

THE MODERN DAMSEL.
JUST NOW.

Why, yes, 'tis true we maids are free,
We never more shall yearn to flee
To hymeneal shelter;
No more our hearts with love are torn,
Nor melt they now to lover lorn,
As if in fiery smelter.

The problem for ourselves we've solved,
And to a higher plane evolved—
All by ourselves we've done it;
Into the world, with steady tread,
We've marched to battle for our bread,
And consequently won it.

And so we're free from Wedlock's chain,
And men may woo and wish in vain
It's links on us to rivet;
We greet them with a haughty stare,
And as our nose doth sniff the air,
An upward tilt we give it.

What, never wed! you ask surprised,
Will not our edict be revised
On more mature reflection?
Well, single bliss I'll never rue,
And I, for one, that future view
Without severe dejection.

Yet, if one day there came along
Some one who'd sing the ancient song
In accents sweet and thrilling:
Some one with noble form and face,
A scion of Apollo's race—
Well, maybe I'd be willing.

AFTER A WHILE.

The day—the nuptial day is set,
The kindred soul I've truly met,
And we our troth have plighted;
Responsively our hearts do beat,
And hopes of fame that erst were sweet
Are now forever blighted.

Yet, tears for hopes I cast aside
A moment last, and then are dried
By thoughts of joy domestic;
Although, perhaps, 'twere well to say,
My king is wearing somewhat gray,
His manner—unmajestic.

He comes not of Apollo's line,
His chest doth measure twenty-nine,
And winter makes him shiver:
No song hath he yet said or sung,
For he doth wear but half a lung,
And pads fernist his liver.

—John West, in Grip.

THREE MINUTES TO TWELVE.

It was a cold night in December. I had visited an old friend, who lived about six miles from the city, in an Ober-Forstel; we had been sitting together until late in the warm, cosy room, over a glass of punch. Unfortunately one of the buggy horses of my friend had become lame a few days before, and as I had to transact important business in the city the next morning, I had no other alternative but to walk home.

It was bitterly cold, and so dark that one could hardly see the hands before the eyes. A sharp east wind howled over the gloomy barren fields, and I was heartily glad when the yellow gaslights of the suburbs appeared. Under the first lamp post I stopped to look at my watch, which was a matter of some difficulty, as one of the panes of the lamp was broken, and the flame, blown by the wind to all directions, was liable to be extinguished any minute. At last I succeeded in recognizing the hand. It showed three minutes of twelve.

When I looked up again, I involuntarily started. Close before me stood a man. I had not heard the least noise of steps; it was as if he had suddenly risen out of the ground. I looked for a moment silently into his face. But this moment was enough to press his countenance upon my memory. He was a tall, lank man, clad in a wornout black coat, on which some of the seams were open. His face was exceedingly lean and pale, the eyes were deep in their cavities, and around the chin hung a gray, unkempt beard.

He lifted his shabby hat and said in a tone whose politeness astonished me: "May I ask you for the kindness, sir, to tell me how late it is?" I naturally was careful not to pull out my watch again. "Three minutes before midnight," I replied. "He thanked me with the same politeness with which he had formerly spoken, lifted his hat again, and disappeared in the darkness as noiselessly as he had come.

Half an hour later I smiled in my cosy bed room about my causeless fear, and a week afterward I had forgotten the adventure. I was very busy about that time, and a large contract which I had to fill in the next few days for a firm in a neighboring city, occupied my whole attention. About two months had passed when I had, in the night, a very strange dream, after I had just returned from a business trip. I found myself on the summit of a steep precipice. Far away, on the horizon, I saw a tower looming up. Beside me stood a tall, black figure. Suddenly it stretched out its arm and pointed with a commanding motion to the far away city. The dream was simple, but it was so exceedingly vivid that I could not get rid of the thought of it the following day. "Will it come again?" I murmured, when I retired on the evening. And the dream came again, the same dream I had the night before. I again stood on the mount, and the mysterious figure again pointed at the city.

Next morning at the breakfast table I narrated this strange dream to my wife. She was kind enough not to laugh at it, but gave me a very sensible explanation.

"That you dream," said she, "is very natural. You have just returned from a very important business transaction. And as far as concerns the black figure, well, of such ghosts one dreams often."

"But it is strange that I have the same dream two nights in succession," I replied.

"Well, this is natural enough. You just

told me that you were thinking all day about your dream."

"I drank a cup of coffee with a feeling of relief. The explanation of my wife was so sensible. It was a pity that I could not prevent the dream from coming in the third night and more vivid than ever before. In the gesture of the black figure this time there was something threatening, terrible—I was bathed in cold perspiration when I started up from sleep with a cry of terror.

"You look like a corpse," exclaimed my wife when I entered the dining room next morning. "Has anything happened to you?" I tried to smile, but I fear I did not succeed well in the attempt. "Just think, I had the dream again last night," I said slowly.

My wife looked at me, silently. "Either I will become insane or—something terrible has happened."

"Oh, you superstitious!" she did not conclude the sentence. The maid entered the room with the mail. "Well, there it is."

"Very well, but what then? Open it." I opened the envelope with trembling fingers. I was sure that I must have received an unfortunate message.

"Well!"

"Oh, my business friend requests me to see him about a transaction."

My wife laughed outright. "And therefore the triple dream! Well, see that you get off. The train leaves in an hour. But I hope you will bring home another face."

I divided the coupe with three gentlemen, two elderly and a young one, who had a lively conversation. I soon found out that they were lawyers. Their conversation was about a murder case which was to be tried at the District Court. One, a handsome gentleman with a gray beard and gold spectacles, was thoroughly convicted of the guilt of the defendant. "The defence was altogether faulty from the start," he said.

The young one—his sharply cut, intelligent profile seemed familiar to me—nodded. "The proof of alibi was ventured, indeed; but on the other side you must not forget that there was not one direct witness of the murder. And I must confess I am somewhat mistrustful of purely circumstantial evidence."

"But let me tell you, my dear Dr. Bergmann," said the stout one, "the case is as clear as the sun. And if a dozen witnesses had been there the fellow would not be more certainly convicted. No doubt he is the murderer."

I addressed my vis-a-vis: "I believe we have met before, doctor?" The young lawyer recognized me; we had had some business together some time before. I asked him for particulars: "What is the case about? I have not regularly read the papers recently."

"Oh, it is a very interesting case. A book-keeper who has lost his position is indicted for the murder and robbery of the cashier of his former firm. A direct proof, it is said, cannot be given; the circumstantial evidence, however, is grave enough. The defence has tried to prove an alibi, but, unfortunately, there is a missing link, just the critical hour in which the deed was committed. Well, here we are already."

The train stopped, and we got off. "Will you accompany me to the court house, or must you attend to your business right away?" asked the lawyer. I stood undecided for a moment. It was just after nine o'clock—so early that I could hardly find my business friend. "Very well, if I can find a seat."

"The court room will undoubtedly be very full, but I will do my best."

The court had not yet been opened. Loud confusion of noises filled the hall. Suddenly deep silence prevailed. I heard steps—the judges entered. The presiding judge opened session. A few minutes the District Attorney took the floor. Although I could see nothing of the action, I could hear every word, and I followed the argument of the speaker in breathless suspense. The attorney for the defendant also did his best. But in the proof of alibi, by which he tried to save his client, the most important link was missing. It was proved that the crime was committed about midnight. Several witnesses had unanimously stated that about that time cries for help were heard from the office in which the cashier had been working alone.

The defendant, during the whole transaction, had steadfastly maintained that he was not at all in the city at that time. But he could not prove it by a single witness. Under these conditions it was certain that the arguments of his attorney would have no force.

"Defendant, you have the last word. Have you anything else to say?" asked the Judge amid dead silence.

At that moment the gentleman in front of me moved a little to the side, and I could see the defendant, but not his face, for it was turned to the Judge. "As true as there is a God I am innocent," said he, with a calm, deep voice, whose tone affected me strangely. He slowly turned and looked sorrowfully through the long lines of the audience.

"There is but one man in the world whose testimony can save me, and"—he suddenly stopped. "There is the man," he cried out and his outstretched hand pointed at me.

Like a stroke of lightning it flashed through my brain. I recognized the man; he was the

CHASE'S CHAPTER

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same that I had met on that December night, the night of the murder.

"He is innocent," I shouted.

My testimony brought the missing link in the chain for proof of not guilty.

The man at the time of the crime was fully three miles from the city.

And, strangely enough, the moment he recognized me the hands of the clock pointed to three minutes to twelve.

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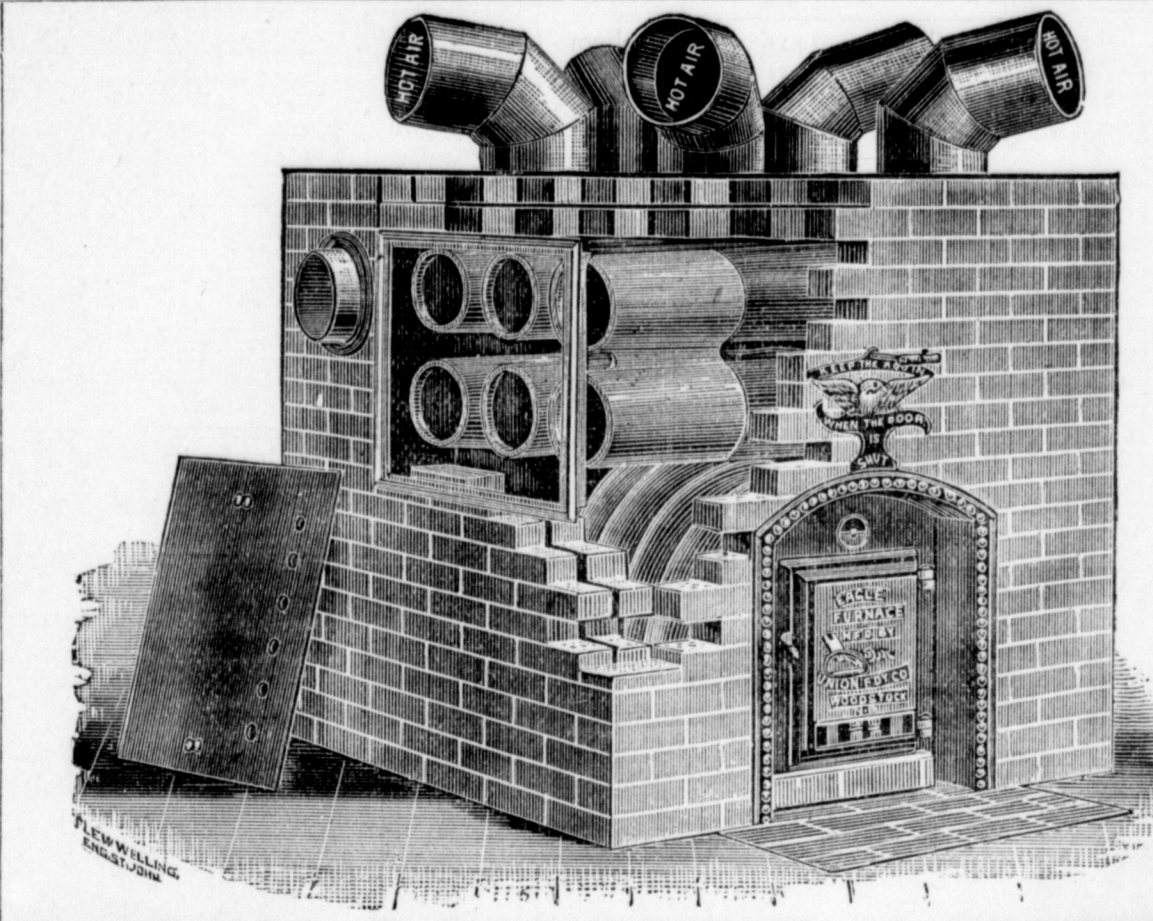
U. R. Hanson.

Woodstock, Nov. 12, 1894.

Death of Anton Rubinstein.

[Anton Gregor Rubinstein, the celebrated Russian pianist and composer, died at Peterhof, Russia, November 20, in his 64th year.]

The death of Anton Rubinstein removes a musician who was on the whole the most famous and gifted among living followers of his art. Born in the Russian village of Bessarabia, of Jewish stock, Rubinstein was reared in the Greek faith; his people were musical, and on moving to Moscow in his early youth secured instruction for him in the art, with such good effect that when but nine, he gave a public concert there; thus, like Mozart, he showed his bent as a child. Later he studied in Paris and thence went on a tour in various European countries with great success. He studied after this at Berlin and after further touring settled in St. Petersburg in 1848. Gaining favor with the court, he wrote some of his early operas under such patronage, founded and conducted the conservatory in his city and produced his numerous and important works, starting in this country in 1872—73 and meeting with the same favor as when abroad. His compositions include work in all the chief forms, the symphony, concerto, opera, oratorio,



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quartet, trio, song and many lesser piano pieces known to the world of music lovers. This musician acquired fame and had power in two distinct ways, as a virtuoso and as a composer, and in this respect resembling his great contemporary, Liszt. As a performer on the piano he was in the very first rank, as those who heard him when he was in this country will readily grant. Probably no other man of his time save Liszt equaled him here, and not the latter in certain particulars. Rubinstein's playing had not only technique but wonderful tone-color and a passionate, at times leonine fire and magnetism which produced electric effects. Paderewski has something of this magnetic gift and *Klang-fest*—to use the German word—while being the other's inferior in strength. He was the idol of his audiences and justly so; and to this result his striking and noble appearance contributed. As a creator of music again he stood very high, surely the equal of men like Brahms, Tschaiskowski, Dvorak and, to some minds, their superior. From so simple a thing as his universally popular and hackneyed Melody to a largely conceived and fine composition like the Ocean Symphony; whether in the light fascinating ballet music of an opera like "Feramors" or the almost barbaric riches of his lyrical piano pieces, or his orchestral inventions, Rubinstein gives evidence of that which surpasses culture, ingenuity or talent; that is, in short, genius. There is an element of the strange, the wild, the sad in his work which gives it depth and distinction. No modern writer of music was fuller of melodies, richer in concerted and harmonic work, more sensuously alluring and emotional in rhythms and motifs. And all his power is controlled and guided by the most scrupulous artistic conscience. In fact, Rubinstein was in his ideas of modern music, as critic, a malcontent, but of sympathy with its newest movement. He names as the five great composers, Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin and Glinka—a choice Mozart and introduces a comparative unknown. He believed not much in the romanticism of Liszt and Wagner, considering the former insincere and showy, the latter the devotee of a false theory, the attempted union of music with the scenic and the dramatic. As he himself said, he lived of late years (musically) mostly in and on memories. "I weep by the waters of Babylon," he said, "and for me the harp is silent." It is not difficult to hear this mood in his music; one thinks of him as sitting remotely a Titan, and one feels that in losing him the world is poorer by a real man and artist. And it is pleasant to know that in his private life he was generous to a fault, giving away in twenty-eight years a quarter of a million.—Hartford Courant.

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