

Evening News.

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QUEENS

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TO A LITTLE BROOK.

You're not so big as you were then,
O little brook!

I mean those hazy summers when
We boys roamed, full of awe, beside
Your noisy, foaming, tumbling tide
And wondered if it could be true
That there were bigger brooks than you.
O mighty brook, O peerless brook!

All up and down this reedy place
Where lives the brook,
We angled for the fat little dace,
The redwing-blackbird did his best
To make us think he'd built his nest
Hard by the stream, when, like as not,
He'd hung it in a secret spot
Far from the brook, the little brook!

And often, when the moonbeams beat
Parboiled the brook,
We'd draw our boots and swing our feet
Upon the waves that, in their play,
Would tag us last and scot away;
And mother never seemed to know
What burnt our legs and chapped them so—
But father guessed it was the brook!

And Fido—how he loved to swim
The cooling brook,
Whenever we'd throw sticks for him
And how we boys did wish that we
Could only swim as good as he—
Why, Daniel Webster never was
Recipient of such great applause
As Fido, battling with the brook!

But once—O most unhappy day
For you, my brook—
Come Cousin Sam along that way,
And, having lived a spell out west,
Where creeks aren't counted much at best,
He neither waded, swam, nor fished,
But, with superb indifference, slept
Across that brook—our mighty brook!

Why do you souper on your way,
You little brook,
When I come back to you to-day?
Is it because you flee the grass
That langes at you as you pass,
As if, in playful mood, it would
Tickle the trunk if it could,
You chuckling brook—you saucy brook!

Or is it you no longer know—
You little brook—
The honest friend of long ago?
The years that kept us twin apart
Have changed my face but not my heart—
Many and sore those years, and yet
I fancied you could not forget
That happy time, my playmate brook!

Oh, sing again in artless glee,
My little brook!

soothed the child's fears, and she was silent.

"More, more! Sing again, pretty music!" cried Clairette when the player stopped, and she clapped her little hands in glee.

So the wonderful violin played on, seeming to speak words of enchantment, and showing plainly what the poor hunchback had received as his maternal inheritance. From that day a tender affection united the two children, and the years passed on.

Lucien has become a man, and is associated with his uncle in business. He is a most valuable assistant, being gifted with extraordinary intelligence. He has not neglected his musical talent, and has had the best instruction.

"Do you know, my boy," said his uncle, "that you will some day be a great composer, or a pride and glory!"

"My only glory," replied Lucien, softly, "is in knowing that Clairette is pleased with me."

He speaks the truth, poor fellow; his whole happiness in life depends upon his cousin's smile.

She too, the petted sensitive child, is now grown up, and has become a lovely woman. She loves her cousin with frank sincere affection, and prefers to all other music the air he played for her when first they met, so that in the family the melody is always called "Clairette's Song." It is a composition worthy of a master-musician, and since drying the child's tears, has become the souvenir of her earliest joys.

What happened next was inevitable. One day Lucien acknowledged to himself that he loved Clairette, and called himself a fool for daring to raise his eyes to the daughter of his benefactor. True, she was his cousin, but how could he, the poor hunchback, hope to marry the beautiful blooming girl? He concealed his grief within his heart, and the violin, his only confidant, wept and sobbed for his hopeless love.

Claire Langelot, a gentle, affectionate girl, treated Lucien as her dearest friend and counselor, confiding to him her inmost thoughts. One day she artlessly told him of her love for Raoul Darboz, and then in a sudden burst of happiness, exclaimed:

"Here, Lucien, take your violin and play Clairette's Song for me!"

Ah, what bitter irony that was! The instrument was forced to sing her happy love under his martyred fingers!

Later, Raoul and Claire were married, and Lucien played the wedding music a mystic strain was the master's skill, and its tender

Joe, the Worm Merchant.

Joe Pierce, the "only worm merchant" who died in this city a few days ago, was well known on the water front. His store was a portable bucket and gunny-sack. His place of business was nearly always open, for Joe slept but little. He had no partner but a diminutive Scotch terrier that was constantly at odds with the whole world, and his only stock in trade was worms.

Four years since Joe, who had an interest in pure politics, determined to register as a voter. The Registrar's clerks subjected him to a close cross-fire of questions because his mind was suspiciously humble and his gait seedy and worn.

"What is your business?" he was finally asked, and, drawing himself together, Joe answered in all seriousness: "I am a worm merchant."

He was passed, and the story of his tilt with the commissioners traveled through the mazes of the water front, and honest Joe was thenceforth known as "the worm merchant."

It was ten years ago that Joe appeared on the water front and inaugurated his enterprise. He took up his stand at the corner of Clay and East streets, with his slimy wares concealed in a bucket bearing the advertisement in prominent letters made with shoeblack: "Worms, Fresh as God."

"You've spelled that wrong, Joe," remarked a sailor to him one day.

"Never you mind," was Joe's reply. "Worms is worms, and people as wants 'em knows where to get 'em."

Late at night, when noisy revelry reigned high in the brilliantly lighted saloons along East street, Joe would go down to the wharf and push out through the muddy water in a small boat. Next to an asphaltum cover Joe was the next best friend to the terrier-stricken piles, for he searched diligently for the long, wriggling things until his gunny-sack was almost alive with them. Next morning he would take up his position on East street and wait for customers. Nearly every lover of the rod patronized him, and the copertition spread space that Joe was a sort of picaresque mascot, and that his worms were "sure to fetch." He contributed by his thrift to the support of his mother and sisters. When the news came that he was dead the whole water front mourned his loss.

—San Francisco Chronicle.

A Bad Break—A Powerful Instrument—Overheard in the Bank—An Infantile Strategist, Etc., Etc.

"Your eyes suggests that radiant stone
That on your finger glitters."
He whispered in a tender tone,
While she in wondrous listens,
And in her face a strange surprise,
A sadness seems to linger,
"Then you must think I have cat's-eyes,
For that's one on my finger."

A POWERFUL INSTRUMENT.

Acquaintance—"I hear your sister has a new piano. Is it like the other?"
Little Boy—"No, this one is a piano fort. You ought to hear it bombard."
—New York Weekly.

OVERHEARD IN THE BANK.

Cashier—"Here's a draft for \$50 from Springs, the poet. It will go to protest, of course, for he has no money."
President—"That's all right, it's the poet's prerogative to draw upon his imagination."
—Munsey's Weekly.

AN INFANTILE STRATEGIST.

"No, darling," said a mother to a sick child, "the doctor says I mustn't read to you."
"Then, mother," begged the little one, "won't you please read to yourself out loud?"
—Daughters of America.

WILL THERE BE ANOTHER?

"So your sister is soon to be married," observed the eligible but deliberate young man to the sweet girl.
"Yes," replied the innocent dear, shyly; "and I hear that double weddings are all the go now."
—Munsey's Weekly.

AT THE CHURCH DOOR.

Mr. Pevens—"Your sermon on 'Economy' this morning, doctor, was a very sensible discourse."
Dr. Churchman—"Thank you; it seems to have been appreciated, from the appearance of the contribution bag."
—Chatter.

A PREMATURE DISCUSSION.

Mrs. Flight—"Have you decided to take any part in the discussion, 'What shall we do in heaven?'"
Good Minister—"No, miss. I am at present much more interested in the question, 'What shall we do to get there?'"

CONVICTIONS, NOT ALWAYS FROM THE HEART.

"Dear me," said the lady who was visiting the man who believed that you should believe in principle."
"Believe in principle?"
"I offered to believe in principle, but I found it was too good for me."
—New York Weekly.

it may be necessary to explain, judge (of Montana court, severely)—the assumption that the court doesn't know what a cold-deck is, Mr. Sharp, is an impertinence that will subject you to a fine for contempt if persisted in. Proceed with your argument."
—Chicago Tribune.

THE HORSE BLEW FIRST.

A veterinary surgeon told his assistant to give a powder a sick horse.

"You take the powder," he explained, "put it in a tin tube, open the horse's mouth and blow the powder down his throat."

Not long afterward the assistant came back, looking as sick as people ever get to be.

"Did you give the horse the powder?" "I tried to. I put the powder in the tin tube, forced open the horse's mouth, put the tube between his teeth, and—"

"Did you blow the powder down his throat?"

"No; I was going to, but the horse blew first and the powder went down my throat."
—Texas Siftings.

CORNERING THE OLD LADY.

"Judging from the flavor of this milk, I should say it was of the vintage of '78," remarked a girl who enjoys the distinction of being what is known as a sweet girl graduate.

"You may know a good deal, Sarah, but you seem to have neglected to learn that milk doesn't belong to vintage. Vintage refers to something that is taken from the vine."

"Why, mother," returned the girl, "didn't you know that milk was taken from a vine?"

"I didn't know anything of the kind," said the mother.

"But it's true," insisted Sarah.

"Oh, nonsense!" interjected mother-fauntler, "what vine?"

"Bovine," replied the girl, and the old lady was so flustered that she put pepper on her Charlotte Russe.
—New York Mercury.

FRATERNAL JOKE.

Three brother officers were talking from Untristair to Lahore, when they had been playing polo during the day. One of them, tired after a long ride, asked on one of the officers, "What's the matter with your pocket?"

SERPENTS FOR THE ZOO.

HOW THEY ARE OBTAINED FOR CINCINNATI'S MENAGERIE.

A Wonderful Collection of Poisonous Lizards and Things That Crawl—Reptiles From Many Climes.

Superintendent Stephan, of the Cincinnati Zoological Garden, told a Tribune reporter that he had an order placed for about three dozen snakes, to get them by next spring. "You see," said Mr. Stephan, "we have to order that sort of thing about six months ahead of the time we want them. The usual way they are gotten is through the captains of the steamers plying between the countries from which we want them and Hamburg or New York. These captains get them for a mere song and sell them either to the animal dealers or direct to the shows and gardens. Yes, these shows use a good number of them. They generally handle them a good deal, and handling is bad for snakes, especially just after they've been fed; it makes them sick. Snakes have to have plenty of time to digest. Ashow considers itself lucky if it keeps a snake through one season, while we keep them here ten or eleven years. But come and take a look at the snakes we have." And he led the way to a corner of the carnivora building, where, in five or six glass cases, their snakeships were confined.

"Here are some young ones from Cuba. They are so called because they usually are found on trees. These are little fellows, being only five or six feet long and about four inches in circumference. Like the boa-constrictor, they kill everything they eat by crushing it. No, they don't do any charming. It's a charming business it is—what newspaper men call it—'a snake power these snakes kill.'"

"Why, when we were in the States we saw a snake power these snakes kill."

"Yes, when we were in the States we saw a snake power these snakes kill."

HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS.

EXERCISE IN HOUSEWORK.

Housework is healthy, and many physicians recommend it to women who need exercise. Walking is not enough; it exercises only the legs, while dusting and sweeping bring an entirely different set of muscles into play. Many girls take more interest in their homes if encouraged to assist in the care of them. Household duties, if properly planned, need take but little time out of a long day. To be systematic in the discharge of such duties is the only way to properly accomplish the right amount of work.
—New York Journal.

DRIVING FRUIT.

Dried fruit is one of the by-products of the farm, and although it will not pay the farmer to hire labor to dry fruit, it will pay to make arrangements in advance for it, so that members of the family can occupy their spare time in this kind of work. In this way a very considerable amount of fruit that otherwise might be had can be turned into an article not quickly perishable, and for which a market can always be found, writes an Ohio farmer. Good apple-parsers should be provided for expediting the work, which should be done in such a manner that the fruit when dried will be clean and attractive in appearance. Nothing detracts so much from its value in the eyes of a purchaser as to find the pieces with bits of core or seeds in them, and poorly packed. It is not a good idea to bleach fruit, as this does not favor its sale. It is better to dry it in a room—