are rapping—
Good spirits and evil are trying each heart;
List not to the false ones' importunate tapping,
But let not the good ones unheeded depart.

A Husband's Confession.

I never undertook but once to set at naught the authority of my wife. You know her way—cool, quiet, but as determined as ever grew. Just after we were married, and all was going on nice and cozy, she got me in the habit of doing all the churning. She never asked me to do it, you know, but then she—why, it was done in just this way. She finished breakfast one morning, and slipping away from the table, she filled the churn with cream, and set it just where I couldn't help seeing what she wanted.

So I took hold regularly enough, and churned till the butter came. She didn't thank me, but looked so nice and sweet about it that I felt well paid. Well, when the next churning day came along, she did the same thing, and I followed suit and fetched the butter. Again, and it was done just so, and I was regularly in for it every time. Not a word was said, you know, of course.

Well, by-and-by this became rather irksome. I wanted she should just ask me, but she never did, and I couldn't say anything about it, so on we went. At last I made a resolve that I would not churn another time unless she asked me. Churning-day came, and when my breakfast—she always got nice breakfasts—when that was swallowed, there stood the churn. I got up and, standing a few minutes, just to give her a chance, put on my hat and walked out doors. I stopped in the yard to give her a chance to call me, but not a word said she, and so with a palpitating heart I moved on. I went down town, up town and all over town, and my foot was as restless as Noah's dove—I felt as if I had done a wrong—I didn't exactly know how—but there was an indescribable sensation of guilt, resting upon me all the forenoon.

It seemed as if dinner time would never come and, as for going home one minute before dinner, I would as soon cut my ears off. So I went fretting and moping around till dinner time.

Home I went, feeling much as a criminal must when the jury is having in their hands his destiny—life or death. I couldn't make up my mind how she would meet me, but some sort of a storm I expected. Will you believe it?—she never greeted me with a sweeter smile—never had a better dinner for me than on that day; but there was the churn just where I left it! Not a word was passed. I felt cut, and every mouthful of that dinner seemed as if it would choke me. She did not pay any regard to it, however, but went on as if nothing had happened.

Before dinner was over I had again resolved, and shoving back my chair I marched up to the churn and went at it the old way. Splash, drip, rattle—I kept it up. As if in spite, the butter was never so long coming. I supposed the cream standing so long, had got warm, so I redoubled my efforts. Obstinate matter—the afternoon wore away while I was churning. I paused at last from real exhaustion, when she spoke for the first time:—

"Come Tom, my dear, you have rattled that buttermilk quite long enough, if it is only for fun you are doing it."

I knew how it was in a flash. She had brought the butter in the forenoon, and left the churn standing with the buttermilk in for me to exercise with.

The Devil and Tom Walker!

The following incident is said to have been the origin of the above phrase. The scene of the story was laid in the town of D., in Rockingham co., N. H. It was told to the writer, some years ago, by a descendant of one of the Scotch-Irish settlers of that town:—

In the southeastern part of the above-named town is a locality, still known by the name of "Tom Walker Hill," deriving its name from one who resided there, and who answered to that appellation. Now, Tom was a miserable scamp, and abused his wife, who was said to be deserving of a better fate. Worn and weary, she at last laid herself down and died. In spite of this, Tom succeeded in finding another who was willing to share with him his hut, bed and board. Tom pur-

sued the same course towards her as to his former partner, but she was determined not to submit without an effort to change matters, if possible, for the better.

She soon discovered that Tom was very superstitious; that he was a believer in devils, witches, ghosts and all the paraphernalia of the bottomless pit. She was determined, if possible, to work upon this weakness, and accomplish her purpose. An opportunity soon offered itself. Tom obtained a large part of his livelihood by working for the neighboring farmers, and he seldom returned to his home till late in the evening. She accordingly seized an opportunity of this kind, and wrapping herself in a sheet, waylaid him on his return through the then almost pathless woods.

She had not to wait long, for as Tom came trudging slowly along with a bag of potatoes on his back, that he had received for his day's labor, she arose before him. Almost paralyzed at the sight, it was some time before he could move or speak. At last his tongue found utterance, and he demanded who she was? I am, said the spectre, the ghost of your first wife, and I have come to tell you, that if you persist in treating your present wife, as you now do, a treatment by which you killed your first, your lot in the next world will be horrible.

Tom dropped his potatoes, and started for home, but his wife succeeded in getting there first. Tom soon came in, breathless with fright, rushed to her, told her what he had seen, asked forgiveness, and promised better for the future. Tradition says, that he kept his promise, and that his wife lived happily with him till his death. She did not deceive him, and he went to his grave believing that he saw his wife's spirit. Not till that event did she reveal her secret.

A Shilling a Day and found.

A gentleman who resided in the vicinity of Glasgow, and whose mornings are devoted to the culture of a garden attached to his house, finding himself behind in his horticultural department, accosted an Irishman who was passing his gate one morning with the inquiry if he would like a job.

"Shure, sir, an' it's that same I'm looking after," says Paddy in a rich brogue.

"Well, sir, I shall want you for a week; what wages do you want?"

"Why, sir," returned the son of Erin, "as I live a good bit away from this and my going home for males will bother me day's work, while an extra mouth at your honor's kitchen table would be nothin', I'll just come for a shillin' a day an' you find me!"

This was agreed to, and the gentleman advanced him four shillings, at his request, to get something for his wife and children. The work was to commence next morning.

Next day came, and the next, and a whole week passed away and Pat had not shown himself. About a month after this occurrence, the parties met by accident in the street, when Pat was accosted by his employer, in rather an angry tone, with, "well, sir, why the deuce did you not come to work for me according to your agreement?"

"Shure, sir," said the Irishman, "it's meself that was ready to do my part of the agreement—but it's yer honor's fault intirely."

"And pray how?" asked the other.

"Well, yer honor agreed to give me a shillin' a day an' find me."

"And didn't I give you a shilling a day and pay you some in advance?"

"Thrus for yer honor: ye did give me a shillin' a day—by ye didn't find me."

"Find you, you scoundrel! I ransacked every street in town; but where were you?" "Drinking yer honor's health, sir."

The gentleman gave Pat a shilling, and told him to call at the garden when he wanted work, but he must find himself.

DR. LOOMIS—chairman of the committee on Medical Societies and Colleges in the N. Y. Legislature—is the author of a curious report relative to a petition of one Herkimer Sternburg, praying to have a book printed, giving directions for the cure of intemperance, diabetes, nervous debility, etc. The following is an extract:—

"The scheme proposed by this Herkimer Sternburg, if successful, will be the annihilation of the medical profession, and thus the five or six thousand doctors of our state will be turned out upon the cold charities of an unfeeling world; that it will introduce the millennium several hundred years before its proper advent in the regular order of business; that it will dislocate every joint in the system of the moral universe; and further, that the committee have not had the aforesaid manuscript submitted to their inspection, but, startled by its 'highfalutin' title, they desire to be excused from the reading and passing judgment upon a work so transcendental in its purposes, and so momentous in its consequences, and modestly advise that Herkimer be allowed to withdraw his petition from the files of the Assembly of the state of New York, and that he present the same, with his manuscript, to the Legislature of the Moon, at its next session; and, therefore, the committee ask to be discharged from its further consideration."

YANKEE CUTENESS.—Whatever savors of wit is commonly attributed to Pat. The following, however, is clearly of Yankee origin:—

"Could you inform me what occasions this large crowd?"

"Well, sir—yes, sir—I believe its a funeral sir."

"Thank you sir. Could you inform me who it is that's dead?"

"Why, yes sir. As near as I can learn, sir, it's the man in the coffin, sir!"

THOUGHTS FOR THE PHYSIOLOGIST.

AN EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF OSSIFICATION.—

The Portage county (Ohio) Democrat gives the particulars of the ossification of the joints of a citizen of that county, a Mr. Perkins, now forty-five years of age, which certainly is one of the most extraordinary cases we ever heard of. The Democrat says:—

"Until he was eleven years old he enjoyed robust health. At that time the family had removed to Kirtland, Lake county, in this State. In June of the year he was eleven, he was thrown from a horse and hurt one knee, and then going into the river to bathe, he took cold in the injured part; inflammation ensued, and the cartilages and ligaments were destroyed, and ossification took place. After this had transpired, the uninjured knee was attacked with inflammation, and finally became completely ossified. Then joint after joint passed through the ordeal, until he is now in the condition mentioned.

The same disease commenced at the roots of his finger and toe nails. The nails came off, and a new substance, resembling nails, grew out, at right angles from his fingers and toes, full half an inch! His jaws have been set and motionless for thirty years, and his front teeth have loosened and come out, forming an aperture through which he talks and receives his food. His food is all prepared for him in a suitable manner, and he always has retained a good appetite, though he is not gluttonous.

Twenty-four years since he became blind in one eye, and for twenty-three years he has been totally blind. All his other senses remain as perfect and acute as those of any other person. His limbs remain near the size they were when he was hurt. His head, neck and body have attained full size. His neck is nearly as large as his head, and measures nineteen inches in circumference, while his wrists measure only four and a half inches. His weight is about one hundred pounds. His body is in a semi-reclining position, and he is not affected by heat or cold as much as people ordinarily. He is always cheerful, and very fond of talking.

His intellectual powers are fairly developed for one in his position, and his memory excellent. It is said of him that he can tell the names and ages of a large proportion of the town of Mantua with accuracy. He does not sleep more than persons in good health, and is not troubled with sickness, aside from the disease which has taken possession of him. He talks freely of death, and at times entertains different opinions upon the subject.

DIETING FOR HEALTH.—Dieting for health has sent many an one to the grave, and will send many more, because it is done injudiciously or ignorantly. One man omits his dinner by a herculean effort, and thinking he has accomplished wonders, expects wonderful results, but by the time supper is ready he feels as hungry as a dog, and eats like one, fast, furious and long. Next day he is worse, and "don't believe in dieting" for the remainder of his life.

Others set out to starve themselves into health, until the system is reduced so low that it has no power of resuscitation, and the man dies.

To diet wisely, does not imply a total abstinence from all food, but the taking of just enough, or of a quality adapted to the nature of the case. Loose bowels weaken very rapidly—total abstinence from all food increases the debility. In this case food should be taken, which while it tends to arrest the disease, imparts nutriment and strength to the system. In this case, resting on a bed, and eating boiled rice, after it has been parched like coffee, will cure three cases out of four of common diarrhoea in a day or two.

Others think that in order to diet effectually, it is all important to do without meat, but allow themselves the widest liberty in all else.

But in many cases, in dyspeptic conditions of the system particularly, the course ought to be reversed, because meat is converted into nutriment with the expenditure of less stomach power than vegetables, while a given amount of work does three times as much good, gives three times as much nutriment and strength as vegetable food would.

These "principles" merit consideration.—[Hall's Journal of Health.

BATHING.—Once a week is often enough for a decent white man to wash himself all over; and whether in summer or winter, that ought to be done with soap, warm water, and a hog's hair brush, in a room showing at least seventy degrees Fahrenheit.

Bath should be taken early in the morning, for it is then that the system possesses the power of reaction in the highest degree. Any kind of bath is dangerous soon after a meal, or fatiguing exercise.

No man or woman should take a bath at the close of the day, unless by the advice of a good counselor.

The best, safest, cheapest, and most universally accessible mode of keeping the surface of the body clean, besides the once a week washing with soap, warm water, and hog's hair brush, is as follows:

As soon as you get out of bed in the morning, wash your face, hands neck, and breast; then, in the same basin of water, put your feet at once for about a minute, rubbing them briskly all the time; then with the towel, which has been dampened by wiping the face, feet, etc., wipe the whole body well, fast and hard, mouth shut, breast projecting. Let the whole thing be done within five minutes.—[Hall's Journal of Health.

LYING IN BED.—No piece of indolence hurts the health more than the modern custom of lying abed too long in a morning. This is the general practice in great towns. The inhabitants of cities seldom rise before eight or nine o'clock, but

the morning is undoubtedly the best time for exercise, while the stomach is empty and the body refreshed with sleep. Besides, the morning air braces and strengthens the nerves, and in some measure answers the purposes of a cold bath.—Let any one, who has been accustomed to lie in bed till eight or nine o'clock, rise by six or seven, spend a couple of hours in walking, riding, or any active diversion without doors, and he will find his spirits cheerful and serene throughout the day, his appetite keen, and his body braced and strengthened.

Custom soon renders early rising agreeable, and nothing contributes more to the preservation of health. The inactive are continually complaining of pains, &c. These complaints, which pave the way to many others, are not to be removed by medicines; they can only be cured by a vigorous course of exercise, to which indeed they seldom fail to yield. It consists with observation, that all very old men have been early risers. This is the only circumstance attending longevity to which we never knew an exception.

INSECT INSTINCT.—One of the most beautiful examples of the arrangement of the eggs, with a view to their preservation, and to the convenience of the exit of the future larvæ in a fitting position to commence their future existence, is, perhaps, that afforded by the instinct of the Gnat. Reaumur closely observed the female in the act of constructing her fairy raft of eggs, which she effected by gluing them together as they were laid, while they were supported and put into the requisite form by means of the long hind-legs, which, being crossed for the purpose, afforded the moulding shape for the pointed end of the little boat; for in that form the structure is made. In this process the top of the eggs is placed downwards, and the narrow end upwards. The secretion used to cement them together is of an oily nature, repellant to water, so that even if the little boat should become accidentally filled, the water quickly retires, as from the feathers of aquatic birds, and the little vessel floats securely till the time for the larvæ to escape from their shells arrives. They then issue from the lower part of the egg, and thus at once plunge into the element which is to be their home during the first portion of their active existence.—[The Butterfly Vivarium, or Insect Home. By H. Noel Humphreys.

STATISTICS OF SUICIDE IN ENGLAND.—In the five years, 1852-56, it is shown by the Register General of England that 5,415 persons put a period to their earthly career by self-destruction, namely: 3,866 males and 1,529 females. The lowest number of suicides was 1,020 (in 1853), and the highest 1,182 (in 1856). Poisoning being the easiest, is a common, but by no means a general means of self-destruction. The favorite poisons are arsenic, opium, laudanum and essential oil of bitter almonds. But hanging is by far the most general mode of suicide in England, for nearly half of the annual average of suicides terminate their miserable lives by suspension. Cut-throats and drowning stand next in the order of frequency; eight-tenths of all the suicides are committed in one of these three ways. It is really worthy of remark that there are three modes of death of which the people know most—by the witnessing of executions by hanging, frequent drownings, and by seeing animals killed by throat-cutting.

But still how singular to choose a felon's death by the rope! Is there not some consciousness that self-murder is a crime to be thus expiated, that enters into this? The greatest number of suicides occur between the ages of 35 and 45. Thirty-three persons of both sexes committed suicide at 10 years of age, and 14 persons of both sexes at the age of 85.

THE HAG—A WATER SKUNK.—This curious little fish, about four or five inches in length, seems to be the parasite and scourge of the shark. It fixes itself on the shark by creating a vacuum with its lips. Once firmly fixed, it lacerates the skin and flesh with its lancet-like teeth, and sucks the monster's blood and fat. But, being unprovided with defensive armature, and having no agility to escape its own enemies, Providence has provided it with the power of emitting an excrement, which, adhering to the slime of its skin, shrouds and hides it from sight. This substance is so abundant that it surrounds the animal to the distance of eighteen inches or two feet, and is so disgusting to all the inhabitants of the waters that none will come near it. Thus the hag is, in one respect, a sort of sea skunk.

CURIOSITIES OF THE EARTH.—At the city of Modena, in Italy, and about four miles around it, wherever the earth is dug, when the workmen arrive at a distance of sixty-three feet, they come to a bed of chalk, which they bore with an auger five feet deep. They then withdraw from the pit before the auger is removed, and, upon its extraction, the water bursts up through the aperture with great violence, and quickly fills this newly-made well, which continues full, and is affected neither by rains nor droughts.

But what is most remarkable in this operation is, the layers of earth as we descend. At the depth of fourteen feet are found the ruins of an ancient city, paved streets, houses, floors, and different pieces of mosaic work. Under this is found a soft oozy earth, made up of vegetables, and at twenty-six feet deep, large trees entire, such as walnut-trees, with the walnuts still sticking to the stem, and the leaves and branches in a perfect state of preservation. At twenty-eight feet deep, a soft chalk is found, mixed with a vast quantity of shells, and this bed is eleven feet thick. Under this, vegetation is found again.—[Pittsburgh Almanac.

RAISING DEER.—Some of the farmers in Northern Ohio and on the borders of Indiana have commenced the breeding and raising of deer, the same as they do sheep, and they bring them to market; hence the plentitude of venison.