Humorous Masterpieces from American Literature eBook

Humorous Masterpieces from American Literature

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Page 1

BAYARD TAYLOR.

(*Born*, 1825—*died*, 1878)

* * * * *

Selections from the experiences of the A.C.

“Bridgeport! Change cars for the Naugatuck Railroad!” shouted the conductor of the New York and Boston Express Train, on the evening of May 27, 1858.... Mr. Johnson, carpet-bag in hand, jumped upon the platform, entered the office, purchased a ticket for Waterbury, and was soon whirling in the Naugatuck train towards his destination.

On reaching Waterbury, in the soft spring twilight, Mr. Johnson walked up and down in front of the station, curiously scanning the faces of the assembled crowd. Presently he noticed a gentleman who was performing the same operation upon the faces of the alighting passengers. Throwing himself directly in the way of the latter, the two exchanged a steady gaze.

“Is your name Billings?” “Is your name Johnson?” were simultaneous questions, followed by the simultaneous exclamations,—“Ned!” “Enos!”

Then there was a crushing grasp of hands, repeated after a pause, in testimony of ancient friendship, and Mr. Billings, returning to practical life asked:

“Is that all your baggage? Come, I have a buggy here: Eunice has heard the whistle, and she’ll be impatient to welcome you.”

The impatience of Eunice (Mrs. Billings, of course) was not of long duration; for in five minutes thereafter she stood at the door of her husband’s chocolate-colored villa, receiving his friend....

J. Edward Johnson was a tall, thin gentleman of forty-five.... A year before, some letters, signed “Foster, Kirkup, & Co., per Enos Billings,” had accidentally revealed to him the whereabouts of the old friend of his youth with whom we now find him domiciled....

“Enos,” said he, as he stretched out his hand for the third cup of tea (which he had taken only for the purpose of prolonging the pleasant table-chat), “I wonder which of us is most changed.”

“You, of course,” said Mr. Billings, “with your brown face and big moustache. Your own brother wouldn’t have known you, if he had seen you last, as I did, with smooth cheeks and hair of unmerciful length. Why, not even your voice is the same!”

“That is easily accounted for,” replied Mr. Johnson. “But in your case, Enos, I am puzzled to find where the difference lies. Your features seem to be but little changed, now that I can examine them at leisure; yet it is not the same face. But really, I never looked at you for so long a time, in those days. I beg pardon; you used to be so—so remarkably shy.”

Mr. Billings blushed slightly, and seemed at a loss what to answer. His wife, however, burst into a merry laugh, exclaiming:

“Oh, that was before the days of the A.C.!”

He, catching the infection, laughed also; in fact, Mr. Johnson laughed, but without knowing why.

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“The ’A.C.’!” said Mr. Billings. “Bless me, Eunice! how long it is since we have talked of that summer! I had almost forgotten that there ever was an A.C.... Well, the A.C. culminated in ’45. You remember something of the society of Norridgeport, the last winter you were there? Abel Mallory, for instance?”

“Let me think a moment,” said Mr. Johnson, reflectively. “Really, it seems like looking back a hundred years. Mallory,—wasn’t that the sentimental young man, with wispy hair, a tallowy skin, and big, sweaty hands, who used to be spouting Carlyle on the ‘reading evenings’ at Shelldrake’s? Yes, to be sure; and there was Hollins, with his clerical face and infidel talk,—and Pauline Ringtop, who used to say, ’The Beautiful is the Good.’ I can still hear her shrill voice singing, ‘Would that *I* were beautiful, would that *I* were fair!’”

There was a hearty chorus of laughter at poor Miss Ringtop’s expense. It harmed no one, however; for the tar-weed was already thick over her Californian grave.

“Oh, I see,” said Mr. Billings, “you still remember the absurdities of those days. In fact, I think you partially saw through them then. But I was younger, and far from being so clearheaded, and I looked upon those evenings at Shelldrake’s as being equal, at least, to the *symposia* of Plato. Something in Mallory always repelled me. I detested the sight of his thick nose, with the flaring nostrils, and his coarse, half-formed lips, of the bluish color of raw corned-beef. But I looked upon these feelings as unreasonable prejudices, and strove to conquer them, seeing the admiration which he received from others. He was an oracle on the subject of ‘Nature.’ Having eaten nothing for two years, except Graham bread, vegetables without salt, and fruits, fresh or dried, he considered himself to have attained an antediluvian purity of health,—or that he would attain it, so soon as two pimples on his left temple should have healed. These pimples he looked upon as the last feeble stand made by the pernicious juices left from the meat he had formerly eaten and the coffee he had drunk. His theory was, that through a body so purged and purified none but true and natural impulses could find access to the soul. Such, indeed, was the theory we all held....

“Shelldrake was a man of more pretence than real cultivation, as I afterwards discovered. He was in good circumstances, and always glad to receive us at his house, as this made him virtually the chief of our tribe, and the outlay for refreshments involved only the apples from his own orchard, and water from his well....

“Well, ’t was in the early part of ’45,—I think in April,—when we were all gathered together, discussing, as usual, the possibility of leading a life in accordance with Nature. Abel Mallory was there, and Hollins, and Miss Ringtop, and Faith Levis, with her knitting,—and also Eunice Hazleton, a lady whom you have never seen, but you may take my wife as her representative....

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“I wish I could recollect some of the speeches made on that occasion. Abel had but one pimple on his temple (there was a purple spot where the other had been), and was estimating that in two or three months more he would be a true, unspoiled man. His complexion, nevertheless, was more clammy and whey-like than ever.

“‘Yes,’ said he, ’I also am an Arcadian! This false dual existence which I have been leading will soon be merged in the unity of Nature. Our lives must conform to her sacred law. Why can’t we strip off these hollow Shams,’ (he made great use of that word,) ’and be our true selves, pure, perfect, and divine?’ ...

“Shelldrake, however, turning to his wife, said,—

“’Elviry, how many up-stairs rooms is there in that house down on the Sound?’

“’Four,—besides three small ones under the roof. Why, what made you think of that, Jesse?’ said she.

“‘I’ve got an idea, while Abel’s been talking,’ he answered. ’We’ve taken a house for the summer, down the other side of Bridgeport, right on the water, where there’s good fishing and a fine view of the Sound. Now, there’s room enough for all of us,—at least, all that can make it suit to go. Abel, you and Enos, and Pauline and Eunice might fix matters so that we could all take the place in partnership, and pass the summer together, living a true and beautiful life in the bosom of Nature. There we shall be perfectly free and untrammelled by the chains which still hang around us in Norridgeport. You know how often we have wanted to be set on some island in the Pacific Ocean, where we could build up a true society, right from the start. Now, here’s a chance to try the experiment for a few months, anyhow.’

“Eunice clapped her hands (yes, you did!) and cried out,—

“‘Splendid! Arcadian! I’ll give up my school for the summer.’ ...

“Abel Mallory, of course, did not need to have the proposal repeated. He was ready for any thing which promised indolence, and the indulgence of his sentimental tastes. I will do the fellow the justice to say that he was not a hypocrite. He firmly believed both in himself and his ideas,—especially the former. He pushed both hands through the long wisps of his drab-colored hair, and threw his head back until his wide nostrils resembled a double door to his brain.

“‘O Nature!’ he said, ’you have found your lost children! We shall obey your neglected laws! we shall hearken to your divine whispers! we shall bring you back from your ignominious exile, and place you on your ancestral throne!’ ...

“The company was finally arranged to consist of the Shelldrakes, Hollins, Mallory, Eunice, Miss Ringtop, and myself. We did not give much thought, either to the

preparations in advance, or to our mode of life when settled there. We were to live near to Nature: that was the main thing.

“’What shall we call the place?” asked Eunice.

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"'Arcadia!' said Abel Mallory, rolling up his large green eyes.

"'Then,' said Hollins, 'let us constitute ourselves the Arcadian Club!'"

—"Aha!" interrupted Mr. Johnson, "I see! The A.C.!"

"Yes, you see the A.C. now, but to understand it fully, you should have had a share in those Arcadian experiences.... It was a lovely afternoon in June when we first approached Arcadia.... Perkins Brown, Shelldrake's boy-of-all-work, awaited us at the door. He had been sent on two or three days in advance, to take charge of the house, and seemed to have had enough of hermit-life, for he hailed us with a wild whoop, throwing his straw hat half-way up one of the poplars. Perkins was a boy of fifteen, the child of poor parents, who were satisfied to get him off their hands, regardless as to what humanitarian theories might be tested upon him. As the Arcadian Club recognized no such thing as caste, he was always admitted to our meetings, and understood just enough of our conversation to excite a silly ambition in his slow mind....

"Our board, that evening, was really tempting. The absence of meat was compensated to us by the crisp and racy onions, and I craved only a little salt, which had been interdicted, as a most pernicious substance. I sat at one corner of the table, beside Perkins Brown, who took an opportunity, while the others were engaged in conversation, to jog my elbow gently. As I turned towards him, he said nothing, but dropped his eyes significantly. The little rascal had the lid of a blacking-box, filled with salt, upon his knee, and was privately seasoning his onions and radishes. I blushed at the thought of my hypocrisy, but the onions were so much better that I couldn't help dipping into the lid with him.

"'Oh,' said Eunice, 'we must send for some oil and vinegar! This lettuce is very nice.'

"'Oil and vinegar?' exclaimed Abel.

"'Why, yes,' said she, innocently: 'they are both vegetable substances.'

"Abel at first looked rather foolish, but quickly recovering herself, said,—

"'All vegetable substances are not proper for food: you would not taste the poison-oak, or sit under the upas-tree of Java.'

"'Well, Abel,' Eunice rejoined, 'how are we to distinguish what is best for us? How are we to know *what* vegetables to choose, or what animal and mineral substances to avoid?'

"'I will tell you,' he answered, with a lofty air. 'See here!' pointing to his temple, where the second pimple—either from the change of air, or because, in the excitement of the last few days, he had forgotten it—was actually healed. 'My blood is at last pure. The

struggle between the natural and the unnatural is over, and I am beyond the depraved influences of my former taste. My instincts are now, therefore, entirely pure also. What is good for man to eat, that I shall have a natural desire to eat: what is bad will be naturally repelled. How does the

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cow distinguish between the wholesome and the poisonous herbs of the meadow? And is man less than a cow, that he cannot cultivate his instincts to an equal point? Let me walk through the woods and I can tell you every berry and root which God designed for food, though I know not its name, and have never seen it before. I shall make use of my time, during our sojourn here, to test, by my purified instinct, every substance, animal, mineral, and vegetable, upon which the human race subsists, and to create a catalogue of the True Food of Man!' ...

"Our lazy life during the hot weather had become a little monotonous. The Arcadian plan had worked tolerably well, on the whole, for there was very little for any one to do, —Mrs. Shelldrake and Perkins Brown excepted. Our conversation, however, lacked spirit and variety. We were, perhaps unconsciously, a little tired of hearing and assenting to the same sentiments. But, one evening, about this time, Hollins struck upon a variation, the consequences of which he little foresaw. We had been reading one of Bulwer's works, (the weather was too hot for Psychology,) and came upon this paragraph, or something like it:—

"'Ah, Behind the Veil! We see the summer smile of the Earth,—enamelled meadow and limpid stream,—but what hides she in her sunless heart? Caverns of serpents, or grottoes of priceless gems? Youth, whose soul sits on thy countenance, thyself wearing no mask, strive not to lift the masks of others! Be content with what thou seest; and wait until Time and Experience shall teach thee to find jealousy behind the sweet smile, and hatred under the honeyed word!'

"This seemed to us a dark and bitter reflection but one or another of us recalled some illustration of human hypocrisy, and the evidences, by the simple fact of repetition, gradually led to a division of opinion,—Rollins, Shelldrake, and Miss Ringtop on the dark side, and the rest of us on the bright. The last, however, contented herself with quoting from her favorite poet Gamaliel J. Gawthrop:—

"'I look beyond thy brow's concealment!
I see thy spirit's dark revealment!
Thy inner self betrayed I see:
Thy coward, craven, shivering *me*!'

"'We think we know one another,' exclaimed Rollins; 'but do we? We see the faults of others, their weaknesses, their disagreeable qualities, and we keep silent. How much we should gain, were candor as universal as concealment Then each one, seeing himself as others see him, would truly know himself. How much misunderstanding might be avoided, how much hidden shame be removed, hopeless because unspoken love made glad, honest admiration cheer its object, uttered sympathy mitigate misfortune,—in short, how much brighter and happier the world would become, if each

one expressed, everywhere and at all times, his true and entire feeling! Why, even Evil would lose half its power!'

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“There seemed to be so much practical wisdom in these views that we were all dazzled and half-convinced at the start. So, when Hollins, turning towards me, as he continued, exclaimed,—’Come, why should not this candor be adopted in our Arcadia? Will any one—will you, Enos—commence at once by telling me now—to my face—my principal faults?’ I answered, after a moment’s reflection,—’You have a great deal of intellectual arrogance, and you are, physically, very indolent.’

“He did not flinch from the self-invited test, though he looked a little surprised.

“‘Well put,’ said he, ’though I do not say that you are entirely correct. Now, what are my merits?’

“‘You are clear-sighted,’ I answered, ’an earnest seeker after truth, and courageous in the avowal of your thoughts.’

“This restored the balance, and we soon began to confess our own private faults and weaknesses. Though the confessions did not go very deep,—no one betraying any thing we did not all know already,—yet they were sufficient to strengthen Hollins in his new idea, and it was unanimously resolved that Candor should thenceforth be the main charm of our Arcadian life....

“The next day, Abel, who had resumed his researches after the True Food, came home to supper with a healthier color than I had before seen on his face.

“‘Do you know,’ said he, looking shyly at Hollins, ’that I begin to think Beer must be a natural beverage? There was an auction in the village to-day, as I passed through, and I stopped at a cake-stand to get a glass of water, as it was very hot. There was no water,—only beer: so I thought I would try a glass, simply as an experiment. Really, the flavor was very agreeable. And it occurred to me, on the way home, that all the elements contained in beer are vegetable. Besides, fermentation is a natural process. I think the question has never been properly tested before.’

“‘But the alcohol!’ exclaimed Hollins.

“’I could not distinguish any, either by taste or smell. I know that chemical analysis is said to show it; but may not the alcohol be created, somehow, during the analysis?’

“‘Abel,’ said Hollins, in a fresh burst of candor, ’you will never be a Reformer, until you possess some of the commonest elements of knowledge.’

“The rest of us were much diverted: it was a pleasant relief to our monotonous amiability.

“Abel, however, had a stubborn streak in his character. The next day he sent Perkins Brown to Bridgeport for a dozen bottles of ‘Beer.’ Perkins, either intentionally or by

mistake, (I always suspected the former,) brought pint-bottles of Scotch ale, which he placed in the coolest part of the cellar. The evening happened to be exceedingly hot and sultry; and, as we were all fanning ourselves and talking languidly, Abel bethought him of his beer. In his thirst, he drank the contents of the first bottle, almost at a single draught.

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"'The effect of beer,' said he, 'depends, I think, on the commixture of the nourishing principle of the grain with the cooling properties of the water. Perhaps, hereafter, a liquid food of the same character may be invented, which shall save us from mastication and all the diseases of the teeth.'

"Hollins and Shelldrake, at his invitation, divided a bottle between them, and he took a second. The potent beverage was not long in acting on a brain so unaccustomed to its influence. He grew unusually talkative and sentimental, in a few minutes.

"'Oh, sing, somebody!' he sighed in hoarse rapture: 'the night was made for Song.'

"Miss Ringtop, nothing loath, immediately commenced, 'When stars are in the quiet skies'; but scarcely had she finished the first verse before Abel interrupted her.

"'Candor's the order of the day, isn't it?' he asked.

"'Yes!' 'Yes!' two or three answered.

"'Well, then,' said he, 'candidly, Pauline, you've got the darn'dest squeaky voice'—

"Miss Ringtop gave a faint little scream of horror.

"'Oh, never mind!' he continued. 'We act according to impulse, don't we? And I've the impulse to swear; and it's right. Let Nature have her way. Listen! Damn, damn, damn, damn! I never knew it was so easy. Why, there's a pleasure in it! Try it, Pauline! try it on me!'

"'Oh-ooh!' was all Miss Ringtop could utter.

"'Abel! Abel!' exclaimed Hollins, 'the beer has got into your head.'

"'No, it isn't Beer,—it's Candor!' said Abel. 'It's your own proposal, Hollins. Suppose it's evil to swear: isn't it better I should express it, and be done with it, than keep it bottled up, to ferment in my mind? Oh, you're a precious, consistent old humbug, *you* are!'

"And therewith he jumped off the stoop, and went dancing awkwardly down towards the water, singing in a most unmelodious voice, ''Tis home where'er the heart is.' ...

"We had an unusually silent breakfast the next morning. Abel scarcely spoke, which the others attributed to a natural feeling of shame, after his display of the previous evening. Hollins and Shelldrake discussed Temperance, with a special view to his edification, and Miss Ringtop favored us with several quotations about 'the maddening bowl,'—but he paid no attention to them....

“The forenoon was overcast, with frequent showers. Each one occupied his or her room until dinner-time, when we met again with something of the old geniality. There was an evident effort to restore our former flow of good feeling. Abel’s experience with the beer was freely discussed. He insisted strongly that he had not been laboring under its effects, and proposed a mutual test. He, Shelldrake, and Hollins were to drink it in equal measures, and compare observations as to their physical sensations. The others agreed,—quite willingly, I thought,—but I refused....

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“There was a sound of loud voices, as we approached the stoop. Hollins, Shelldrake and his wife, and Abel Mallory were sitting together near the door. Perkins Brown, as usual, was crouched on the lowest step, with one leg over the other, and rubbing the top of his boot with a vigor which betrayed to me some secret mirth. He looked up at me from under his straw hat with the grin of a malicious Puck, glanced towards the group, and made a curious gesture with his thumb. There were several empty pint bottles on the stoop.

“‘Now, are you sure you can bear the test?’ we heard Hollins ask, as we approached.

“‘Bear it? Why, to be sure!’ replied Shelldrake ’if I couldn’t bear it, or if *you* couldn’t, your theory’s done for. Try! I can stand it as long as you can.’

“‘Well, then,’ said Hollins, ’I think you are a very ordinary man. I derive no intellectual benefit from my intercourse with you, but your house is convenient to me. I’m under no obligations for your hospitality, however, because my company is an advantage to you. Indeed, if I were treated according to my deserts, you couldn’t do enough for me.’

“Mrs. Shelldrake was up in arms.

“‘Indeed,’ she exclaimed, ’I think you get as good as you deserve, and more too.’

“Elvira,’ said he, with a benevolent condescension, ’I have no doubt you think so, for your mind belongs to the lowest and most material sphere. You have your place in Nature, and you fill it; but it is not for you to judge of intelligences which move only on the upper planes.’

“‘Hollins,’ said Shelldrake, ’Elviry’s a good wife and a sensible woman, and I won’t allow you to turn up your nose at her.’

“‘I am not surprised,’ he answered, ’that you should fail to stand the test. I didn’t expect it.’

“‘Let me try it on *you*!’ cried Shelldrake. ’You, now, have some intellect,—I don’t deny that,—but not so much, by a long shot, as you think you have. Besides that, you’re awfully selfish in your opinions. You won’t admit that anybody can be right who differs from you. You’ve sponged on me for a long time; but I suppose I’ve learned something from you, so we’ll call it even. I think, however, that what you call acting according to impulse is simply an excuse to cover your own laziness.’

“‘Gosh! that’s it!’ interrupted Perkins, jumping up; then, recollecting himself, he sank down on the steps again, and shook with a suppressed ‘Ho! ho! ho!’

“Hollins, however, drew himself up with an exasperated air.

"'Shelldrake,' said he, 'I pity you. I always knew your ignorance, but I thought you honest in your human character. I never suspected you of envy and malice. However, the true Reformer must expect to be misunderstood and misrepresented by meaner minds. That love which I bear to all creatures teaches me to forgive you. Without such love, all plans of progress must fail. Is it not so, Abel?'"

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“Shelldrake could only ejaculate the words, ‘Pity!’ ‘Forgive!’ in his most contemptuous tone; while Mrs. Shelldrake, rocking violently in her chair, gave utterance to that peculiar clucking ‘*ts, ts, ts, ts*,’ whereby certain women express emotions too deep for words.

“Abel, roused by Hollins’ question, answered, with a sudden energy,—

“Love! there is no love in the world. Where will you find it? Tell me, and I’ll go there. Love! I’d like to see it! If all human hearts were like mine, we might have an Arcadia; but most men have no hearts. The world is a miserable, hollow, deceitful shell of vanity and hypocrisy. No: let us give up. We were born before our time: this age is not worthy of us.’

“Hollins stared at the speaker in utter amazement. Shelldrake gave a long whistle, and finally gasped out,—

“‘Well, what next?’

“None of us were prepared for such a sudden and complete wreck of our Arcadian scheme. The foundations had been sapped before, it is true; but we had not perceived it; and now, in two short days, the whole edifice tumbled about our ears. Though it was inevitable, we felt a shock of sorrow, and a silence fell upon us. Only that scamp of a Perkins Brown, chuckling and rubbing his boot, really rejoiced. I could have kicked him.

“We all went to bed, feeling that the charm of our Arcadian life was over.... In the first revulsion of feeling, I was perhaps unjust to my associates. I see now, more clearly, the causes of those vagaries, which originated in a genuine aspiration, and failed from an ignorance of the true nature of Man, quite as much as from the egotism of the individuals. Other attempts at reorganizing Society were made about the same time by men of culture and experience, but in the A.C. we had neither. Our leaders had caught a few half-truths, which, in their minds, were speedly warped into errors.” ...—*The Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1862.

WILLIAM ALLEN BUTLER.

(*Born*, 1825.)

* * * * *

Dobbs his ferry.

A Legend of the Lower Hudson.

The days were at their longest,
The heat was at its strongest,

When Brown, old friend and true,
Wrote thus: "Dear Jack, why swelter
In town when shade and shelter
Are waiting here for you?
Quit Bulls and Bears and gambling,
For rural sports and rambling
Forsake your Wall Street tricks;
Come without hesitation,
Check to Dobbs' Ferry Station,
We dine at half-past six."

I went,—a welcome hearty,
A merry country party,
A drive, and then croquet,
A quiet, well-cooked dinner,
Three times at billiards winner,—
The evening sped away;
When Brown, the dear old joker,
Cried, "Come, my worthy broker,
The hour is growing late;
Your room is cool and quiet,
As for the bed, just try it,
Breakfast at half-past eight."

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I took Brown’s hand, applauded
His generous care, and lauded
  Dobbs’ Ferry to the skies.
A shade came o’er his features,
“We should be happy creatures,
  And this a paradise,
But, ah! the deep disgrace is,
This loveliest of places
  A vulgar name should blight!
But, death to Dobbs! we’ll change it,
If money can arrange it,
  So, pleasant dreams; good night!”

I could not sleep, but, raising
The window, stood, moon-gazing,
  In fairyland a guest;
“On such a night,” *et cetera*—
See Shakespeare for much better a
Description of the rest,—
I mused, how sweet to wander
Beside the river, yonder;
  And then the sudden whim
Seized my head to pillow
On Hudson’s sparkling billow,
  A midnight, moonlight swim!

Soon thought and soon attempted;
At once my room was emptied
  Of its sole occupant;
The roof was low, and easily,
In fact, quite Japanese-ily,
  I took the downward slant,
Then, without stay or stopping,
My first and last eaves-dropping,
  By leader-pipe I sped,
And through the thicket gliding,
Down the steep hillside sliding,
  Soon reached the river’s bed.

But what was my amazement,—
The fair scene from the casement,
  How changed! I could not guess
Where track or rails had vanished,
Town, villas, station, banished,—

All was a wilderness.
Only one ancient gable,
A low-roofed inn and stable,
A creaking sign displayed,
An antiquated wherry,
Below it—“*Dobbs his ferry*”—
In the clear moonlight swayed.

I turned, and there the craft was,
Its shape ’twixt scow and raft was,
Square ends, low sides, and flat,
And standing close beside me,
An ancient chap who eyed me,
Beneath a steeple-hat;
Short legs—long pipe—style very
Pre-Revolutionary,—
I bow, he grimly bobs,
Then, with some perturbation,
By way of salutation,
Says I, “How are you, Dobbs!”

He grum and silent beckoned,
And I, in half a second,
Scarce knowing what I did,
Took the stern seat, Dobbs throwing
Himself ’midships, and rowing,
Swift through the stream we slid;
He pulled awhile, then stopping,
And both oars slowly dropping,
His pipe aside he laid,
Drew a long breath, and taking
An attitude, and shaking
His fist towards shore, thus said:—

“Of all sharp cuts the keenest,
Of all mean turns the meanest,
Vilest of all vile jobs,
Worse than the Cow-Boy pillagers,
Are these Dobbs’ Ferry villagers
A going back on Dobbs!
’Twould not be more anom’lous
If Rome went back on Rom’lus
(Old rum-un like myself),
Or Hail Columbia, played out
By Southern Dixie, laid out
Columbus on the shelf!

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“They say ‘Dobbs’ ain’t melodious,
It’s ‘horrid,’ ‘vulgar,’ ‘odious,’
  In all their crops it sticks;
And then the worse addendum
Of ‘Ferry’ does offend ’em
  More than its vile prefix.
Well, it does seem distressing,
But, if I’m good at guessing,
Each one of these same nobs,
If there was money in it,
Would ferry in a minute,
  And change his name to Dobbs!

“That’s it, they’re not partic’lar,
Respecting the auric’lar,
  At a stiff market rate;
But Dobbs’ especial vice is,
That he keeps down the prices
  Of all their real estate!
A name so unattractive
Keeps villa-sites inactive,
  And spoils the broker’s jobs;
They think that speculation
Would rage at ‘Paulding’s Station,’
  Which stagnates now at ‘Dobbs.’

“’Paulding’s!”—that’s sentimental!
An old Dutch Continental,
  Bushwhacked up there a spell;
But why he should come blustering
Round here, and filibustering,
  Is more than I can tell;
Sat playing for a wager,
And nabbed a British major.
  Well, if the plans and charts
From Andre’s boots he hauled out,
Is his name to be bawled out
  Forever, round these parts?

“Guess not! His pay and bounty
And mon’ment from the county
  Paid him off, every cent,
While this snug town and station,
To every generation,

Shall be Dobbs' monument;
Spite of all speculators
And ancient-landmark traitors,
Who, all along this shore,
Are ever substitutin'
The modern, highfalutin',
For the plain names of yore.

"Down there, on old Manhattan,
Where land-sharks breed and fatten,
They've wiped out Tubby Hook.
That famous promontory,
Renowned in song and story,
Which time nor tempest shook,
Whose name for aye had been good,
Stands newly christened 'Inwood,'
And branded with the shame
Of some old rogue who passes
By dint of aliases,
Afraid of his own name!

"See how they quite outrival,
Plain barnyard Spuytenduyvil,
By peacock Riverdale,
Which thinks all else it conquers,
And over homespun Yonkers
Spreads out its flaunting tail!
There's new-named Mount St. Vincent,
Where each dear little inn'cent
Is taught the Popish rites,—
Well, ain't it queer, wherever
These saints possess the river
They get the finest sites!

"They've named a place for Irving,
A trifle more deserving
Than your French, foreign saints,
But if he has such mention,
It's past my comprehension
Why Dobbs should cause complaints;
Wrote histories and such things,
About Old Knick and Dutch things,
Dolph Heyligers and Rips;
But no old antiquary
Like him could keep a ferry,
With all his authorships!

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“By aid of these same showmen,
Some fanciful cognomen
  Old Cro’nest stock might bring
As high as Butter Hill is,
Which, patronized by Willis,
  Leaves cards now as ‘Storm-King!’
Can’t some poetic swell-beau
Re-christen old Crum Elbow
  And each prosaic bluff,
Bold Breakneck gently flatter,
And Dunderberg bespatter,
  With euphony and stuff!

“’T would be a *magnum opus*
To bury old Esopus
  In Time’s sepulchral vaults,
Or in Oblivion’s deep sea
Submerge renowned Poughkeepsie,
  And also ancient Paltz;
How it would give them rapture
Brave Stony Point to capture,
  And make it face about;
Bid Rhinebeck sound much smoother
Than in the tongue of Luther,
  And wipe the Catskills out!

“Well, DOBBS is DOBBS, and faster
Than pitch or mustard-plaster
Shall it stick hereabouts,
While Tappan Sea rolls yonder,
Or round High Torn the thunder
  Along these ramparts shouts.
No corner-lot banditti,
Or brokers from the City—
  Like you—” Here Dobbs began
Wildly both oars to brandish,
As fierce as old Miles Standish,
  Or young Phil Sheridan.

Sternwards he rushed,—I, ducking,
Seized both his legs, and chucking
  Dobbs sideways, splash he went,—
The wherry swayed, then righted,
While I, somewhat excited,

  Over the water bent;
Three times he rose, but vainly
I clutched his form ungainly,
  He sank, while sighs and sobs
Beneath the waves seemed muttered,
And all the night-winds uttered
  In sad tones, “Dobbs! Dobbs! Dobbs!”

Just then some giant boulders
Upon my head and shoulders
  Made sudden, fearful raids,
And on my face and forehead,
With din and uproar horrid,
  Came several Palisades;
I screamed, and woke, in screaming,
To see, by gaslight’s gleaming,
  Brown’s face above my bed;
“Why, Jack, what is the matter?
We heard a dreadful clatter
  And found you on the shed!

“It’s plain enough, supposing
You sat there, moon-struck, dozing,
  Upon the window’s edge,
Then lost yourself, and falling,
Just where we found you, sprawling,
  Struck the piazza ledge;
A lucky hit, old fellow,
Of black and blue and yellow
  It gives your face a touch,
You saved your neck, but barely;
To state the matter fairly,
  You took a drop too much!”

I took the train next morning,
Some lumps my nose adorning,
  My forehead, sundry knobs,
My ideas slightly wandering,
But, as I went, much pondering
Upon my night with Dobbs;
Brown thinks it, dear old sinner,
A case of “after dinner,”
  And won’t believe a word,
Talks of “hallucination,”
“Laws of association,”
  And calls my tale “absurd.”

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Perhaps it is, but never,
Say I, should we dissever
  Old places and old names;
Guard the old landmarks truly,
On the old altars duly
  Keep bright the ancient flames.
For me the face of Nature,
No luckless nomenclature
  Of grace or beauty robs;
No, when of town I weary,
I'll make a strike in Erie,
  And buy a place at DOBBS!

—*Poems.*

JOHN WILLIAM DE FOREST.

(BORN, 1826.)

* * * * *

FATHER HIGGINS'S PREFERMENT.

Father Higgins was not the kind of divine who easily finds preferment in the Catholic Church, or who would be apt to make a shining mark in any other.

Fat and red-faced and pudding-headed was Father Higgins; uncommonly in the way of good eating, and now and then disposed for good drinking; as lazy as he dared be, ignorant enough for a hermit, and simple enough for a monk. His chief excellence lay in his kindliness of heart, which would doubtless have made him very serviceable and comfortable to his fellow-men, had it not been for his indolence, his spare intellectual gifts, and perhaps a little leaven of selfishness.

Such as he was, however, Father Higgins had no small "consate" of himself, and sometimes thought that even a bishopric would not be "beyant his desarts." He pleased himself with imagining how finely he would fill an episcopal chair, what apostolic labors he would accomplish in his diocese, what swarms of heretics or pagans he would convert, what a self-sacrificing and heroic life he would lead, and what a saintly name he would leave. One day, or to speak with a precision worthy of this true history, one evening, he became a bishop.

It happened on this wise. Father Higgins had ventured to treat himself to a spectacle. He had attended, for the first time in his life, an exhibition of legerdemain; this one being given by that celebrated master of the black-art, Professor Heller. He had seen the

professor change turnips into gold watches, draw a dozen live pigeons in succession out of an empty box, send rings into ladies' handkerchiefs at the other end of the hall, catch a bullet out of an exploded pistol in his hand, and perform other marvels equally irrational and disturbing. From this raree-show Father Higgins had gone home feeling that he had witnessed something about as unearthly as he was likely to be confronted with in the next world.

For an hour or more he sat in his elbow-chair, puzzling over the professor's "diviltries," and crossing himself at the remembrance of each one of them. It was black midnight, and stormy at that; there was such an uproar in the elm branches over his house as if all the Salem witches were holding Sabbath there; the whole village of Sableburg swarmed with windy rushings and shriekings and slammings. It was one of those midnights when the devil evidently "has business on his hand."

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Of a sudden there was a rustle in the room, and looking around to discover the cause of it, Father Higgins beheld a tall and dark man with startling black eyes, in whom he recognized Professor Heller.

“What’s yer will, sir?” demanded the Father, a good deal astonished, but not a bit frightened.

“I understand, sir, that you would like to be a bishop,” replied the professor, bowing politely, but seating himself unceremoniously.

“That’s thrue enough, sir,” replied Father Higgins, who somehow felt curiously at his ease, and disposed at once to be confidential with this utter stranger. “I’ve often imagined meself a bishop, an’ doin’ wondhers in me office. But it’s nonsinse.”

“What post would suit you?” inquired the visitor. “The diocese of New York?”

“No, no,” said the father. “I’m not ayqual to sich a risponsebility; that is, not at wanst, ye ondherstand. I’d like best to come up to sich a place as that gintly an’ by degrays. It’s been a drame av mine to begin my prefarmint as biship av some far-away continent or archypilago, like, an’ convart slathers av haythins an’ cannebals for a practice. It ud plase me imagenation to prache among corrils an’ coky-nuts an’ naked crachurs. Y’ are aware, I suppose, Misther Heller—or Professor Heller—av sich islands as Owyhee an’ the Marquesas, famous a’ready in the history av the Propaganda Fide. Jist suppose me havin’ me episkepal raysedence on wan av ‘um, an’ makin’ me progresses to the others. There be great devoshin to a spiritual father among thim simple people, I’m thinkin.’ I’d be a god to ’um, like. Sich obeyjince ud jist shuit me. Yes, I’d enj’y bein’ Biship av the Cannebal Islands, or even av wan av um.”

“Faith is necessary,” replied Heller. “You must believe that you are to be Bishop of the Cannibal Islands.”

“Sure an’ it’s not aisy at this distance to belave in the islands thimselves, let alone bein’ spiritual father av the same,” smiled the priest. “Howandiver, there’s no harrum in tryin’ to belave, an’ so here goes for the exparimint. If ye’ll kape silence a bit, I’ll jist collect me moind on the subject, an’ we’ll see what happens.”

For a moment the gray, piggish eyes of the Father, and the black, gleaming, mysterious orbs of his visitor were fixed upon each other. In the next moment Heller, bowing with a ceremonious air of respect, inquired, “What are your commands, my lord bishop?”

Startled by a consciousness of some wonderful change, doubtful in what land he was, or even in what age of the world, Father Higgins stared about him in expectation. A sunny shore, scattered groves of cocoa-nut trees, distant villages of circular huts, beyond them far-stretching forests and a smoking volcano; on the hither side bays alive

with carved and painted canoes, near at hand a gathering crowd of half-naked savages —such were the objects that filled his vision.

“So this is me diocese,” he said, without feeling the least surprise. “Well, the climate is deloightful. Let us hope that the coky-nuts will agree wid us, an’ that the natives won’t urge upon us the blissins av martyrdom. Professor, what may be the spiritual condition av things hereaway, do ye think?”

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“A clear field—not a convert yet. Your predecessor, who went through the office of being eaten a year ago, had not even learned the language.”

“The blissid saints watch over us! To hear the likes av that, whin I expected to be a god, like, among these wretches! Well, it’s our duty we must do, Heller; we mustn’t run away from our post; indade, we can’t. Moreover, I feel a sthrong confidence that the howly Catholic Church is to be greatly glorified by me on these islands. What do ye say now to meself exhibitin’ the gift av miracles an’ tongues? If I should discoorse to these cannebals in their own contimptible language, would it surprise ye, Heller?”

“No,” smiled the professor. “I have seen greater marvels in my time. I have seen men preach not merely words, but feelings and faiths, that they were ignorant of.”

Father Higgins, closely followed by Heller, now advanced to a green hillock, a few rods from the shelly and pebbly beach, knelt down upon the thin sward, and repeated a prayer. Meantime the population gathered; behind them canoe after canoe touched the shore; before them there was a swift, tumultuous hurrying from the villages; presently they were surrounded by a compact, eager, barbaric multitude. The babble of its wonder turned to silence as the priest rose, extended his fat hands, and commenced a sermon.

Father Higgins was not a bit astonished at hearing himself pour forth a torrent of words which he did not understand, nor at seeing in the faces of his wild listeners that they perfectly comprehended his discourse. It was merely a supernatural inspiration; it was but another exhibition of the heavenly gifts of the Church; he was as much at his ease as if he had been in the habit of working miracles from his cradle. At the close of his harangue he took out his breviary, and translated a prayer into the unknown tongue. Evidently the auditors understood this also, for while some crouched to earth in undisguisable terror, others looked upward as if expecting an answer from the sky.

Presently a savage, in a many-colored robe of feathers, stepped in front of the multitude, and uttered a few sentences.

“It’s a mighty quare providence that this miracle works ownly wan way,” observed Father Higgins to Heller. “It’s meself can prache acceptably to this poor haythin, an’ it’s meself, loikewise, can’t sense a blissid word he gabbles.”

“He is comparing you with your predecessor,” exclaimed the professor. “He says the other man called himself a messenger from God; but as he could not talk Feejee, they saw that he was a liar, because God knows every language; and so, having found him a liar, they fattened him with fish and cocoa-nuts, and ate him. As for you, they admit that you are a heavenly personage, and they mean to worship you.”

“How came ye to larn the language, annyway?” demanded the priest.

“I have wandered to and fro in the earth a good deal,” replied Heller. “I have performed some of my best black-art in these islands.”

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Father Higgins, rather bothered by these statements, was about to ask further questions, when he was seized by four sturdy natives, who mounted him upon their naked shoulders, while four others uplifted the professor in like manner, all then setting off rapidly toward the village, followed by the whole crowd in procession.

“An’ what if I should tell ye I had conscientious scruples agenst lettin’ meself be adored for a heavenly personage?” objected the good Father.

“Don’t think of it,” counselled Heller. “Being worshipped is infinitely more agreeable than being eaten. Besides, consider the interests of the Church. If you are set up as a god, you can use the position to sprinkle holy water on your adorers, and so convert the whole island without trouble.”

“Sure y’ are mighty well varsed in the precepts and customs av the Jesuit Fathers,” answered the priest, with a stare of wonder and admiration. “I moind me now that the missionaries in Chaynee baptized lashins av haythin babies under pretinse av rubbin’ um with medicine. An’ it’s a maxim that whin the ind is salvatory, the manes are justified. It’s a maxim, also, that y’ ave no business to lead yer felly-crachurs into sin. Now cannebalism is a sin; it ud be a sin capital for these fellies to ate us; an’, av coorse, it follies that it ud be a sin in me to timpt um to do it. But, by sufferin’ meself to be worshipped I prevint that same. So, I advise an’ counsel, Heller, that we go on as we are for a bit longer, until a proper time comes to expose the whole av the thrue faith.”

Beguiling the way with such like discourse, Father Higgins journeyed on to the nearest village, where his bearers halted before an unusually large hut, evidently serving as a temple. In the door of this building the principal chief took post, and waving his hand toward the crowd, made the following speech:

“Hear, O chiefs! hear, O priests of our religion ye men of Feejee, hear! The god who can come over the waters is greater than the god who can only abide upon the land, and shall have his house and his sacrifices. Whosoever disapproves of this, let him offer himself for the trial of the sacred poison; if he is not ready so to do, let him hereafter hold his peace and submit.”

No one objecting, the chief beckoned the bearers to follow him, and led the way into the temple. Mounting a platform eight or ten feet high, he advanced to an ugly scarecrow of an idol, slapped it, kicked it, and toppled it to the ground. Then, with vast labor and much joyful shouting, the ponderous form of Father Higgins was hoisted aloft, and installed in the seat of the dethroned deity. Next Professor Heller was set down upon his feet beside an altar which stood in front of the platform.

“What are ye afther doin’, Heller?” inquired the clergyman from his eminence.

“I am about to sacrifice to your divinity two green cocoa-nuts, two roasted bread-fruit, and half a dozen fishes,” was the answer.

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“Well, I suppose it must be permitted,” sighed Father Higgins. “Go on wid yer sacrifice, me dear felly. I presume, av coorse, that it will be in ordher for me to ate some av it. Let the fishes be well cooked, by-the-way, and sarved wid some kind av sauce. I’d almost as lave be devoured meself as devour raw fishes.”

“Really, I have some scruples,” smiled the mischievous professor. “You might shock the devotional feelings of your new worshippers.”

“I insist upon it, Heller. I tell ye I won’t ate raw fishes to convart a continent av haythins, much less a little bit island av ’um.”

The fish being promptly broiled on the coals of the altar, were handed up to Father Higgins on a large leaf, together with one of the cocoa-nuts and a bread-fruit. The worthy man immediately proceeded to make a hearty meal, vastly to the delight and confirmation in the faith of his worshippers, they having never before been blessed with a god who could fairly and squarely eat his dinner. After another brief speech from the chief, and a benediction from the padre, the multitude dispersed.

“Is it me unavoidable duty to live on this perch, Heller?” demanded Father Higgins. “Me opinion is that in that case I shall get mightily tired av me mission. I’d about as lave be a parrot, an’ sit in a tin ring.”

“My dear Father, remember that blessed saint who roosted for twenty years on the top of a pillar,” urged the professor. “Stay where you are until you have got a firm grip on the faith of these cannibals.”

“Very good,” assented Higgins, with a yawn. “But get me a bucket of wather, me dear felly. Sure I must have some blessed an’ ready for use. The next time sarvice is conducted here I propose to sprinkle the worshippers. It’ll benefit um in more ways nor wan, if I’m a judge of ayther sowl or body.”

Such was the installation of Bishop Higgins, or, as the Feejeeans insisted upon considering him, Divinity Higgins, over the diocese of the Pacific.

There was something mysterious about the Cannibal Islands. Time flew like a bird there; the days seemed no more than minutes; they were coming, and they were gone. Events, emotions, changes of belief, transformations of character, succeeded each other with magical rapidity. Every thing was transacted at the wildest speed of dreams; and yet, what was strangest of all, every thing went smoothly and naturally; nothing excited astonishment. In a few days, or a few seconds, whatever the period of time might have been, Father Higgins enjoyed being Divinity Higgins.

“I think it best for the eventual spiritual interests av me paple that they should continue to worship me for a while longer,” he said to Heller. “Human nature in a savage state,

ye see, wont go at wan jump from a log av wood to the thrue Deity. I'm playin' the part av a steppin'-stone betwixt the two. Afther they've larned to lift their sowls to Higgins, they'll be able to go a bit higher, say to the saints first, an' thin to the blissid Vargin, an' so on, wan step at a time, till they've got the whole av it. But it'll be mortial slow, I'm doubtin'. I may have to bear an' forbear as I am for an intire gineration av the poor crachurs."

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“Certainly,” assented the professor. “Nothing so injurious to weak eyes as too much light.”

“Y’ ‘ave put it in a nutshell,” replied the priest. “Sure an’ that’s the rason we’re opposed to gineral schoolin’, an’ to readin’ the Bible to the children. Y’ are a masther mind, Heller, an’ ought to been in howly ordhers. An’ that brings me to another idee av high importince. There should be somebody to run about with howly wather an’ exthrame unction, an’ the like. Now that business wouldn’t shuit me pheesical conformation, an’ nayther would it shuit the character I have to bear. It’s betther that you should do the outside trampin’, Heller. Ye know the tradditions an’ docthrines av the Church well enough, an’ y’ are a dab at Latin. As for yer not bein’ av the prastely office, I’ll jist lay hands on ye an’ qualify ye for the same. If it happens to be a bit irregular, why, the ind justifies the manes, ye remimber, or the ancient Fathers are all wrong, which is onpossible. An’ now, Heller, do tell these poor, benighted, lazy loons that I must have me coky-nuts fresh, an’ as great a variety av fish as can be procured in these wathers. The chap that preshumes to bring me an owld coky-nut I’ll curse his basket an’ his shtore.”

After a brief missionary effort, Heller reported that the whole population of the island, barring a few obstinate seniors, had been baptized.

“That’s well, me son,” replied Father Higgins. “I s’pose y’ ’ave done it rather on the wholesale, sprinklin’ a hundred or so at a fling, but I’ve no doubt y’ ‘ave done it the best ye could in the time y’ ’ave had; and surely it’s a great work, no matter how done. As for the apostates—I mane the fellows that stick to their owld haythinism—it might be well to make an example av a few av thim, jist for the encouragemint av the faithful. Suppose ye should organize an inquisition, or howly office, Heller, an’ conduct the proceedin’s yerself intirely, be way av seein’ that they are regular an’ effective? Y’ are parfectly able for it, wid your knowledge av Church history.”

It was not long before Heller was able to state that all the old fogies and silver-grays who remained alive had been converted.

“Ah, but isn’t that blissid news!” responded Father Higgins, joyfully. “An’ wouldn’t me brethren, the other bishops, be glad to hear that same concernin’ their dioceses! That’s betther nor coky-nuts—of which, be-the-way, I’m gettin’ a bit tired. I wondher, Heller, if some av these other islands wouldn’t furnish us a change of diet? If we could find pataties an’ grapes, it ud be a blessin’ to body an’ sowl. Surely it ud be a good deed to bring all this archypilago into the thrue faith. Couldn’t the chafe, now, take an army out in his doubled-barrelled canoes, an’ commince the work av convarsion? Tell him if he’ll do that same, I’ll grant him all the indulgences he can think av.”

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Another magical moment of these lightning-like days brought about important events. With an armament of scores of canoes and hundreds of warriors the chief invaded a large island, and was beaten in a bloody battle by its painim inhabitants, escaping with but a remnant of his followers. Then came a counter invasion. The worshippers of Father Higgins fought for their deity under his eye; the unbelievers were defeated and driven with great slaughter to their dug-outs. But as the hostile fleet still held command of the sea and hovered menacingly off the coast, keeping the faithful under arms and preventing them from fishing, the good Father decided that peace was necessary.

“This livin’ on coky-nuts and bread-fruits intirely is bad for the stomich, Heller,” he observed. “We must come to an ondherstandin’ wid these raskilly infidels an’ idolaters. See if ye can’t make tarms wid um.”

The adroit Heller soon arranged a secret treaty with the enemy to the following effect: Their chief, Umbaho, was to be universal king and his orthodox rival, Patoo-patoo, was to be beheaded; polygamy, cannibalism, and the use of the sacred poison were to continue in force; both islands were to adore Father Higgins and bring him sacrifices.

“Seems to me they’re mighty sevare tarms,” commented the Father. “I’d ’a been glad to get howld av a bit av timporal sovereighnty, don’t you see? Moreover, I’m sorry about that poor divil, Patoo-patoo; he was my first convart. Annyway, I’ll give um full absolution, so that death can’t hurt um sariously, an’ I’ll canonize him as a martyr. Saint Patoo-patoo! If that don’t satisfy um, an’ if he ain’t willin’ to die for the extinsion av the faith, he’s no thrue belayver, and desarves no pity. So jist see to gettin’ um off aisy.”

After another brief period of time, such as periods of time were in these mysterious islands, Father Higgins found himself the acknowledged divinity of the whole archipelago.

“This cannebalism an’ polygamy an’ the like greatly distresses me, however,” he confessed to Heller. “Be moments I’m timpted to unfold the naked truth, an’ bring these paple square up to the canons of the Church at wanst. But it ud be risky. We read av times, ye know, Heller, that God winked at. No doubt it’s me duty, as a divinity, to go on winkin’ at these polygamies an’ cannebalisms a bit longer. Slow an’ aisy is me motto, an’ I’ve noticed it’s the way of Providence mostly. Sure it was so at home in Sableburg, ye know, Heller; we didn’t average a convart in twinty years.”

Now ensued an event which troubled the holy Father more than any thing that had yet occurred during his episcopate. Two German priests, Heller informed him, had landed on one of the islands of the archipelago, and were preaching the pure doctrines of the Christian faith, denouncing cannibalism and polygamy, and otherwise sapping the established religion.

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“Some av the New Catholics, I’ll warrant ye!” exclaimed Higgins, indignantly. “Some of thim blatherskites av the Doellinger school, come over here to stir up sedition in the Church, as though they hadn’t made worry enough in the owld counthries. An’ what business has Dutchmen here, annyway, whin an Irishman has begun the good worrk? They’ve no right to take the labor of convartin’ these haythins out of me hands that a-way. Me conscience won’t allow me to permit such distarbances an’ innovations. See if ye can’t get um to lave the islands peaceable, Heller. If they won’t, I shall have to let Umbaho settle wid um afther his fashion.”

An embassy to the missionaries having obtained from them no other response than that they would welcome martyrdom rather than relinquish their labors, Umbaho was dispatched against them at the head of a sufficient army, with instructions to treat them as enemies of Feejee and of the unity of the Church.

But instead of slaughtering the missionaries, Umbaho was converted by them. He renounced cannibalism, polygamy, and the sacred poison; he denied Father Higgins. Accompanied by one of the Germans, he returned to Feejee at the head of his army, bent on establishing the true Christian faith.

“We must press a lot av min, an’ beat um,” responded the good Father, when Heller informed him of the approach and purposes of the chief. “Tell the faithful to give no quarter; tell um to desthroy ivery wan of these schismatics; an’ as for the Dutchman, burrn him at the stake, as they used to do in the good owld times.”

A great battle ensued; the adherents of Higginsism were defeated and dispersed; the door of the temple opened to Umbaho and the German. Father Higgins, by this time a helpless mass of fat, swaying perilously on his unsteady platform, looked down upon them with terror through the smoke of his altar.

“Sacrilegious wretch!” cried the German, God has put an end to thy mad and selfish and wicked dominion.”

“I wish I had niver been a biship!” screamed Father Higgins at the top of his voice, as he rolled off the platform.

All the way from the Cannibal Islands he fell and tumbled and dropped, until, with a dull thump, he alighted upon the floor of his own study.

“There! y’ ’ave rolled out av yer chair agen, Father Higgins,” said his housekeeper, who at that moment entered the room to order him to bed, as was her merciful custom.

“So I have,” returned the Father, picking himself up. “An’ sarved me right, too. I thought I was the biggest raskil on the face av the earth. I wondher if it’s true. The Lord

presarve me from the timptation av great power, or I'll abuse it, an' abuse me felly-men and the Church!"—*Harper's Magazine*, May, 1872.

JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE.

(BORN, 1827.)

* * * * *

FRED TROVER'S LITTLE IRON-CLAD.

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Did I never tell you the story? Is it possible? Draw up your chair.
Stick of wood, Harry. Smoke?

You've heard of my Uncle Popworth, though. Why, yes! You've seen him;—the eminently respectable elderly gentleman who came one day last summer just as you were going; book under his arm, you remember; weed on his hat; dry smile on bland countenance; tall, lank individual in very seedy black. With him my tale begins; for if I had never indulged in an Uncle Popworth I should never have sported an Iron-Clad.

Quite right, sir; his arrival *was* a surprise to me. To know how great a surprise, you must understand why I left city, friends, business, and settled down in this quiet village. It was chiefly, sir, to escape the fascinations of that worthy old gentleman that I bought this place, and took refuge here with my wife and little ones. Here we had respite, respite and nepenthe from our memories of Uncle Popworth; here we used to sit down in the evening and talk of the past with grateful and tranquil emotions, as people speak of awful things endured in days that are no more. To us the height of human happiness was raising green corn and strawberries, in a retired neighborhood where uncles were unknown. But, sir, when that Phantom, that Vampire, that Fate, loomed before my vision that day, if you had said, "Trover, I'll give ye sixpence for this neat little box of yours," I should have said, "Done!" with the trifling proviso that you should take my uncle in the bargain.

The matter with him? What indeed could invest human flesh with such terrors,—what but this? he was—he is—let me shriek it in your ear—a bore—a BORE! of the most malignant type; an intolerable, terrible, unmitigated BORE!

That book under his arm was a volume of his own sermons;—nine hundred and ninety-nine octavo pages, O Heaven! It wasn't enough for him to preach and re-preach those appalling discourses, but then the ruthless man must go and print 'em! When I consider what booksellers—worthy men, no doubt, many of them, deserving well of their kind—-he must have talked nearly into a state of syncope before ever he found one to give way, in a moment of weakness, of utter exhaustion and despair, and consent to publish him; and when I reflect what numbers of inoffensive persons, in the quiet walks of life, have been made to suffer the infliction of that Bore's Own Book, I pause, I stand aghast at the inscrutability of Divine Providence.

Don't think me profane, and don't for a moment imagine I underrate the function of the preacher. There's nothing better than a good sermon,—one that puts new life into you. But what of a sermon that takes life out of you? instead of a spiritual fountain, a spiritual sponge that absorbs your powers of body and soul, so that the longer you listen the more you are impoverished? A merely poor sermon isn't so bad; you will find, if you are the right kind of a hearer, that it will suggest something

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better than itself; a good hen will lay to a bit of earthen. But the discourse of your ministerial vampire, fastening by some mystical process upon the hearer who has life of his own,—though not every one has that,—sucks and sucks and sucks; and he is exhausted while the preacher is refreshed. So it happens that your born bore is never weary of his own boring; he thrives upon it; while he seems to be giving, he is mysteriously taking in—he is drinking your blood.

But you say nobody is obliged to *read* a sermon. O my unsophisticated friend! if a man will put his thoughts—or his words, if thoughts are lacking—between covers,—spread his banquet, and respectfully invite Public Taste to partake of it, Public Taste being free to decline, then your observation is sound. If an author quietly buries himself in his book,—very good! hic jacet; peace to his ashes!

> "The times have been,
> That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
> And there an end; but now they rise again,"

as Macbeth observes, with some confusion of syntax, excusable in a person of his circumstances. Now, suppose they—or he—the man whose brains are out—goes about with his coffin under his arm, like my worthy uncle? and suppose he blandly, politely, relentlessly insists upon reading to you, out of that octavo sarcophagus, passages which in his opinion prove that he is not only not dead, but immortal? If such a man be a stranger, snub him; if a casual acquaintance, met in an evil hour, there is still hope,—doors have locks, and there are two sides to a street, and nearsightedness is a blessing, and (as a last resort) buttons may be sacrificed (you remember Lamb's story of Coleridge), and left in the clutch of the fatal fingers. But one of your own kindred, and very respectable, adding the claim of misfortune to his other claims upon you,—pachydermatous to slights, smilingly persuasive, gently persistent,—as imperturbable as a ship's wooden figurehead through all the ups and downs of the voyage of life, and as insensible to cold water;—in short, an uncle like my uncle, whom there was no getting rid of;—what the deuce would you do?

Exactly; run away as I did. There was nothing else to be done, unless, indeed, I had throttled the old gentleman; in which case I am confident that one of our modern model juries would have brought in the popular verdict of justifiable insanity. But, being a peaceable man, I was averse to extreme measures. So I did the next best thing,—-consulted my wife, and retired to this village.

Then consider the shock to my feelings when I looked up that day and saw the enemy of our peace stalking into our little Paradise with his book under his arm and his carpet-bag in his hand! coming with his sermons and his shirts, prepared to stay a week—that

is to say a year—that is to say forever, if we would suffer him,—and how was he to be hindered by any desperate measures short of burning the house down!

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“My dear nephew!” says he, striding toward me with eager steps, as you perhaps remember, smiling his eternally dry, leathery smile,—“Nephew Frederick!”—and he held out both hands to me, book in one and bag in t’other,—“I am rejoiced! One would almost think you had tried to hide away from your old uncle! for I’ve been three days hunting you up. And how is Dolly? she ought to be glad to see me, after all the trouble I’ve had in finding you! And, Nephew Frederick!—h’m!—can you lend me three dollars for the hackman? for I don’t happen to have—thank you! I should have been saved this if you had only known I was stopping last night at a public house in the next village, for I know how delighted you would have been to drive over and fetch me!”

If you were not already out of hearing, you may have noticed that I made no reply to this affecting speech. The old gentleman has grown quite deaf of late years,—an infirmity which was once a source of untold misery to his friends, to whom he was constantly appealing for their opinions, which they were obliged to shout in his ear. But now, happily, the world has about ceased responding to him, and he has almost ceased to expect responses from the world. He just catches your eye, and, when he says, “Don’t you think so, sir?” or, “What is your opinion, sir?” an approving nod does your business.

The hackman paid, my dear uncle accompanied me to the house, unfolding the catalogue of his woes by the way. For he is one of those worthy, unoffending persons, whom an ungrateful world jostles and tramples upon,—whom unmerciful disaster follows fast and follows faster. In his younger days, he was settled over I don’t know how many different parishes; but secret enmity pursued him everywhere, poisoning the parochial mind against him, and driving him relentlessly from place to place. Then he relapsed into agencies, and went through a long list of them, each terminating in flat failure, to his ever-recurring surprise,—the simple old soul never suspecting, to this day, who his one great, tireless, terrible enemy is!

I got him into the library, and went to talk over this unexpected visit—or visitation—with Dolly. She bore up under it more cheerfully than could have been expected,—-suppressed a sigh,—and said she would go down and meet him. She received him with a hospitable smile (I verily believe that more of the world’s hypocrisy proceeds from too much good-nature than from too little), and listened patiently to his explanations.

“You will observe that I have brought my bag,” says he, “for I knew you wouldn’t let me off for a day or two,—though I must positively leave in a week,—in two weeks, at the latest. I have brought my volume, too, for I am contemplating a new edition” (he is always contemplating a new edition, making that a pretext for lugging the book about with him), “and I wish to enjoy the advantages of your and Frederick’s criticism;—I anticipate some good, comfortable, old-time talks over the old book, Frederick!”

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We had invited some village friends to come in and eat strawberries and cream with us that afternoon; and the question arose, what should be done with the old gentleman? Harry, who is a lad of a rather lively fancy, coming in while we were taking advantage of his great uncle's deafness to discuss the subject in his presence, proposed a pleasant expedient. "Trot him out into the cornfield, introduce him to the scarecrow, and let him talk to that," says he, grinning up into the visitor's face, who grinned down at him, no doubt thinking what a wonderfully charming boy he was! If he were as blind as he is deaf, he might have been disposed of very comfortably in some such ingenious way;—-the scarecrow, or any other lay figure, might have served to engage him in one of his immortal monologues. As it was, the suggestion bore fruit later, as you will see.

While we were consulting—keeping up our scattering fire of small-arms under the old talker's heavy guns—our parish minister called,—old Doctor Wortleby, for whom we have a great liking and respect. Of course we had to introduce him to Uncle Popworth, —for they met face to face; and of course Uncle Popworth fastened at once upon the brother clergyman. Being my guest, Wortleby could do no less than listen to Popworth, who is my uncle. He listened with interest and sympathy for the first half-hour; and then continued listening for another half-hour, after his interest and sympathy were exhausted. Then, attempting to go, he got his hat, and sat with it in his hand half an hour longer. Then he stood half an hour on his poor old gouty feet, desperately edging toward the door.

"Ah, certainly," says he, with a weary smile, repeatedly endeavoring to break the spell that bound him. "I shall be most happy to hear the conclusion of your remarks at some future time" (even ministers can lie out of politeness); "but just now—"

"One word more, and I am done," cries my Uncle Popworth, for the fiftieth time; and Wortleby, in despair, sat down again.

Then our friends arrived.

Dolly and I, who had all the while been benevolently wishing Wortleby would go, and trying to help him off, now selfishly hoped he would remain and share our entertainment —and our Uncle Popworth.

"I ought to have gone two hours ago," he said, with a plaintive smile, in reply to our invitation; "but, really, I am feeling the need of a cup of tea" (and no wonder!) "and I think I will stay."

We cruelly wished that he might continue to engage my uncle in conversation; but that would have been too much to hope from the sublime endurance of a martyr,—if ever there was one more patient than he. Seeing the Lintons and the Greggs arrive, he craftily awaited his opportunity, and slipped off, to give them a turn on the gridiron. First Linton was secured; and you should have seen him roll his mute, appealing orbs, as he

settled helplessly down under the infliction. Suddenly he made a dash. “I am ignorant of these matters,” said he; “but Gregg understands them;—Gregg will talk with you.” But Gregg took refuge behind the ladies. The ladies receiving a hint from poor distressed Dolly, scattered. But no artifice availed against the dreadful man. Piazza, parlor, garden,—he ranged everywhere, and was sure to seize a victim.

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At last tea was ready, and we all went in. The Lintons and Greggs are people of the world, who would hardly have cared to wait for a blessing on such lovely heaps of strawberries and mugs of cream as they saw before them; but, there being two clergymen at the table, the ceremony was evidently expected. We were placidly seated; there was a hush, agreeably filled with the fragrance of the delicious fruit: even my uncle Popworth, from long habit, turned off his talk at that suggestive moment: when I did what I thought a shrewd thing. I knew too well my relative's long-windedness at his devotions, as at everything else (I wonder if Heaven itself isn't bored by such fellows!)—I had suffered, I had seen my guests suffer, too much from him already,—to think of deliberately yielding him a fearful advantage over us; so I coolly passed him by, and gave an expressive nod to the old Doctor.

Wortleby began; and I was congratulating myself on my adroit management of a delicate matter, when—conceive my consternation!—Popworth—not to speak it profanely—followed suit! The reverend egotist couldn't take in the possibility of anybody but himself being invited to say grace at our table, he being present;—he hadn't noticed my nod to the Doctor, and the Doctor's low, earnest voice didn't reach him;—and there, with one blessing going on one side of the table, he, as I said, pitched in on the other! His eyes shut, his hands spread over his plate, his elbows on the board, his head bowed, he took care that grace should abound with us for once! His mill started, I knew there was no stopping it, and I hoped Wortleby would desist. But he didn't know his man. He seemed to feel that he had the stroke-oar, and he pulled away manfully. As Popworth lifted up his loud, nasal voice, the old Doctor raised his voice, in the vain hope, I suppose, of making himself heard by his lusty competitor. If you have never had two blessings running opposition at your table, in the presence of invited guests, you can never imagine how astounding, how killingly ludicrous it was! I felt that both Linton and Gregg were ready to tumble over, each in an apoplexy of suppressed emotions; while I had recourse to my handkerchief to hide my tears. At length, poor Wortleby yielded to fate,—withdrew from the unequal contest—hauled off—for repairs; and the old seventy-two gun-ship thundered away in triumph.

At last (as there must be an end to everything under the sun) my uncle came to a close; and a moment of awful silence ensued, during which no man durst look at another. But in my weak and jelly-like condition I ventured a glance at him, and noticed that he looked up and around with an air of satisfaction at having performed a solemn duty in a becoming manner, blissfully unconscious of having run a poor brother off the track. Seeing us all with moist eyes and much affected,—two or three handkerchiefs still going,—he no doubt flattered himself that the pathetic touches in his prayer had told.

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This will give you some idea of the kind of man we had on our hands; and I won't risk making myself as great a bore as he is, by attempting a history of his stay with us; for I remember I set out to tell you about my little Iron-Clad. I'm coming to that.

Suffice it to say, he stayed—he *stayed*—he STAYED!—five mortal weeks; refusing to take hints when they almost became kicks; driving our friends from us, and ourselves almost to distraction; his misfortunes alone protecting him from a prompt and vigorous elimination: when a happy chance helped me to a solution of this awful problem of destiny.

More than once I had recalled Harry's vivacious suggestion of the scarecrow—if one could only have been invented that would sit composedly in a chair and nod when spoken to! I was wishing for some such automaton, to bear the brunt of the boring with which we were afflicted, when one day there came a little man into the garden, where I had taken refuge.

He was a short, swarthy, foreign-looking, diminutive, stiff, rather comical fellow,—little figure mostly head, little head mostly face, little face mostly nose, which was by no means little—a sort of human vegetable (to my horticultural eye) running marvellously to seed in that organ. The first thing I saw, on looking up at the sound of footsteps, was the said nose coming toward me, among the sweet-corn tassels. Nose of a decidedly Hebraic cast,—the bearer respectably dressed, though his linen had an unwholesome sallowness, and his cloth a shiny, much-brushed, second-hand appearance.

Without a word he walks up to me, bows solemnly, and pulls from his pocket (I thought he was laying his hand on his heart) the familiar, much-worn weapon of his class,—the folded, torn yellow paper, ready to fall to pieces as you open it,—in short, the respectable beggar's certificate of character. With another bow (which gave his nose the aspect of the beak of a bird of prey making a pick at me) he handed the document. I found that it was dated in Milwaukee, and signed by the mayor of that city, two physicians, three clergymen, and an editor, who bore united testimony to the fact that Jacob Menzel—I think that was his name—the bearer, any way,—was a deaf mute, and, considering that fact, a prodigy of learning, being master of no less than five different languages (a pathetic circumstance, considering that he was unable to speak one); moreover, that he was a converted Jew; and, furthermore, a native of Germany, who had come to this country in company with two brothers, both of whom had died of cholera in St. Louis in one day; in consequence of which affliction, and his recent conversion, he was now anxious to return to Fatherland, where he proposed to devote his life to the conversion of his brethren;—the upshot of all which was that good Christians and charitable souls everywhere were earnestly recommended to aid the said Jacob Menzel in his pious undertaking.

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I was fumbling in my pocket for a little change wherewith to dismiss him,—for that is usually the easiest way of getting off your premises and your conscience the applicant for “aid,” who is probably an impostor, yet possibly not,—when my eye caught the words (for I still held the document), “would be glad of any employment which may help to pay his way.” The idea of finding employment for a man of such a large nose and little body, such extensive knowledge and diminutive legs—who had mastered five languages yet could not speak or understand a word of any one of them,—struck me as rather pleasant, to say the least; yet, after a moment’s reflection,—wasn’t he the very thing I wanted, the manikin, the target for my uncle?

Meanwhile he was scribbling rapidly on a small slate he had taken from his pocket. With another bow (as if he had written something wrong and was going to wipe it out with his nose), he handed me the slate, on which I found written in a neat hand half-a-dozen lines in as many different languages,—English, Latin, Hebrew, German, French, Greek,—each, as far as I could make out, conveying the cheerful information that he could communicate with me in that particular tongue. I tried him in English, French, and Latin, and I must acknowledge that he stood the test; he then tried me In Greek and Hebrew, and I as freely confess that I didn’t stand the test. He smiled intelligently, nodded, and condescendingly returned to the English tongue, writing quickly,—“I am a poor exile from Fatherland, and I much need friends.”

I wrote: “You wish employment?” He replied: “I shall be much obliged for any service I shall be capable to do,”—and passed me the slate with a hopeful smile.

“What can you do?” I asked. He answered: “I copy the manuscripts, I translate from the one language to others with some perfect exactitude, I arrange the libraries, I make the catalogues, I am capable to be any secretary.” And he looked up as if he saw in my eyes a vast vista of catalogues, manuscripts, libraries, and Fatherland at the end of it.

“How would you like to be companion to a literary man?” I inquired.

He nodded expressively, and wrote: “I should that like overall. But I speak and hear not.”

“No matter,” I replied. “You will only have to sit and appear to listen, and nod occasionally.”

“You shall be the gentleman?” he asked with a bright, pleased look.

I explained to him that the gentleman was an unfortunate connection of my family, whom we could not regard as being quite in his right mind.

Jacob Menzel smiled, and touched his fore head interrogatively.

I nodded, adding on the slate,—“He is perfectly harmless; but he can only be kept quiet by having some person to talk and read to. He will talk and read to you. He must not know you are deaf. He is very deaf himself, and will not expect you to reply.” And, for a person wishing a light and easy employment, I recommended the situation.

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He wrote at once, “How much you pay?”

“One dollar a day, and board you,” I replied.

He of the nose nodded eagerly at that, and wrote, “Also you make to be washed my shirt?”

I agreed; and the bargain was closed. I got him into the house, and gave him a bath, a clean shirt, and complete instructions how to act.

The gravity with which he entered upon the situation was astonishing. He didn’t seem to taste the slightest flavor of a joke in it all. It was a simple matter of business; he saw in it only money and Fatherland.

Meanwhile I explained my intentions to Dolly, saying in great glee: “His deafness is his defence: the old three-decker may bang away at him; he is IRON-CLAD!” And that suggested the name we have called him by ever since.

When he was ready for action, I took him in tow, and ran him in to draw the Popworth’s fire—in other words, introduced him to my uncle in the library. The meeting of my tall, lank relative and the big-nosed little Jew was a spectacle to cure a hypochondriac! “Mr. Jacob Menzel—gentleman from Germany—travelling in this country,” I yelled in the old fellow’s ear. He of the diminutive legs and stupendous nose bowed with perfect decorum, and seated himself, stiff and erect, in the big chair I placed for him. The avuncular countenance lighted up: here were fresh woods and pastures new to that ancient shepherd. As for myself, I was wellnigh strangled by a cough which just then seized me, and obliged to retreat,—for I never was much of an actor, and the comedy of that first interview was overpowering.

As I passed the dining-room door, Dolly, who was behind it, gave my arm a fearful pinch, that answered, I supposed, in the place of a scream, as a safety-valve for her hysterical emotions. “O you cruel man—you miserable humbug!” says she; and went off into convulsions of laughter. The door was open, and we could see and hear every thing.

“You are travelling, h’m?” says my uncle. The nose nodded duly. “H’m! I have travelled, myself,” the old gentleman proceeded; “my life has been one of vicissitudes, h’m! I have journeyed, I have preached, I have published;—perhaps you have heard of my literary venture”—and over went the big volume to the little man, who took it, turned the leaves, and nodded and smiled, according to instructions.

“You are very kind to say so; thank you!” says my uncle, rubbing his husky hands with satisfaction. “Rejoiced to meet with you, truly! It is always a gratification to have an

intelligent and sympathizing brother to open one's mind to; it is especially refreshing to me, for, as I may say without egotism, my life and labors have *not* been appreciated."

From that the old interminable story took its start and flowed on, the faithful nose nodding assent at every turn in that winding stream.

The children came in for their share of the fun; and for the first time in our lives we took pleasure in the old gentleman's narration of his varied experiences.

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“O hear him! see him go it!” said Robbie. “What a nose!”

“Long may it wave!” said Harry.

With other remarks of a like genial nature; while there they sat, the two,—my uncle on one side, long, lathy, self-satisfied, gesticulating, earnestly laying his case before a grave jury of one, whom he was bound to convince, if time would allow; my little Jew facing him, upright in his chair, stiff, imperturbable, devoted to business, honorably earning his money, the nose in the air, immovable, except when it played duly up and down at fitting intervals: in which edifying employment I left them, and went about my business, a cheerier man.

Ah, what a relief it was to feel myself free for a season from the attacks of the enemy—-to know that my plucky little Iron-Clad was engaging him! In a hour I passed through the hall again, heard the loud blatant voice still discoursing (it had got as far as the difficulties with the second parish), and saw the unflinching nasal organ perform its graceful see-saw of assent. An hour later it was the same,—except that the speaker had arrived at the persecutions which drove him from parish number three. When I went to call them to dinner, the scene had changed a little, for now the old gentleman, pounding the table for a pulpit, was reading aloud passages from a powerful farewell sermon preached to his ungrateful parishioners. I was sorry I couldn’t give my man a hint to use his handkerchief at the affecting periods, for the nose can hardly be called a sympathetic feature (unless indeed you blow it), and these nods were becoming rather too mechanical, except when the old gentleman switched off on the argumentative track, as he frequently did. “What think you of that?” he would pause in his reading to inquire. “Isn’t that logic? isn’t that unanswerable?” In responding to which appeals nobody could have done better than my serious, my devoted, my lovely little Jew.

“Dinner!” I shouted over my uncle’s dickey. It was almost the only word that had the magic in it to rouse him from the feast of reason which his own conversation was to him. It was always easy to head him toward the dining-room—to steer him into port for necessary supplies. The little Iron-Clad followed in his wake. At table, the old gentleman resumed the account of his dealings with parish number three, and got on as far as negotiations with number four; occasionally stopping to eat his soup or roast-beef very fast; at which time Jacob Menzel, who was very much absorbed in his dinner, but never permitted himself to neglect business for pleasure, paused at the proper intervals, with his spoon or fork half-way to his mouth, and nodded,—just as if my uncle had been speaking,—yielding assent to his last remarks after mature consideration, no doubt the old gentleman thought.

The fun of the thing wore off after a while, and then we experienced the solid advantages of having an Iron-Clad in the house; Afternoon—evening—the next day—-my little man of business performed his function promptly and assiduously. But in the afternoon of the second day he began to change perceptibly. He wore an aspect of

languor and melancholy that alarmed me. The next morning he was pale, and went to his work with an air of sorrowful resignation.

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“He is thinking of Fatherland,” said the sympathizing Dolly; while Harry’s less refined but more sprightly comment was, that the nose had about played out.

Indeed it had almost ceased to wave; and I feared that I was about to lose a most valuable servant, whose place it would be impossible to fill. Accordingly I wrote on a slip of paper, which I sent in to him,”—

“You have done well, and I raise your salary to a dollar and a quarter a day. Your influence over our unfortunate relative is soothing and beneficial. Go on as you have begun,—continue in well-doing, and merit the lasting gratitude of an afflicted family.”

That seemed to cheer him a little—to wind him up, as Harry said, and set the pendulum swinging again. But it was not long before the listlessness and low spirits returned; Menzel showed a sad tendency to shirk his duty; and before noon there came a crash.

I was in the garden, when I heard a shriek of rage and despair, and saw the little Jew coming toward me with frantic gestures.

“I yielt! I abandone! I take my moneys and my shirt, and I go!” says he.

I stood in perfect astonishment at hearing the dumb speak; while he threw his arms wildly above his head, exclaiming:

“I am not teaf! I am not teaf! I am not teaf! He is one terreeble mon! He vill haf my life! So I go—I fly—I take my moneys and my shirt—I leafe him, I leafe your house! I vould earn honest living, but—Gott im himmel! dieu des dieux! all de devils!” he shrieked, mixing up several of his languages at once, in his violent mental agitation.

“Jacob Menzel!” said I, solemnly, “I little thought I was having to do with an impostor!”

“If I haf you deceive, I haf myself more dan punish!” was his reply. “Now I resign de position. I ask for de moneys and de shirt, and I part!”

Just then my uncle came up, amazed at his new friend’s sudden revolt and flight, and anxious to finish up with his seventh parish. “I vill hear no more of your six, of your seven,—I know not how many parish!” screamed the furious little Jew, turning on him.

“What means all this?” said my bewildered uncle.

“I tell you vat means it all!” the vindictive little impostor, tiptoeing up to him, yelled at his cheek. “I make not vell my affairs in your country; I vould return to Faderlant; for conwenience I carry dis pappeer. I come here; I am suppose teaf; I accept de position to be your companion, for if a man hear, you kill him tead soon vid your book and your ten, twenty parish! I hear! you kill me! and I go!”

And, having obtained his moneys and his shirt, he went. That is the last I ever saw of my little Iron-Clad. I remember him with gratitude, for he did me good service, and he had but one fault, namely, that he was *not* iron-clad!

As for my uncle, for the first time in his life, I think, he said never a word, but stalked into the house. Dolly soon came running out to ask what was the matter; Popworth was actually packing his carpet-bag! I called Andrew, and ordered him to be in readiness with the buggy to take the old gentleman over to the railroad.

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“What! going?” I cried, as my uncle presently appeared, bearing his book and his baggage.

“Nephew Frederick!” said he, “after this treatment, can you ask me if am going?”

“Really,” I shouted, “it is not my fault that the fellow proved an impostor. I employed him with the best of intentions, for your—and our—good!” “Nephew Frederick,” said he, “this is insufferable; you will regret it! I shall never—NEVER” (as if he had been pronouncing my doom)—“accept of your hospitalities again!”

He did, however, accept some money which I offered him, and likewise a seat in the buggy. I watched his departure with joy and terror,—for at any moment he might relent and stay nor was I at ease in my mind until I saw Andrew come riding back alone.

We have never seen the old gentleman since But last winter I received a letter from him he wrote in a forgiving tone, to inform me that he had been appointed chaplain in a prison, and to ask for a loan of money to buy a suit of clothes. I sent him fifty dollars and my congratulations. I consider him eminently qualified to fill the new situation. As a hardship he can’t be beat; and what are the rogues sent to prison for, but to suffer punishment?

Yes, it would be a joke if my little Iron-Clad should end his career of imposture in that public institution, and sit once more under my excellent uncle! But I can’t wish him any such misfortune. His mission to us was one of mercy. The place has been Paradise again, ever since his visit.—*Scribners Magazine*, August, 1873.

OLIVER BELL BUNCE.

(BORN, 1828.)

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MR. BLUFF DISCOURSES OF THE COUNTRY AND KINDRED THEMES.

(*In a Country Lane*.)

BACHELOR BLUFF. A LISTENER.

“The country,” exclaimed Mr. Bluff, with an air of candor and impartiality, “is, I admit, a very necessary and sometimes a very charming place. I thank Heaven for the country when I eat my first green peas, when the lettuce is crisp, when the potatoes are delicate and mealy, when the well-fed poultry comes to town, when the ruddy peach and the purple grape salute me at the fruit-stands. I love the country when I think of a mountain ramble; when I am disposed to wander with rod and reel along the forest-shadowed

brook; when the apple-orchards are in blossom; when the hills blaze with autumn foliage. But I protest against the dogmatism of rural people, who claim all the cardinal and all the remaining virtues for their rose-beds and cabbage-patches. The town, sir, bestows felicities higher in character than the country does; for men and women, and the works of men and women, are always worthier our love and concern than the rocks and the hills ...

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—“Oh, yes! I have heard before of the pleasures of the garden. Poets have sung, enthusiasts have written, and old men have dreamed of them since History began her chronicles. But have the *pains* of the garden ever been dwelt upon? Have people, now, been entirely honest in what they have said and written on this theme? When enthusiasts have told us of their prize pears, their early peas of supernatural tenderness, their asparagus, and their roses, and their strawberries, have they not hidden a good deal about their worm-eaten plums—about their cherries that were carried off by armies of burglarious birds; about their potatoes that proved watery and unpalatable; about their melons that fell victims to their neighbors’ fowls; about their peaches that succumbed to the unexpected raid of Jack Frost; about their grapes that fell under the blight of mildew; about their green corn that withered in the hill; about the mighty host of failures that, if all were told, would tower in high proportion above the few much blazoned successes?

“Who is it that says a garden is a standing source of pleasure? Amend this, I say, by asserting that a garden is a standing source of discomfort and vexation ... A hopeless restlessness, according to my observation, takes possession of every amateur gardener. Discontent abides in his soul. There is, indeed, so much to be done, changed, rearranged, watched, nursed, that the amateur gardener is really entitled to praise and generous congratulations when one of his thousand schemes comes to fruition. We ought in pity to rejoice with him over his big Lawton blackberries, and say nothing of the cherries, and the pears, and the peaches, that once were budding hopes, but have gone the way of Moore’s ‘dear gazelle.’ Then the large expenditures which were needed to bring about his triumph of the Lawtons. ‘Those potatoes,’ said an enthusiastic amateur gardener to me once, ’cost twenty-five cents apiece!’ And they were very good potatoes, too—almost equal to those that could be bought in market at a dollar a bushel.

“And then, amateur gardeners are feverishly addicted to early rising. Men with gardens are like those hard drinkers whose susceptibilities are hopelessly blunted. Who but a man diverted from the paths of honest feeling and natural enjoyment, possessed of a demoniac mania, lost to the peace and serenity of the virtuous and the blessed, could find pleasure amid the damps, and dews, and chills, and raw-edgedness of a garden in the early morning, absolutely find pleasure in saturated trousers, in shoes swathed in moisture, in skies that are gray and gloomy, in flowers that are, as Mantalini would put it, ’demnition moist’? The thing is incredible! Now, a garden, after the sun has dried the paths, warmed the air, absorbed the dew, is admissible. But a possession that compels an early turning out into fogs and discomforts deserves for this fact alone the anathema of all rational beings.

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“I really believe, sir, that the literature of the garden, so abundant everywhere, is written in the interest of suburban land-owners. The inviting one-sided picture so persistently held up is only a covert bit of advertising, intended to seduce away happy cockneys of the town—men supremely contented with their attics, their promenades in Fifth Avenue, their visits to Central Park, where all is arranged for them without their labor or concern, their evenings at the music gardens, their soft morning slumbers, which know no dreadful chills and dews! How could a back-ache over the pea-bed compensate for these felicities? How could sour cherries, or half-ripe strawberries, or wet rosebuds, even if they do come from one’s own garden, reward him for the lose of the ease and the serene conscience of one who sings merrily in the streets, and cares not whether worms burrow, whether suns burn, whether birds steal, whether winds overturn, whether droughts destroy, whether floods drown, whether gardens flourish, or not?”—*Bachelor Bluff: his Opinions, Sentiments, and Disputations*.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

(BORN, 1829.)

* * * * *

GARDEN ETHICS.

I believe that I have found, if not original sin, at least vegetable total depravity in my garden; and it was there before I went into it. It is the bunch-, or joint-, or snake-grass, —whatever it is called. As I do not know the names of all the weeds and plants, I have to do as Adam did in his garden,—name things as I find them. This grass has a slender, beautiful stalk: and when you cut it down, or pull up a long root of it, you fancy it is got rid of; but in a day or two it will come up in the same spot in half a dozen vigorous blades. Cutting down and pulling up is what it thrives on. Extermination rather helps it. If you follow a slender white root, it will be found to run under the ground until it meets another slender white root; and you will soon unearth a network of them, with a knot somewhere, sending out dozens of sharp-pointed, healthy shoots, every joint prepared to be an independent life and plant. The only way to deal with it is to take one part hoe and two parts fingers, and carefully dig it out, not leaving a joint anywhere. It will take a little time, say all summer, to dig out thoroughly a small patch; but if you once dig it out, and keep it out, you will have no further trouble.

I have said it was total depravity. Here it is. If you attempt to pull up and root out sin in you, which shows on the surface,—if it does not show, you do not care for it,—you may have noticed how it runs into an interior network of sins, and an ever-sprouting branch of these roots somewhere; and that you cannot pull out one without making a general internal disturbance, and rooting up your whole being. I suppose it is less trouble to quietly cut them off at the top—say once a week, on Sunday, when you put on your

religious clothes and face,—so that no one will see them, and not try to eradicate the network within.

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Remark.—This moral vegetable figure is at the service of any clergyman who will have the manliness to come forward and help me at a day's hoeing on my potatoes. None but the orthodox need apply.

I, however, believe in the intellectual, if not the moral, qualities of vegetables, and especially weeds. There was a worthless vine that (or who) started up about midway between a grape-trellis and a row of bean-poles, some three feet from each, but a little nearer the trellis. When it came out of the ground, it looked around to see what it should do. The trellis was already occupied. The bean-pole was empty. There was evidently the a little best chance of light, air, and sole proprietorship on the pole. And the vine started for the pole, and began to climb it with determination. Here was as distinct an act of choice, of reason, as a boy exercises when he goes into a forest, and, looking about, decides which tree he will climb. And, besides, how did the vine know enough to travel in exactly the right direction, three feet, to find what it wanted? This is intellect. The weeds, on the other hand, have hateful moral qualities. To cut down a weed is, therefore, to do a moral action. I feel as if I were destroying a sin. My hoe becomes an instrument of retributive justice. I am an apostle of nature. This view of the matter lends a dignity to the art of hoeing which nothing else does, and lifts it into the region of ethics. Hoeing becomes, not a pastime, but a duty. And you get to regard it so, as the days and the weeds lengthen.

Observation.—Nevertheless, what a man needs in gardening is a cast-iron back, with a hinge in it. The hoe is an ingenious instrument, calculated to call out a great deal of strength at a great disadvantage.

The striped bug has come, the saddest of the year. He is a moral double-ender, iron-clad at that. He is unpleasant in two ways. He burrows in the ground so that you cannot find him, and he flies away so that you cannot catch him. He is rather handsome, as bugs go, but utterly dastardly, in that he gnaws the stem of the plant close to the ground, and ruins it without any apparent advantage to himself. I find him on the hills of cucumbers (perhaps it will be a cholera-year, and we shall not want any), the squashes (small loss), and the melons (which never ripen). The best way to deal with the striped bug is to sit down by the hills, and patiently watch for him. If you are spry, you can annoy him. This, however, takes time. It takes all day and part of the night. For he flieth in the darkness, and wasteth at noonday. If you get up before the dew is off the plants,—it goes off very early,—you can sprinkle soot on the plant (soot is my panacea: if I can get the disease of a plant reduced to the necessity of soot, I am all right); and soot is unpleasant to the bug. But the best thing to do is set a toad to catch the bugs. The toad at once establishes the most intimate relations

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with the bug. It is a pleasure to see such unity among the lower animals. The difficulty is to make the toad stay and watch the hill. If you know your toad, it is all right. If you do not, you must build a tight fence round the plants, which the toad cannot jump over. This, however, introduces a new element. I find that I have a zoological garden on my hands. It is an unexpected result of my little enterprise, which never aspired to the completeness of the Paris "Jardin des Plantes."—*My Summer in a Garden*.

THE PLUMBER.

Speaking of the philosophical temper, there is no class of men whose society is to be more desired for this quality than that of plumbers! They are the most agreeable men I know; and the boys in the business begin to be agreeable very early. I suspect the secret of it is, that they are agreeable by the hour. In the driest days, my fountain became disabled: the pipe was stopped up. A couple of plumbers, with the implements of their craft, came out to view the situation. There was a good deal of difference of opinion about where the stoppage was. I found the plumbers perfectly willing to sit down and talk about it,—talk by the hour. Some of their guesses and remarks were exceedingly ingenious; and their general observations on other subjects were excellent in their way, and could hardly have been better if they had been made by the job. The work dragged a little,—as it is apt to do by the hour. The plumbers had occasion to make me several visits. Sometimes they would find, upon arrival, that they had forgotten some indispensable tool; and one would go back to the shop, a mile and a half, after it; and his comrade would await his return with the most exemplary patience, and sit down and talk,—always by the hour. I do not know but it is a habit to have something wanted at the shop. They seemed to me very good workmen, and always willing to stop and talk about the job, or any thing else, when I went near them. Nor had they any of that impetuous hurry that is said to be the bane of our American civilization. To their credit be it said, that I never observed any thing of it in them. They can afford to wait. Two of them will sometimes wait nearly half a day while a comrade goes for a tool. They are patient and philosophical. It is a great pleasure to meet such men. One only wishes there was some work he could do for *them* by the hour. There ought to be reciprocity. I think they have very nearly solved the problem of Life: it is to work for other people, never for yourself, and get your pay by the hour. You then have no anxiety, and little work. If you do things by the job, you are perpetually driven: the hours are scourges. If you work by the hour, you gently sail on the stream of Time, which is always bearing you on to the haven of Pay, whether you make any effort or not. Working by the hour tends to make one moral. A plumber working by the job, trying to unscrew a rusty, refractory nut, in a cramped position, where the tongs continually slipped off, would swear; but I never heard one of them swear, or exhibit the least impatience at such a vexation, working by the hour. Nothing can move a man who

is paid by the hour. How sweet the flight of time seems to his calm mind!—*My Summer in a Garden*.

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FRANCES LEE PRATT.

(BORN, 1830.)

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CAPTAIN BEN'S CHOICE.

An old red house on a rocky shore, with a fisherman's blue boat rocking on the bay, and two white sails glistening far away over the water. Above, the blue, shining sky; and below, the blue shining sea.

"It seems clever to have a pleasant day," said Mrs. Davids, sighing.

Mrs. Davids said every thing with a sigh, and now she wiped her eyes also on her calico apron. She was a woman with a complexion like faded sea-weed, who seemed always pitying herself.

"I tell them," said she, "I have had real hard luck. My husband is buried away off in California, and my son died in the army, and he is buried away down South. Neither one of them is buried together."

Then she sighed again. Twice, this time.

"And so," she continued, taking out a pinch of bayberry snuff, "I am left alone in the world. *Alone*, I say! why, I've got a daughter, but she is away out West. She is married to an engineer-man. And I've got two grandchildren."

Mrs. Davids took the pinch of bayberry and shook her head, looking as though that was the "hardest luck" of all.

"Well, everybody has to have their pesters, and you'll have to take yours," rejoined Miss Persis Tame, taking a pinch of snuff—the real Maccaboy—twice as large, with twice as fierce an action. "I don't know what it is to bury children, nor to lose a husband; I s'pose I don't; but I know what it is to be jammed round the world and not have a ruff to stick my head under. I wish I had all the money I ever spent travelling,—and *that's* twelve dollars," she continued, regretfully.

"Why in the world don't you marry and have a home of your own," sighed Mrs. Davids.

"Well, I don't *expect* to marry. I don't know as I do at my time of life," responded the spinster. "I rather guess my day for chances is gone by."

“You ain’t such a dreadful sight older than I am, though,” replied Mrs. Davids, reflectively.

“Not so old by two full years,” returned Miss Tame, taking another smart pinch of snuff, as though it touched the empty spot in her heart and did it good. “But *you* ain’t looking out for opportunities yet, I suppose.”

Mrs. Davids sighed, evasively. “We can’t tell what is before us. There is more than one man in want of a wife.”

As though to point her words, Captain Ben Lundy came in sight on the beach, his head a long way forward and his shambling feet trying in vain to keep up.

“Thirteen months and a half since Lyddy was buried,” continued Mrs. Davids, accepting this application to her words, “and there is Captain Ben taking up with just what housekeeper he can get, and *no* housekeeper at all. It would be an excellent home for you, Persis. Captain Ben always had the name of making a kind husband.”

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She sighed again, whether from regret for the bereaved man, or for the multitude of women bereft of such a husband.

By this time Captain Ben's head was at the door.

"Morning!" said he, while his feet were coming up. "Quite an accident down here below the lighthouse last night. Schooner ran ashore in the blow and broke all up into kindling-wood in less than no time. Captain Tisdale's been out looking for dead bodies ever since daylight."

"I knowed it," sighed Mrs. Davids. "I heard a rushing sound sometime about the break of day that waked me out of a sound sleep, and I knowed then there was a spirit leaving its body. I heard it the night Davids went, or I expect I did. It must have been very nearly at that time."

"Well, I guess it wasn't a spirit, last night," said Captain Ben; "for as I was going on to say, after searching back and forth, Captain Tisdale came upon the folks, a man and a boy, rolled up in their wet blankets asleep behind the life-boat house. He said he felt like he could shake them for staying out in the wet. Wrecks always make for the lighthouse, so he s'posed those ones were drowned to death, sure enough."

"Oh, then it couldn't have been them, I was warned of!" returned Mrs. Davids, looking as though she regretted it. "It was right over my head, and I waked up just as the thing was rushing past. You haven't heard, have you," she continued, "whether or no there was any other damage done by the gale?"

"I don't know whether you would call it damage exactly," returned Captain Ben; "but Loizah Mullers got so scared she left me and went home. She said she couldn't stay and run the chance of another of our coast blows, and off she trapsed."

Mrs. Davids sighed like November. "So you have some hard luck as well as myself. I don't suppose you can *get* a housekeeper to keep her long," said she, dismally.

"Abel Grimes tells me it is enough sight easier getting wives than housekeepers, and I'm some of a mind to try that tack," replied Captain Ben, smiling grimly.

Mrs. Davids put up her hand to feel of her back hair, and smoothed down her apron; while Miss Persis Tame blushed like a withered rose, and turned her eyes modestly out of the window.

"I am *so*. But the difficulty is, who will it be? There are so many to select from it is fairly bothersome," continued Captain Ben, winking fast and looking as though he was made of dry corncobs and hay.

Miss Persis Tame turned about abruptly. "The land alive!" she ejaculated with such sudden emphasis that the dishes shook on their shelves and Captain Ben in his chair. "It makes me mad as a March hare to hear men go on as though all they'd got to do was to throw down their handkerchers to a woman, and, no matter who, she'd spring and run to pick it up. It is always 'Who will I marry?' and not 'Who will marry me?'"

"Why, there is twice the number of widders that there is of widderers here at the P'int. That was what was in my mind," said Captain Ben, in a tone of meek apology. "There is the Widow Keens, she that was Azubah Muchmore. I don't know but what she would do; Lyddy used to think every thing of her, and she is a first-rate of a housekeeper."

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“Perhaps so,” assented Mrs. Davids, dubiously. “But she is troubled a sight with the head complaint; I suppose you know she is. That is against her.”

“Yes,” assented Miss Tame. “The Muchmores all have weak heads. And, too, the Widow Keens, she’s had a fall lately. She was up in a chair cleaning her top buttery shelf, and somehow one of the chair-leg’s give way,—it was loose or something, I expect,—and down she went her whole heft. She keeps about, but she goes with two staves.”

“I want to know if that is so,” said Captain Ben, his honest soul warming with sudden sympathy. “The widder has seen a sight of trouble.”

“Yes, she has lived through a good deal, that woman has. I couldn’t live through so much, ’pears to me; but we don’t know what we can live through,” rejoined Miss Tame.

Captain Ben did not reply, but his ready feet began to move to and fro restlessly; for his heart, more ready yet, had already gone out toward the unfortunate widow.

“It is so bad for a woman to be alone,” said he to himself, shambling along the shingly beach a moment after. “Nobody to mend her chairs or split up her kindlings, or do a chore for her; and she lame into the bargain. It is *too* bad.”

“He has steered straight for the Widow Keens’s, as sure as A is apple-dumpling,” remarked Miss Persis, peering after him from the window.

“Well, I must admit I wouldn’t have thought of Captain Ben’s being en-a-mored after such a sickly piece of business. But men never know what they want. Won’t you just hand me that gum-cam-phyer bottle, now you are up? It is on that chest of drawers behind you.”

“No more they don’t,” returned Miss Tame, with a plaintive cadence, taking a sniff from the camphor-bottle on the way. “However, I don’t begrutch him to her,—I don’t know as I do. It will make her a good hum, though, if she concludes to make arrangements.”

Meantime, Captain Ben Lundy’s head was wellnigh to Mrs. Keens’s door, for it was situated only around the first sand-hill. She lived in a little bit of a house that looked as though it had been knocked together for a crockery-crate, in the first place, with two windows and a rude door thrown in as afterthoughts. In the rear of this house was another tiny building, something like a grown-up hen-coop; and this was where Mrs. Keens carried on the business bequeathed to her by her deceased husband, along with five small children, and one not so small. But, worse than that, one who was “not altogether there,” as the English say.

She was about this business now, dressed in a primitive sort of bloomer, with a wash-tub and clothes-ringer before her, and an army of bathing-suits of every kind and color flapping wildly in the fresh sea air at one side.

From a little farther on, mingling with the sound of the beating surf, came the merry voices of bathers,—boarders at the great hotels on the hill.

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“Here you be! Hard at it!” said Captain Ben, puffing around the corner like a portable west-wind. I’ve understood you’ve had a hurt. Is that so?”

“Oh, no! Nothing to mention,” returned Mrs. Keens, turning about a face bright and cheerful as the full moon; and throwing, as by accident, a red bathing-suit over the two broomsticks that leaned against her tub.

Unlike Mrs. Davids, Mrs. Keens neither pitied herself nor would allow anybody else to do so.

“Sho!” remarked Captain Ben, feeling defrauded. He had counted on sacrificing himself to his sympathies, but he didn’t give up yet. “You must see some pretty tough times ’pears to me with such a parcel of little ones, and only yourself to look to,” said he, proceeding awkwardly enough to hang the pile of wrung-out clothes upon an empty line.

“I don’t complain,” returned the widow, bravely. “My children are not *teusome*; and Jack, why you would be surprised to see how many things Jack can do, for all he isn’t quite right.”

As she spoke thus with affectionate pride, Jack came up wheeling a roughly made cart filled with wet bathing clothes from the beach. He looked up at sound of his mother’s voice with something of the dumb tenderness of an intelligent dog. “Jack helps, Jack good boy,” said he, nodding with a happy smile.

“Yes, Jack helps. We don’t complain,” repeated the mother.

“It would come handy, though, to have a man around to see to things and kind o’ provide, wouldn’t it, though?” persisted Captain Ben.

“Some might think so,” replied Mrs. Keens, stopping her wringer to reflect a little. “But I haven’t any wish to change my situation,” she added, decidedly, going on again with her work.

“Sure on ’t?” persisted the Captain.

“Certain,” replied the widow.

Captain Ben sighed. “I thought ma’be you was having a hard row to hoe, and I thought like enough—”

What he never said, excepting by a beseeching glance at the cheerful widow, for just then an interruption came from some people after bathing-suits.

So Captain Ben moved off with a dismal countenance. But before he had gone far it suddenly brightened. “It might not be for the best,” quoth he to himself, “Like enough

not. I was very careful not to commit myself, and I am very glad I didn't." He smiled as he reflected on his judicious wariness. "But, however," he continued, "I might as well finish up this business now. There is Rachel Doolittle. Who knows but she'd make a likely wife? Lyddy sot a good deal by her. She never had a quilting or a sewing bee but what nothing would do but she must give Rachel Doolittle an invite. Yes; I wonder I never decided on her before. She will be glad of a home sure enough, for she haves to live around, as it were, upon her brothers."

Captain Ben's feet quickened themselves at these thoughts, and had almost overtaken his head, when behold! at a sudden turn in the road there stood Miss Rachel Doolittle, picking barberries from a wayside bush. "My sakes! If she ain't right here, like Rachel in the Bible!" ejaculated Captain Ben, taking heart at the omen.

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Miss Doolittle looked up from under her tied-down brown hat in surprise at such a salutation. But her surprise was increased by Captain Ben's next remark.

"It just came into my mind," said he, "that you was the right one to take Lyddy's place. You two used to be such great knit-ups that it will seem 'most like having Lyddy back again. No," he continued, after a little reflection, "I don't know of anybody I had rather see sitting in Lyddy's chair and wearing Lyddy's things than yourself."

"Dear me, Captain Lundy, I couldn't think of it. Paul's folks expect me to stay with them while the boarder-season lasts, and I've as good as promised Jacob's wife I'll spend the winter with her."

"Ain't that a hard life you are laying out for yourself? And then bum-by you will get old or sick ma' be, and who is going to want you around then? Every woman needs a husband of her own to take care of her."

"I'm able to take care of myself as yet, thanks to goodness! And I am not afraid my brothers will see me suffer in case of sickness," returned Miss Doolittle, her cheeks flaming up like a sumach in October.

"But hadn't you better take a little time to think it over? Ma' be it come sudden to you," pleaded Captain Ben.

"No, I thank you. Some things don't need thinking over," answered Miss Doolittle, plucking at the barberries more diligently than ever.

"I wish Lyddy was here. She would convince you you were standing in your own light," returned Lyddy's widower in a perplexed tone.

"I don't need one to come from the dead to show me my own mind," retorted Miss Doolittle, firmly.

"Well, like enough you are right," said Captain Ben, mildly, putting a few stems of barberries in her pail; "ma' be it wouldn't be best. I don't want to be rash."

And with that he moved off, on the whole congratulating himself he had not decided to marry Miss Doolittle.

"I thought after she commenced her miserable gift of the gab, that Lyddy used to be free to admit she had a fiery tongue, for all they were such friends. And I'm all for peace myself. I guess, on the whole, ma' be she ain't the one for me, perhaps, and it is as well to look further. *Why*! what in *the* world! Well, there! what have I been thinking of? There is Mrs. Davids, as neat as a new cent, and the master hand to save. She is always taking on; and she will be glad enough to have somebody to look out for her,—why, sure

enough! And there I was right at her house this very day, and never once thought of her! What an old dunce!"

But, fortunately, this not being a sin of commission, it could easily be rectified; and directly Captain Ben had turned about and was trotting again toward the red house on the beach.

"Pound for pound of the best white sugar," he heard Miss Tame say as he neared the door.

"White, sugar!" repeated Mrs. Davids, her usual sigh drawn out into a little groan. "*White* sugar for *cram* berries! Who ever heard of such a thing? I've always considered I did well when I had plenty of brown."

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“Poor creeter!” thought Captain Ben. “How she will enjoy getting into my pantry. Lyddy never complained that she didn’t have enough of every thing to do *with*”

And in the full ardor of his intended benevolence, he went right in and opened the subject at once. But, to his astonishment, Mrs. Davids refused him. She sighed, but she refused him.

“I’ve seen trouble enough a’ready, without my rushing into more with my eyes wide open,” sighed she.

“Trouble? Why, that is just what I was meaning to save you!” exclaimed the bewildered widower. “Pump right in the house, and stove e’enamost new. And Lyddy never knew what it was to want for a spoonful of sugar or a pound of flour. And such a *handy* buttery and sink! Lyddy used to say she felt the worst about leaving her buttery of any thing.”

“Should thought she would,” answered Mrs. Davids, forgetting to sigh. “However, I can’t say that I feel any hankering after marrying a buttery. I’ve got buttery-room enough here, without the trouble of getting set up in a new place.”

“Just as you say,” returned the rejected. “I ain’t sure as you’d be exactly the one. I *was* a thinking of looking for somebody a little younger.”

“Well, here is Persis Tame. Why don’t you bespeak her? *She* is younger, and she is in need of a good home. I can recommend her, too, as the first-rate of a cook,” remarked Mrs. Davids, benevolently.

Miss Tame had been sitting a little apart by the open window, smiling to herself.

But now she turned about at once. “Hm!” said she, with contempt. “I should rather live under an umbrella tied to a stake, than marry for a *hum*.”

So Captain Ben went home without engaging either wife or housekeeper.

And the first thing he saw was Captain Jacob Doolittle’s old one-eyed horse eating the apples Loizah Mullers had strung and festooned from nails against the house, to dry.

The next thing he saw was, that, having left a window open, the hens had flown in and gone to housekeeping on their own account. But they were not, like Mrs. Davids, as neat as a new cent, and *not*, also, such master hands to save.

“Shoo! shoo! Get out. Go ’long there with you!” cried Captain Ben, waving the dish-cloth and the poker. “I declare for ’t! I most hadn’t ought to have left that bread out on the table. They’ve made a pretty mess of it, and it is every spec there is in the house

too. Well, I must make a do of potatoes for supper, with a bit of pie and a mouthful of cake."

Accordingly he went to work building a fire that wouldn't burn. Then, forgetting the simple matter of dampers, the potatoes wouldn't bake. The tea-kettle boiled over and cracked the stove, and after that boiled dry and cracked itself. Finally the potatoes fell to baking with so much ardor that they overdid it and burnt up. And, last of all, the cake-jar and pie-cupboard proved to be entirely empty. Loizah had left on the eve of baking-day.

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“The old cat! Well, I’d just as soon live on slapjacks a spell,” said Captain Ben, when he made this discovery.

But even slapjacks palled on his palate, especially when he had them always to cook for himself.

“’T ain’t no way to live, this ain’t,” said he at last. “I’m a good mind to marry as ever I had to eat.”

So he put on his hat and walked out. The first person he met was Miss Persis Tame, who turned her back and fell to picking thoroughwort blossoms as he came up.

“Look a here,” said he, stopping short, “I’m dreadful put to ’t. I can’t get ne’er a wife nor ne’er a housekeeper, and I am e’enamost starved to death. I wish you *would* consent to marry with me, if you feel as if you could bring your mind to it. I am sure it would have been Lyddy’s wish.”

Miss Tame smelt of the thoroughwort blossoms.

“It comes pretty sudden on me,” she replied. “I hadn’t given the subject any thought. But you *are* to be pitied in your situation.”

“Yes. And I’m dreadful lonesome. I’ve always been used to having Lyddy to talk over things with, and I miss her a sight. And I don’t know anybody that has her ways more than you have. You are a good deal such a built woman, and you have the same hitch to your shoulders when you walk. You’ve got something the same look to your eyes, too; I noticed it last Sunday in meeting-time,” continued the widower, anxiously.

“I do feel for you. A man alone is in a deplorable situation,” replied Miss Tame. “I’m sure I’d do any thing in my power to help you.”

“Well, marry with me then. That is what I want. We could be real comfortable together. I’ll go for the license this minute, and we’ll be married right away,” returned the impatient suitor. “You go up to Elder Crane’s, and I’ll meet you there as soon as I can fetch around.”

Then he hurried away, “without giving me a chance to say ‘no,’” said “she that was” Persis Tame, afterward. “So I *had* to marry with him, as you might say. But I’ve never seen cause to regret it, I’ve got a first-rate of a hum, and Captain Ben makes a first-rate of a husband. And no hain’t he, I hope, found cause to regret it,” she added, with a touch of wifely pride; “though I do expect he might have had his pick among all the single women at the Point; but out of them all he chose *me*.”—*The Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1870.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

(BORN, 1832.)

* * * * *

STREET SCENES IN WASHINGTON.

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The mules were my especial delight; and an hour's study of a constant succession of them introduced me to many of their characteristics; for six of these odd little beasts drew each army wagon, and went hopping like frogs through the stream of mud that gently rolled along the street. The coquettish mule had small feet, a nicely trimmed tassel of a tail, perked-up ears, and seemed much given to little tosses of the head, affected skips and prances; and, if he wore the bells, or were bedizened with a bit of finery, put on as many airs as any belle. The moral mule was a stout, hardworking creature, always tugging with all his might; often pulling away after the rest had stopped, laboring under the conscientious delusion that food for the entire army depended upon his private exertions. I respected this style of mule; and, had I possessed a juicy cabbage, would have pressed it upon him, with thanks for his excellent example. The histrionic mule was a melodramatic quadruped, prone to startling humanity by erratic leaps, and wild plunges, much shaking of his stubborn head, and lashing out of his vicious heels; now and then falling flat, and apparently dying *a la* Forrest; a gasp—a squirm—a flop, and so on, till the street was well blocked up, the drivers all swearing like demons in bad hats, and the chief actor's circulation decidedly quickened by every variety of kick, cuff, jerk, and haul. When the last breath seemed to have left his body, and "doctors were in vain," a sudden resurrection took place; and if ever a mule laughed with scornful triumph, that was the beast, as he leisurely rose, gave a comfortable shake, and, calmly regarding the excited crowd seemed to say—"A hit! a decided hit! for the stupidest of animals has bamboozled a dozen men. Now, then! what are *you* stopping the way for?" The pathetic mule was, perhaps, the most interesting of all; for, though he always seemed to be the smallest, thinnest, weakest of the six, the postillion, with big boots, long-tailed coat, and heavy whip, was sure to bestride this one, who struggled feebly along, head down, coat muddy and rough, eye spiritless and sad, his very tail a mortified stump, and the whole beast a picture of meek misery, fit to touch a heart of stone. The jovial mule was a roly poly, happy-go-lucky little piece of horse-flesh, taking every thing easily, from cudgeling to caressing; strolling along with a roguish twinkle of the eye, and, if the thing were possible, would have had his hands in his pockets, and whistled as he went. If there ever chanced to be an apple core, a stray turnip, or wisp of hay, in the gutter, this Mark Tapley was sure to find it, and none of his mates seemed to begrudge him his bite. I suspected this fellow was the peacemaker, confidant, and friend of all the others, for he had a sort of "Cheer-up,-old-boy,-I'll-pull-you-through" look, which was exceedingly engaging.

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Pigs also possessed attractions for me, never having had an opportunity of observing their graces of mind and manner, till I came to Washington, whose porcine citizens appeared to enjoy a larger liberty than many of its human ones. Stout, sedate-looking pigs, hurried by each morning to their places of business, with a preoccupied air, and sonorous greeting to their friends. Genteel pigs, with an extra curl to their tails, promenaded in pairs, lunching here and there, like gentlemen of leisure. Rowdy pigs pushed the passers-by off the sidewalk; tipsy pigs hiccoughed their version of "We won't go home till morning," from the gutter; and delicate young pigs tripped daintily through the mud, as if they plumed themselves upon their ankles, and kept themselves particularly neat in point of stockings. Maternal pigs, with their interesting families, strolled by in the sun; and often the pink, baby-like squealers lay down for a nap, with a trust in Providence worthy of human imitation.—*Hospital Sketches*.

SELECTIONS FROM TRANSCENDENTAL WILD OATS.

On the first day of June, 184-, a large wagon, drawn by a small horse, and containing a motley load, went lumbering over certain New England hills, with the pleasing accompaniments of wind, rain, and hail. A serene man with a serene child upon his knee was driving, or rather being driven, for the small horse had it all his own way. A brown boy with a William Penn style of countenance sat beside him, firmly embracing a bust of Socrates. Behind them was an energetic-looking woman, with a benevolent brow, satirical mouth, and eyes brimful of hope and courage. A baby reposed upon her lap, a mirror leaned against her knee, and a basket of provisions danced about at her feet, as she struggled with a large, unruly umbrella. Two blue-eyed little girls, with hands full of childish treasures, sat under one old shawl, chatting happily together.

In front of this lively party stalked a tall, sharp-featured man, in a long blue cloak; and a fourth small girl trudged along beside him through the mud as if she rather enjoyed it.

The wind whistled over the bleak hills; the rain fell in a despondent drizzle, and twilight began to fall. But the calm man gazed as tranquilly into the fog as if he beheld a radiant bow of promise spanning the gray sky. The cheery woman tried to cover every one but herself with the big umbrella. The brown boy pillowed his head on the bald pate of Socrates and slumbered peacefully. The little girls sang lullabies to their dolls in soft, maternal murmers. The sharp-nosed pedestrian marched steadily on, with the blue cloak streaming out behind him like a banner; and the lively infant splashed through the puddles with a duck-like satisfaction pleasant to behold.

Thus these modern pilgrims journeyed hopefully out of the old world, to found a new one in the wilderness.

The editors of “The Transcendental Tripod” had received from Messrs. Lion & Lamb (two of the aforesaid pilgrims) a communication from which the following statement is an extract:

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“We have made arrangements with the proprietor of an estate of about a hundred acres which liberates this tract from human ownership. Here we shall prosecute our effort to initiate a Family in harmony with the primitive instincts of man.

“Ordinary secular farming is not our object. Fruit, grain, pulse, herbs, flax, and other vegetable products, receiving assiduous attention, will afford ample manual occupation, and chaste supplies for the bodily needs. It is intended to adorn the pastures with orchards, and to supersede the labor of cattle by the spade and the pruning-knife.

“Consecrated to human freedom, the land awaits the sober culture of devoted men. Beginning with small pecuniary means, this enterprise must be rooted on a reliance on the succors of an over-bounteous Providence, whose vital affinities being secured by this union with uncorrupted field and unwordly persons, the cares and injuries of a life of gain are avoided.

“The inner nature of each member of the Family is at no time neglected. Our plan contemplates all such disciplines, cultures, and habits as evidently conduce to the purifying of the inmates.

“Pledged to the spirit alone, the founders anticipate no hasty or numerous addition to their numbers. The kingdom of peace is entered only through the gates of self-denial; and felicity is the test and the reward of loyalty to the unswerving law of Love.”

This prospective Eden at present consisted of an old red farm-house, a dilapidated barn, many acres of meadow-land, and a grove. Ten ancient apple-trees were all the “chaste supply” which the place offered as yet; but, in the firm belief that plenteous orchards were soon to be evoked from their inner consciousness, these sanguine founders had christened their domain Fruitlands.

Here Timon Lion intended to found a colony of Latter Day Saints, who, under his patriarchal sway, should regenerate the world and glorify his name for ever. Here Abel Lamb, with the devoutest faith in the high ideal which was to him a living truth, desired to plant a Paradise, where Beauty, Virtue, Justice, and Love might live happily together, without the possibility of a serpent entering in. And here his wife, unconverted but faithful to the end, hoped, after many wanderings over the face of the earth, to find rest for herself and a home for her children.

“There is our new abode,” anounced the enthusiast, smiling with the satisfaction quite undamped by the drops dripping from his hat-brim, as they turned at length into a cart-path that wound along a steep hillside into a barren-looking valley.

“A little difficult of access,” observed his practical wife, as she endeavored to keep her various household gods from going overboard with every lurch of the laden ark.

“Like all good things. But those who earnestly desire and patiently seek will soon find us,” placidly responded the philosopher from the mud, through which he was now endeavoring to pilot the much-enduring horse.

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“Truth lies at the bottom of a well, Sister Hope,” said Brother Timon, pausing to detach his small comrade from a gate, whereon she was perched for a clearer gaze into futurity.

“That’s the reason we so seldom get at it, I suppose,” replied Mrs. Hope, making a vain clutch at the mirror, which a sudden jolt sent flying out of her hands.

“We want no false reflections here,” said Timon, with a grim smile, as he crunched the fragments under foot in his onward march.

Sister Hope held her peace, and looked wistfully through the mist at her promised home. The old red house with a hospitable glimmer at its windows cheered her eyes; and, considering the weather, was a fitter refuge than the sylvan bowers some of the more ardent souls might have preferred.

The new-comers were welcomed by one of the elect precious,—a regenerate farmer, whose idea of reform consisted chiefly in wearing white cotton raiment and shoes of untanned leather. This costume, with a snowy beard, gave him a venerable, and at the same time a somewhat bridal appearance.

The goods and chattels of the Society not having arrived, the weary family reposed before the fire on blocks of wood, while Brother Moses White regaled them with roasted potatoes, brown bread and water, in two plates, a tin pan, and one mug; his table service being limited. But, having cast the forms and vanities of a depraved world behind them, the elders welcomed hardship with the enthusiasm of new pioneers, and the children heartily enjoyed this foretaste of what they believed was to be a sort of perpetual picnic.

During the progress of this frugal meal, two more brothers appeared. One a dark, melancholy man, clad in homespun, whose peculiar mission was to turn his name hind part before and use as few words as possible. The other was a bland, bearded Englishman, who expected to be saved by eating uncooked food and going without clothes. He had not yet adopted the primitive costume, however; but contented himself with meditatively chewing dry beans out of a basket.

“Every meal should be a sacrament, and the vessels used should be beautiful and symbolical,” observed Brother Lamb, mildly, righting the tin pan slipping about on his knees. “I priced a silver service when in town, but it was too costly; so I got some graceful cups and vases of Britannia ware.”

“Hardest things in the world to keep bright. Will whiting be allowed in the community?” inquired Sister Hope, with a housewife’s interest in labor-saving institutions.

“Such trivial questions will be discussed at a more fitting time,” answered Brother Timon, sharply, as he burnt his fingers with a very hot potato. “Neither sugar, molasses, milk, butter, cheese, nor flesh are to be used among us, for nothing is to be admitted which has caused wrong or death to man or beast.”

“Our garments are to be linen till we learn to raise our own cotton or some substitute for woollen fabrics,” added Brother Abel, blissfully basking in an imaginary future as warm and brilliant as the generous fire before him.

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“Haou abaout shoes?” asked Brother Moses, surveying his own with interest.

“We must yield that point till we can manufacture an innocent substitute for leather. Bark, wood, or some durable fabric will be invented in time. Meanwhile, those who desire to carry out our idea to the fullest extent can go barefooted,” said Lion, who liked extreme measures.

“I never will, nor let my girls,” murmured rebellious Sister Hope, under her breath.

“Haou do you cattle’ate to treat the ten-acre lot? Ef things ain’t ’tended to right smart, we sha’n’t hev no crops,” observed the practical patriarch in cotton.

“We shall spade it,” replied Abel, in such perfect good faith that Moses said no more, though he indulged in a shake of the head as he glanced at hands that held nothing heavier than a pen for years. He was a paternal old soul and regarded the younger men as promising boys on a new sort of lark.

“What shall we do for lamps, if we cannot use any animal substance? I do hope light of some sort is to be thrown upon the enterprise,” said Mrs. Lamb, with anxiety, for in those days kerosene and camphene were not, and gas was unknown in the wilderness.

“We shall go without till we have discovered some vegetable oil or wax to serve us,” replied Brother Timon, in a decided tone, which caused Sister Hope to resolve that her private lamp should be always trimmed, if not burning.

“Each member is to perform the work for which experience, strength, and taste best fit him,” continued Dictator Lion. “Thus drudgery and disorder will be avoided and harmony prevail. We shall rise at dawn, begin the day by bathing, followed by music, and then a chaste repast of fruit and bread. Each one finds congenial occupation till the meridian meal; when some deep-searching conversation gives rest to the body, and development to the mind. Healthful labor again engages us till the last meal, when we assemble in social communion, prolonged till sunset, when we retire to sweet repose, ready for the next day’s activity.”

“What part of the work do you incline to yourself?” asked Sister Hope, with a humorous glimmer in her keen eyes.

“I shall wait till it is made clear to me. Being in preference to doing is the great aim, and this comes to us rather by a resigned willingness than a wilful activity, which is a check to all divine growth,” responded Brother Timon.

“I thought so,” and Mrs. Lamb sighed audibly, for during the year he had spent in her family, Brother Timon had so faithfully carried out his idea of “being, not doing,” that she had found his “divine growth” both an expensive and unsatisfactory process.

Here her husband struck into the conversation, his face shining with the light and joy of the splendid dreams and high ideals hovering before him.

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“In these steps of reform, we do not rely so much on scientific reasoning or physiological skill as on the spirit’s dictates. The greater part of man’s duty consists in leaving alone much that he now does. Shall I stimulate with tea, coffee, or wine? No. Shall I consume flesh? Not if I value health. Shall I subjugate cattle? Shall I claim property in any created thing? Shall I trade? Shall I adopt a form of religion? Shall I interest myself in politics? To how many of these questions—could we ask them deeply enough and could they be heard as having relation to our eternal welfare—would the response be ’Abstain’?”

A mild snore seemed to echo the last word of Abel’s rhapsody, for Brother Moses had succumbed to mundane slumber, and sat nodding like a massive ghost. Forest Absalom, the silent man, and John Pease, the English member, now departed to the barn; and Mrs. Lamb led her flock to a temporary fold, leaving the founders of the “Consociate Family” to build castles in the air till the fire went out and the symposium ended in smoke.

The furniture arrived next day, and was soon bestowed; for the principal property of the community consisted in books. To this rare library was devoted the best room in the house, and the few busts and pictures that still survived many flittings were added to beautify the sanctuary, for here the family was to meet for amusement, instruction, and worship.

Any housewife can imagine the emotions of Sister Hope, when she took possession of a large, dilapidated kitchen, containing an old stove and the peculiar stores out of which food was to be evolved for her little family of eleven. Cakes of maple sugar, dried peas and beans, barley and hominy, meal of all sorts, potatoes, and dried fruit. No milk, butter, cheese, tea, or meat appeared. Even salt was considered a useless luxury, and spice entirely forbidden by these lovers of Spartan simplicity. A ten years’ experience of vegetarian vagaries had been good training for this new freak, and her sense of the ludicrous supported her through many trying scenes.

Unleavened bread, porridge, and water for breakfast; bread, vegetables, and water for dinner; bread, fruit, and water for supper was the bill of fare ordained by the elders. No teapot profaned that sacred stove, no gory steak cried aloud for vengeance from her chaste gridiron and only a brave woman’s taste, time, and temper were sacrificed on that domestic altar.

The vexed question of light was settled by buying a quantity of bayberry wax for candles; and, on discovering that no one knew how to make them, pine-knots were introduced, to be used when absolutely necessary. Being summer, the evenings were not long, and the weary fraternity found it no great hardship to retire with the birds. The inner light was sufficient for most of them. But Mrs. Lamb rebelled. Evening was the only time she had to herself, and while the tired feet rested the skilful hands mended torn frocks and little stockings, or anxious heart forgot its burden in a book.

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So “mother’s lamp” burned steadily, while the philosophers built a new heaven and earth by moonlight; and through all the metaphysical mists and philanthropic pyrotechnics of that period Sister Hope played her own little game of “throwing light,” and none but the moths were the worse for it.

Such farming probably was never seen before since Adam delved. The band of brothers began by spading garden and field; but a few days of it lessened their ardor amazingly. Blistered hands and aching backs suggested the expediency of permitting the use of cattle till the workers were better fitted for noble toil by a summer of the new life.

Brother Moses brought a yoke of oxen from his farm,—at least, the philosophers thought so till it was discovered that one of the animals was a cow; and Moses confessed that he “must be let down easy, for he couldn’t live on garden sarse entirely.”

Great was Dictator Lion’s indignation at this lapse from virtue. But time pressed, the work must be done; so the meek cow was permitted to wear the yoke, and the recreant brother continued to enjoy forbidden draughts in the barn, which dark proceeding caused the children to regard him as one set apart for destruction.

The sowing was equally peculiar, for, owing to some mistake, the three brethren who devoted themselves to this graceful task, found when about half through the job that each had been sowing a different sort of grain in the same field; a mistake which caused much perplexity, as it could not be remedied; but, after a long consultation and a good deal of laughter, it was decided to say nothing and see what would come of it.

The garden was planted with a generous supply of useful roots and herbs; but, as manure was not allowed to profane the virgin soil, few of these vegetable treasures ever came up. Purslane reigned supreme, and the disappointed planters ate it philosophically, deciding that Nature knew what was best for them, and would generously supply their needs, if they could only learn to digest her “sallets” and wild roots.

The orchard was laid out, a little grafting done, new trees and vines set, regardless of the unfit season and entire ignorance of the husbandmen, who honestly believed that in the autumn they would reap a bounteous harvest.

Slowly things got into order, and rapidly rumors of the new experiment went abroad, causing many strange spirits to flock thither, for in those days communities were the fashion and transcendentalism raged wildly. Some came to look on and laugh, some to be supported in poetic idleness, a few to believe sincerely and work heartily. Each member was allowed to mount his favorite hobby, and ride it to his heart’s content. Very queer were some of the riders, and very rampant some of the hobbies.

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One youth, believing that language was of little consequence if the spirit was only right, startled new-comers by blandly greeting them with “good-morning, damn you,” and other remarks of an equally mixed order. A second irrepressible being held that all the emotions of the soul should be freely expressed, and illustrated his theory by antics that would have sent him to a lunatic asylum, if, as an unregenerate wag said, he had not already been in one. When his spirit soared, he climbed trees and shouted; when doubt assailed him, he lay upon the floor and groaned lamentably. At joyful periods, he raced, leaped, and sang; when sad, he wept aloud; and when a great thought burst upon him in the watches of the night, he crowed like a jocund cockerel, to the great delight of the children and the great annoyance of the elders. One musical brother fiddled whenever so moved, sang sentimentally to the four little girls, and put a music-box on the wall when he hoed corn.

Brother Pease ground away at his uncooked food, or browsed over the farm on sorrel, mint, green fruit, and new vegetables. Occasionally he took his walks abroad, airily attired in an unbleached cotton *poncho*, which was the nearest approach to the primeval costume he was allowed to indulge in. At midsummer he retired to the wilderness, to try his plan where the woodchucks were without prejudices and huckleberry-bushes were hospitably full. A sunstroke unfortunately spoilt his plan, and he returned to semi-civilization a sadder and wiser man.

Forest Absalom preserved his Pythagorean silence, cultivated his fine dark locks, and worked like a beaver, setting an excellent example of brotherly love, justice, and fidelity by his upright life. He it was who helped overworked Sister Hope with her heavy washes, kneaded the endless succession of batches of bread, watched over the children, and did the many tasks left undone by the brethren, who were so busy discussing and defining great duties that they forgot to perform the small ones.

Moses White placidly plodded about, “chorin’ raound,” as he called it, looking like an old-time patriarch, with his silver hair and flowing beard, and saving the community from many a mishap by his thrift and Yankee shrewdness.

Brother Lion domineered over the whole concern; for, having put the most money into the speculation, he was resolved to make it pay,—as if any thing founded on an ideal basis could be expected to do so by any but enthusiasts.

Abel Lamb simply revelled in the Newness, firmly believing that his dream was to be beautifully realized and in time not only little Fruitlands, but the whole earth, be turned into a Happy Valley. He worked with every muscle of his body, for *he* was in deadly earnest. He taught with his whole head and heart; planned and sacrificed, preached and prophesied, with a soul full of the purest aspirations, most unselfish purposes, and desires for a life devoted to God and man, too high and tender to bear the rough usage of this world.

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It was a little remarkable that only one woman ever joined this community. Mrs. Lamb merely followed wheresoever her husband led,—"as ballast for his balloon," as she said, in her bright way.

Miss Jane Gage was a stout lady of mature years, sentimental, amiable, and lazy. She wrote verses copiously, and had vague yearnings and graspings after the unknown, which led her to believe herself fitted for a higher sphere than any she had yet adorned.

Having been a teacher, she was set to instructing the children in the common branches. Each adult member took a turn at the infants; and, as each taught in his own way, the result was a chronic state of chaos in the minds of these much-afflicted innocents.

Sleep, food, and poetic musings were the desires of dear Jane's life, and she shirked all duties as clogs upon her spirit's wings. Any thought of lending a hand with the domestic drudgery never occurred to her; and when to the question, "Are there any beasts of burden on the place?" Mrs. Lamb answered, with a face that told its own tale, "Only one woman!" the buxom Jane took no shame to herself, but laughed at the joke, and let the stout-hearted sister tug on alone.

Unfortunately, the poor lady hankered after the flesh-pots, and endeavored to stay herself with private sips of milk, crackers, and cheese, and on one dire occasion she partook of fish at a neighbor's table.

One of the children reported this sad lapse from virtue, and poor Jane was publicly reprimanded by Timon.

"I only took a little bit of the tail," sobbed the penitent poetess.

"Yes, but the whole fish had to be tortured and slain that you might tempt your carnal appetite with that one taste of the tail. Know ye not, consumers of flesh meat, that ye are nourishing the wolf and tiger in your bosoms?"

At this awful question and the peal of laughter which arose from some of the younger brethren, tickled by the ludicrous contrast between the stout sinner, the stern judge, and the naughty satisfaction of the young detective, poor Jane fled from the room to pack her trunk, and return to a world where fishes' tails were not forbidden fruit.

Transcendental wild oats were sown broadcast that year, and the fame thereof has not yet ceased in the land; for, futile as this crop seemed to outsiders, it bore an invisible harvest, worth much to those who planted in earnest. As none of the members of this particular community have ever recounted their experiences before, a few of them may not be amiss, since the interest in these attempts has never died out and Fruitlands was the most ideal of all these castles in Spain.—*Silver Pitchers, and Other Stories*.

WILLIAM WIRT HOWE.

(BORN, 1833.)

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CONVERSATIONAL DEPRAVITY

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To the Chief-Justice of Glenwood,

SUBLIME SIR: ... What can be more destructive of the higher forms of conversation than a pun? What right has any one to explode a petard in the midst of sweet sociality, and blow every thing like sequence and sentiment sky-high? And therefore, since you, as translator of the Pasha's Letters, have taken pains to publish his observations on many social subjects, I think it eminently proper that you should ventilate the ideas of his friend Tompkins upon a not less important theme.

Happily, I have been saved the trouble of original composition, by a discovery made by my landlady while I was boarding a year ago on St. John's Park. Mr. Green, our attic boarder, went off suddenly one day to see a friend in the country, as he said. Of course our landlady searched his room, with a view of reading his letters; and in a brown hair-trunk, with a boot-jack, a razor-strop, a box of Seidlitz powders, and an odd volume of Young's Night Thoughts, she found the following manuscript. The females of the house were satisfied with reading such letters as were left by Mr. Green in his apartment, and so this paper was handed over to me. I may say that it was marked with pencil, "Declined with Thanks."

"THE PUN FIEND.

"BY C. GREEN.

"I used to be corpulent, rosy-cheeked, and cheerful. I am gaunt, pale, and morose now. I used to sleep sweetly; but now I toss about upon my bed, terrified by hideous visions, and feelings as of a clammy hand or wet cloth laid on my face. I was wont to walk about our streets after business hours, and on Sundays, with a genuine smile of enjoyment lighting up my face; but now I hurry along with my eyes cast down, and I seek by-ways and dark lanes for my rambles. My friends think I am in love; persons who know me but slightly, suppose me a victim to remorse—imagine that I wear a hair shirt, and macerate my flesh. They are all wrong. An old bachelor like myself has long ago buried the light of love in a tomb, and set a seal upon the great stone at the door; and as for remorse, I owe no tailor any thing, and do not at present blame myself for any great fault, except having once subscribed for six months to the New York *Morning Cretan*. Nevertheless, my face grows haggard, my step weary, and even our Thursday's beef *a la mode* fails to tempt my enfeebled appetite.

"I am haunted, haunted by a foul fiend. He meets me at six, P.M., in our festive dining-room, and the fork or spoon drops from my nerveless grasp. He follows me up to the parlor, where I sometimes talk of an evening to Miss Pipkin (Miss P. is our fourth story, front), and I become silent in his presence, and Pipkin votes me a bore. He sits by my side when I am playing at whist, and I trump my partner's trick, and the dear old game becomes disgusting. He even dared once to follow me into church, but I cried 'Avaunt!' in a tone so peremptory, that he fled for a moment. He joined me, however, as soon as

service was over, and walked from Tenth Street to Madison Square, with his grizzly arm thurst through mine, and his diabolical jeers drumming on my tympana. In dreams he perches on my breast, and clutches me by the throat.

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“Like the arch fiend, he assumes many shapes. He is now a tall man, and again a short man; sometimes young and audacious, sometimes old and leering. He only once took a feminine guise: that blessed form was irksome to him. He prefers the freedom of masculinity and ineffables. He was once a bookkeeper like myself; then a young attorney; then a medical student; then a bald-headed old gentleman, who seemed to blow a flageolet for a living; and lately, he has taken the shape of a well-to-do President of ’The Arkansas and Arizona Sky Rocket Transportation Company,’ but through all these shifting shapes, I recognize him and shudder.

“He is known as the Funny Fellow.

“Very glorious are wit and humor. I have heard many eminent lecturers discourse on the distinctions, definitions, and value of these airy good gifts. I remember being especially edified by the skill with which Spout, the eloquent, dissected the philosophy of mirth in the same style and with the same effect that the boy in the story dissected his grandmamma’s bellows to see how the wind was raised. I agree with Spout that wit and humor are glorious; that satire, pricking the balloons of conceit, vain glory, and hypocrisy, is invaluable; that a good laugh can come only from a warm heart; that the man in motley is often wiser than the judge in ermine or the priest in lawn. These qualities are goodly in literature. We all love the kindly humorist from Chaucer to Holmes, inclusive. How genial and gentle they are, as they sit with us around the fireside, chucking us under the chins, and slyly poking us in the ribs; and in the field how nobly they have charged upon humbugs and shams. They have been true knights, chivalrous, kind-hearted, brave, religious; their spears are slender, perhaps, yet sharp and elastic as the blades of Toledo; and as they have galloped up and down in the lists, gaily caparisoned and cheery, it has done our hearts good to see how they have hurled into the dust the pompous, sleepy champions of error and hypocrisy.

“So too, consider how pleasant a thing is mirth on the stage. Who does not thank William the Great for Falstaff, and Hackett for his personation of the fat knight? Who does not chuckle over the humors of Autolycus, rogue and peddler? Who has not felt his eye glisten, as his lips smiled, when Jesse Rural has spoken, and who will not say to Ollapod, ‘Thank you, good sir, I owe you one’?

“Ah me! how I used to read those jolly unctuous authors when I was young, in the old ‘sitting-room’ at home! The great fire-place glows before me now; its light dances on the wall; my mother’s hand is on my head; my sister’s eyes are beaming on her lover over in the darker corner; there is a murmur of pleasant voices; there are quiet mirth and deep joy. I lose myself in revery when I think of these pleasures, and almost forget the Funny Fellow.

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“He is pestiferous. If I were in the habit of profanity, I would let loose upon him an octagonal oath. If I were a man of muscle, it would be pleasant to get his head in chancery, and bruise it. It would be a relief to serve him with subpoenas, or present him long bills and demand immediate payment. Was my name providentially ordered to be Green, that he might pass verbal contumely upon it? Does he suppose that a man can live thirty-five years in this state of probation, without becoming slightly calloused to a pun on his own name? Yet he continues to pun on mine as if the process were highly amusing. Then again he interrupts any little attempts at pleasing conversation with his infernal absurdities. I was speaking one day at the dinner-table of a well-known orator who had been entertaining the town, and I flatter myself that my remarks were critically just as well as deeply interesting. The wretched being interposed—

“’Mr. Green, when you say there was too much American Eagle in the speaker’s discourse, do you mean that it was a talon-ted production, and to what claws of the speech do you especially refer?’

“Miss Pipkin, who had been deeply intent on my observations, commenced to titter; what could I do but hang my head and swallow the rest of the meal in silence? If I had been possessed of a quick tongue, I would have lashed him with sarcasms, and Pipkin would have rejoiced with me in his groans. But no—I am slow of speech—and so I was bound to submit. After that he was more tyrannical than ever. He would come stealthily into my room and garotte me in a conversational way. He would seem to take me by the throat, saying, ’why don’t you laugh—why don’t you burst with merriment?’ and then I would force a dismal grin, just to get rid of him.

“I said to myself, I will leave this selfish Sahara called the city and county of New York I will leave its dust, dirt, carts, confusion, bulls, bears, Peter Funks, Jeremy Diddlers, and, best of all, the Funny Fellow. I will take board in some rural, as well as accessible place; the mosquitoes and ague of Flushing shall refresh my frame; the cottages of Astoria, with their pleasant view of the Penitentiary, shall revive my wounded spirit; I will exile myself from my native land to the shores of Jersey; I will sit beneath the shadow of the Quarantine on Staten Island. No—I won’t—I will go to Yonkers—Yonkers that looks as though it had been built on a gentle slope, and then had suffered a violent attack of earthquake; daily boats shall convey me from my ledger to my bed and board, at convenient hours, so that while I post books in New York by day, I may revel in breezes, moonbeams, sweet milk, and gentle influences, by night. There, said I, in a burst of excusable enthusiasm, I will recline beneath wide-spreading beeches, and pipe upon an oaten reed. There will I listen to the soft bleating of lambs, and scent the fresh breath of cows; Nature shall touch and thrill me with

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her gentle hand; I will see the dear flowers turn their faces up to receive the kiss of the rising sun, or the benediction of the summer shower. There, too, I will meet the members of the mystic P.B., so that I shall talk of books other than day-books and blotters: we will discourse reverently of authors and their creations. I will not meet the Funny Fellow, for such a wretch can be produced only in the corrupt social hot-bed of Gotham.

"So to Yonkers I went. I chose a room looking out upon the Hudson and the noble Palisades. I took with me a flute, a copy of the Bucolics of Virgil, and numerous linen garments. A great calm came over me. I was no longer haunted, goaded, oppressed. With peace nestling in my bosom, I went down to my first supper in the new boarding-house. A goodly meal smoked on the table, and the savor of baked shad, sweetest of smells, went up. While I sat choking myself with the bones of this delicious fish, I heard a voice on the opposite side of the table that sent the blood to my heart. If I had been feminine, there would have been a scene.

"He was there: his eyes gloated over the board, a malicious quirk sat astride his fat lips. The Funny Fellow spoke to Miss Grasscloth:

"'Why are the fishermen who catch these shad like wigmakers?'

"'I don't know,'

"'Because they make their living from bare poles.'

"I ate no more supper. A nausea supervened. I left the table, rushed into the cool evening air, and let the fresh breeze visit my faded cheek. I strolled up the main street of Yonkers, and as I crushed my toes against the stones which then adorned that highway, I resolved to call on my sweet friend Julia ——. Her gentle smile, said I, will console me. She is not a Funny Fellow. We will talk together calmly, earnestly, in the moonlight, close by the great river. I will sit as near to her as her fashionable garments will permit, and forget my foe.

"We walked together—Julia and I. We talked of things good and true. We spoke of the beauty of the nocturnal scene. Alas! a fearful, a demoniac change came over the girl's face. She said:

"'Yes, my friend, we ought to enjoy this scene—for we are fine-night beings.'

"I bid a hasty farewell to the large eyes and gentle smile. She was not much offended at my abrupt and angry departure, for my salary is small, my hair is turning grey, and I do not dance. But I was not entirely discouraged. I resolved to give Yonkers a fair trial, and a true verdict to render according to the evidence. So I frequented the tea-parties

and sociables so common in that wretched town, and strove to shake off the melancholy that clung to me like the Old Man of the Sea. To my horror, the Funny Fellow became multiplied like the reflections in a shivered mirror. Men and women, and even young innocent children, became Funny, and danced about me in a horrible maze, and squeaked and gibbered, and tossed their jokes in my face.

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In one week I made five mortal enemies by refusing to smile when their tormenting squibs were exploded in my eyes. I felt like a rustic pony, who comes in his simple way into town on the Fourth of July, and has Chinese crackers and fiery serpents cast under his heels. One evening, in particular, they asked me to play the game of Comparisons (a proverbially odious game, that could exist only in an effete and degenerate civilization), in which the entire company tried to see how Funny they could be; and because I made stupid answers, I was laughed at by the young ladies.

"I became disgusted with Yonkers, and returned to my intramural boarding-house in St. John's Park. The sidewalk near the house was in a dilapidated state, through the carelessness of the contractor, who had stipulated to pave it properly, but had not paved it at all, except with good intentions. And therefore, as I came along, I first besmeared my boots with muck then tripped my toes against a pile of brick: and finally fell headlong into the gutter. As I rose up and denounced, in somewhat loud language, the idleness and inefficiency of the contractor who had the work in charge, the Funny Fellow stood before me, his eyes glaring with triumph. He spoke in reply to my denunciations:

"' My dear Green, do not call the contractor lazy and inefficient. I am sure that his is an energy that never FLAGS!'

"I rushed to the room where I am now sealed. There is but one hope left me.

"In the Territory of Nebraska, far to the west thereof, lies a tract of land which the early French trappers, with shrewd fitness called the' Mauvaises Terres.' It is a region of rocks, petrifactions, and other pre-Adamite peculiarities. In a paper written by Dr. Leid of Philadelphia, and published by the Smithsonian Institute, we are assured that there once lived in these bad lands, turtles six feet square, and alligators, compared with which the present squatter sovereigns of the territory are lovely and refined. The fossil remains of these ancient inhabitants still encumber the earth of that region, and make it unpleasant to view with an agricultural eye; but here and there the general desolation is relieved by a fertile valley, with a running brook and green slopes. White men, whisky, and Funny Fellows have not yet penetrated there. I will go to this sanctuary. A snug cabin will contain my necessary household—to wit—twelve shirts and a Bible. I will plant my corn, and tobacco, and vines on the fertile slope that looks to the south; my cattle and sheep shall browse the rest of the valley, while a few agile goats shall stand in picturesque positions upon the rocky monsters described by Dr. Leidy. My guests shall be the brave and wise red men who never try to make bad jokes. I do not think they ever try to be Funny; but to make assurance doubly sure, I shall not learn their language, so that any melancholy attempts they may possibly make, will fall upon unappreciative ears. By day I

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will cultivate my crops and tend my flocks and herds; and in the long evenings smoke the calumet with the worthy aborigines. If I should find there some dusky maiden, like Palmer's Indian girl, who has no idea of puns, polkas, crinoline, or eligible matches, I will woo her in savage hyperbole, and she shall light my pipe with her slender fingers, and beat for me the tom-tom when I am sad. I will live in a calm and conscientious way; the Funny Fellow shall become like the dim recollection of some horrible dream, and"—

Mr. Green seems not to have finished his interesting reflections, and I shall not attempt to complete them. As well might I try to finish the Cathedral at Cologne. But I heartily sympathize with the feelings he has expressed, and trust that his new home in the West will never be invaded by conversational garroters.

Sincerely your friend,

TOMPKINS.

—*The Pasha Papers*.

CHARLES FARRAR BROWNE.

("ARTEMUS WARD.")

(BORN, 1834—DIED, 1867.)

* * * * *

THE TOWER OF LONDON.

MR. PUNCH,—*My Dear Sir*:—I skurcely need inform you that your excellent Tower is very pop'lar with pe'ple from the agricultooral districks, and it was chiefly them class which I found waitin at the gates the other mornin.

I saw at once that the Tower was established on a firm basis. In the entire history of firm basisis I don't find a basis more firmer than this one.

"You have no Tower in America?" said a man in the crowd, who had somehow detected my denomination.

"Alars! no," I anserd; "we boste of our enterprise and improovements, and yit we are devoid of a Tower. America oh my onhappy country! thou hast not got no Tower! It's a sweet Boon."

The gates was opened after a while, and we all purchist tickets, and went into a waitin-room.

“My frens,” said a pale-faced little man, in black close, “this is a sad day.”

“Inasmuch as to how?” I said.

“I mean it is sad to think that so many peple have been killed within these gloomy walls. My frens, let us drop a tear!”

“No,” I said, “you must excuse me. Others may drop one if they feel like it; but as for me, I decline. The early managers of this institootion were a bad lot, and their crimes were trooly orful; but I can’t sob for those who died four or five hundred years ago. If they was my own relations I couldn’t. It’s absurd to shed sobs over things which occurd during the rain of Henry the Three. Let us be cheerful,” I continnered. “Look at the festiv Warders, in their red flannil jackets. They are cheerful, and why should it not be thusly with us?”

A Warder now took us in charge, and showed us the Trater’s Gate, the armers, and things. The Trater’s Gate is wide enuff to admit about twenty traters abrest, I should jedge; but beyond this, I couldn’t see that it was superior to gates in gen’ral.

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Traters, I will here remark, are a onfornit class of peple. If they wasn't, they wouldn't be traters. They conspire to bust up a country—they fail, and they're traters. They bust her, and they become statesmen and heroes.

Take the case of Gloster, afterwards Old Dick the Three, who may be seen at the Tower on horseback, in a heavy tin overcoat—take Mr. Gloster's case. Mr. G. was a conspirator of the basist dye, and if he'd failed, he would have been hung on a sour apple tree. But Mr. G. succeeded, and became great. He was slewed by Col. Richmond, but he lives in history, and his equestrian figger may be seen daily for a sixpence, in conjunction with other em'nent persons, and no extra charge for the Warder's able and bootiful lectur.

There's one king in this room who is mounted onto a foaming steed, his right hand graspin a barber's pole. I didn't learn his name.

The room where the daggers and pistils and other weppins is kept is interestin. Among this collection of choice cuttlery I notist the bow and arrer which those hot-heded old chaps used to conduct battles with. It is quite like the bow and arrer used at this day by certain tribes of American Injuns, and they shoot 'em off with such a excellent precision that I almost sigh'd to be an Injun when I was in the Rocky Mountain regin. They are a pleasant lot them Injuns. Mr. Cooper and Dr. Catlin have told us of the red man's wonerful eloquence, and I found it so. Our party was stopt on the plains of Utah by a band of Shoshones, whose chief said:

"Brothers! the pale-face is welcome. Brothers! the sun is sinking in the west, and Wa-na-bucky-she will soon cease speakin. Brothers! the poor red man belongs to a race which is fast becomin extink."

He then whooped in a shrill manner, stole all our blankets and whisky, and fled to the primeval forest to conceal his emotions.

I will remark here, while on the subjeck of Injuns, that they are in the main a very shaky set, with even less sense than the Fenians, and when I hear philanthropists bewailin the fack that every year "carries the noble red man nearer the settin sun," I simply have to say I'm glad of it, tho' it is rough on the settin sun. They call you by the sweet name of Brother one minit, and the next they scalp you with their Thomas-hawks. But I wander. Let us return to the Tower.

At one end of the room where the weppins is kept, is a wax figger of Queen Elizabeth, mounted on a fiery stuffed hoss, whose glass eye flashes with pride, and whose red morocker nostril dilates hawtily, as if conscious of the royal burden he bears. I have associated Elizabeth with the Spanish Armady. She's mixed up with it at the Surrey Theatre, where *Troo to the Core* is bein acted, and in which a full bally core is introjooced on board the Spanish Admiral's ship, giving the audiens the idee that he

intends openin a moosic-hall in Plymouth the moment he conkers that town. But a very interesting drammer is *Troo to the Core*, notwithstandin the eccentric conduct of the Spanish Admiral; and very nice it is in Queen Elizabeth to make Martin Truegold a baronet.

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The Warder shows us some instrooments of tortur, such as thumbscrews, throat-collars, *etc*., statin that these was conkered from the Spanish Armady, and addin what a crooil peple the Spaniards was in them days—which elissited from a bright-eyed little girl of about twelve summers the remark that she tho't it *was* rich to talk about the crooilty of the Spaniards usin thumbscrews, when he was in a Tower where so many poor peple's heads had been cut off. This made the Warder stammer and turn red.

I was so pleased with the little girl's brightness that I could have kissed the dear child, and I would if she'd been six years older.

I think my companions intended makin a day of it, for they all had sandwiches, sassiges, *etc*. The sad-lookin man, who had wanted us to drop a tear afore we started to go round, fling'd such quantities of sassige into his mouth that I expected to see him choke hisself to death; he said to me, in the Beauchamp Tower, where the poor prisoners writ their onhappy names on the cold walls, "This is a sad sight."

"It is indeed," I anserd. "You're black in the face. You shouldn't eat sassige in public without some rehearsals beforehand. You manage it orkwardly."

"No," he said, "I mean this sad room."

Indeed, he was quite right. Tho' so long ago all these drefful things happened, I was very glad to git away from this gloomy room, and go where the rich and sparklin Crown Jewils is kept. I was so pleased with the Queen's Crown, that it occurd to me what a agree'ble surprise it would be to send a sim'lar one home to my wife; and I asked the Warder what was the vally of a good, well-constructed Crown like that. He told me, but on cypherin up up with a pencil the amount of funs I have in the Jint Stock Bank, I conclooded I'd send her a genteel silver watch instid.

And so I left the Tower. It is a solid and commandin edifis, but I deny that it is cheerful. I bid it adoo without a pang.

I was droven to my hotel by the most melancholly driver of a four-wheeler that I ever saw. He heaved a deep sigh as I gave him two shillings.

"I'll give you six d.'s more," I said, "if it hurts you so."

"It isn't that," he said, with a hart-rendin groan, "it's only a way I have. My mind's upset to-day. I at one time tho't I'd drive you into the Thames. I've been readin all the daily papers to try and understand about Governor Eyre, and my mind is totterin. It's really wonderful I didn't drive you into the Thames."

I asked the onhappy man what his number was, so I could redily find him in case I should want him agin, and bad him good-bye. And then I tho't what a frollicsome day I'd made of it. Respectably, *etc*.,

ARTEMUS WARD.

—*Punch*,1866.

SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Mr. Punch *My Dear Sir*:—I was a little disapinted at not receivin a invitation to jine in the meetins of the Social Science Congress....

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I prepared an Essy on Animals to read before the Social Science meetins. It is a subjeck I may troothfully say I have successfully wrastled with. I tackled it when only nineteen years old. At that tender age I writ a Essy for a lit'ry Institoot entitled, "Is Cats to be trusted?" Of the merits of that Essy it doesn't becum me to speak, but I may be excoos'd for mentionin that the Institoot parsed a resolution that "whether we look upon the length of this Essy, or the manner in which it is written, we feel that we will not express any opinion of it, and we hope it will be read in other towns."

Of course the Essy I writ for the Social Science Society is a more finisheder production than the one on Cats, which was wroten when my mind was crood, and afore I had masterd a graceful and ellygant stile of composition. I could not even punctooate my sentences proper at that time, and I observe with pane, on lookin over this effort of my youth, that its beauty is in one or two instances mar'd by ingrammaticisms. This was inexcusable, and I'm surprised I did it. A writer who can't write in a grammerly manner better shut up shop.

You shall hear this Essy on Animals. Some day when you have four hours to spare, I'll read it to you. I think you'll enjoy it. Or, what will be much better, if I may suggest—omit all picturs in next week's *Punch*, and do not let your contributors write eny thing whatever (et them have a holiday; they can go to the British Mooseum;) and publish my Essy intire. It will fill all your collumes full, and create comment. Does this proposition strike you? Is it a go?

In case I had read the Essy to the Social Sciencers, I had intended it should be the closin attraction. I intended it should finish the proceedins. I think it would have finished them. I understand animals better than any other class of human creatures. I have a very animal mind, and I've been identified with 'em doorin my entire perfessional career as a showman, more especial bears, wolves, leopards and serpunts.

The leopard is as lively a animal as I ever came into contack with. It is troo he cannot change his spots, but you can change 'em for him with a paint-brush, as I once did in the case of a leopard who wasn't nat'rally spotted in a attractive manner. In exhibitin him I used to stir him up in his cage with a protracted pole, and for the purpuss of makin him yell and kick up in a leopardy manner, I used to casionally whack him over the head. This would make the children inside the booth scream with fright, which would make fathers of families outside the booth very anxious to come in—because there is a large class of parents who have a uncontrollable passion for takin their children to places where they will stand a chance of being frightened to death.

One day I whacked this leopard more than ushil, which elissited a remonstrance from a tall gentleman in spectacles, who said, "My good man, do not beat the poor caged animal. Rather fondle him."

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“I’ll fondle him with a club,” I ansered, hitting him another whack.

“I prithy desist,” said the gentleman; “stand aside, and see the effeck of kindness. I understand the idiosyncracies of these creeturs better than you do.”

With that he went up to the cage, and thrustin his face in between the iron bars, he said, soothingly, “Come hither, pretty creetur.”

The pretty creetur come-hithered raythеr speedy, and seized the gentleman by the whiskers, which he tore off about enuff to stuff a small cushion with.

He said “You vagabone, I’ll have you indicted for exhibitin dangerous and immoral animals.”

I replied, “Gentle Sir, there isn’t a animal here that hasn’t a beautiful moral, but you mustn’t fondle ’em. You mustn’t meddle with their idiotsyncracies.”

The gentleman was a dramatic cricket, and he wrote a article for a paper, in which he said my entertainment wos a decided failure.

As regards Bears, you can teach ’em to do interestin things, but they’re onreliable. I had a very large grizzly bear once, who would dance, and larf, and lay down, and bow his head in grief, and give a mournful wale, etsetry. But he often annoyed me. It will be remembered that on the occasion of the first battle of Bull Run, it suddenly occurd to the Fed’ral soldiers that they had business in Washington which ought not to be neglected, and they all started for that beautiful and romantic city, maintainin a rate of speed durin the entire distance that would have done credit to the celebrated French steed *Gladiateur*. Very nat’rally our Gov’ment was deeply grieved at this defeat; and I said to my Bear shortly after, as I was givin a exhibition in Ohio—I said, “Brewin, are you not sorry the National arms has sustained a defeat?” His business was to wale dismal, and bow his head down, the band (a barrel origin and a wiolin) playing slow and melancholy moosic. What did the grizzly old cuss do, however, but commence darncin and larfin in the most joyous manner? I had a narrer escape from being imprisoned for disloyalty.—-*Works*.

FROM THE “LECTURE.”

Some years ago I engaged a celebrated Living American Skeleton for a tour through Australia. He was the thinnest man I ever saw. He was a splendid skeleton. He didn’t weigh any thing scarcely,—and I said to myself,—the people of Australia will flock to see this tremendous curiosity. It is a long voyage—as you know—from New York to Melbourne—and to my utter surprise the skeleton had no sooner got out to sea than he commenced eating in the most horrible manner. He had never been on the ocean before—and he said it agreed with him.—I thought so!—I never saw a man eat so much

in my life. Beef—mutton—pork—he swallowed them all like a shark—and between meals he was often discovered behind barrels eating hard-boiled eggs. The result was that when we reached Melbourne this infamous skeleton weighed sixty-four pounds more than I did!

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I thought I was ruined—but I wasn't. I took him on to California—another very long sea voyage—and when I got him to San Francisco I exhibited him as a fat man.

This story hasn't any thing to do with my Entertainment, I know—but one of the principal features of my Entertainment is that it contains so many things that don't have any thing to do with it....

* * * * *

I like Music.—I can't sing. As a singist I am not a success. I am saddest when I sing. So are those who hear me. They are sadder even than I am....

* * * * *

I met a man in Oregon who hadn't any teeth—not a tooth in his head—yet that man could play on the bass drum better than any man I ever met....

* * * * *

Brigham Young has two hundred wives. Just think of that! Oblige me by thinking of that. That is—he has eighty actual wives, and he is spiritually married to one hundred and twenty more. These spiritual marriages—as the Mormons call them—are contracted with aged widows—who think it a great honor to be sealed—the Mormons call it being sealed—to the Prophet.

So we may say he has two hundred wives. He loves not wisely—but two hundred well. He is dreadfully married. He's the most married man I ever saw in my life....

* * * * *

I regret to say that efforts were made to make a Mormon of me while I was in Utah.

It was leap-year when I was there—and seventeen young widows—the wives of a deceased Mormon—offered me their hearts and hands. I called on them one day—and taking their soft white hands in mine—which made eighteen hands altogether—I found them in tears.

And I said—"Why is this thus? What is the reason of this thusness?"

They hove a sigh—seventeen sighs of different size.—They said—

"Oh—soon thou wilt be gonested away!"

I told them that when I got ready to leave a place I wentested.

They said—“Doth not like us?”

I said—“I doth—I doth!”

I also said—“I hope your intentions are honorable—as I am a lone child—my parents being far—far away.”

They then said—“Wilt not marry us?”

I said—“Oh no—it cannot was.”

Again they asked me to marry them—and again I declined. When they cried—

“Oh—cruel man! This is too much—oh! too much!”

I told them that it was on account of the muchness that I declined.—*Works*.

FRANK R. STOCKTON.

(BORN, 1834.)

* * * * *

OUR TAVERN.

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It was about noon of a very fair July day, when Euphemia and myself arrived at the little town where we were to take the stage up into the mountains. We were off for a two weeks' vacation and our minds were a good deal easier than when we went away before, and left Pomona at the helm. We had enlarged the boundaries of Rudder Grange, having purchased the house, with enough adjoining land to make quite a respectable farm. Of course I could not attend to the manifold duties on such a place, and my wife seldom had a happier thought than when she proposed that we should invite Pomona and her husband to come and live with us. Pomona was delighted, and Jonas was quite willing to run our farm. So arrangements were made, and the young couple were established in apartments in our back building, and went to work as if taking care of us and our possessions was the ultimate object of their lives. Jonas was such a steady fellow that we feared no trouble from tree-man or lightning rodder during this absence.

Our destination was a country tavern on the stage-road, not far from the point where the road crosses the ridge of the mountain range, and about sixteen miles from the town. We had heard of this tavern from a friend of ours, who had spent a summer there. The surrounding country was lovely, and the house was kept by a farmer, who was a good soul, and tried to make his guests happy. These were generally passing farmers and wagoners, or stage-passengers, stopping for a meal, but occasionally a person from the cities, like our friend, came to spend a few weeks in the mountains.

So hither we came, for an out-of-the-world spot like this was just what we wanted. When I took our place at the stage-office, I inquired for David Button, the farm tavern-keeper before mentioned, but the agent did not know of him.

"However," said he, "the driver knows everybody on the road, and he'll set you down at the house."

So, off we started, having paid for our tickets on the basis that we were to ride about sixteen miles. We had seats on top, and the trip, although slow,—for the road wound uphill steadily,—was a delightful one. Our way lay, for the greater part of the time, through the woods, but now and then we came to a farm, and a turn in the road often gave us lovely views of the foot-hills and the valleys behind us.

But the driver did not know where Dutton's tavern was. This we found out after we had started. Some persons might have thought it wiser to settle this matter before starting, but I am not at all sure that it would have been so. We were going to this tavern, and did not wish to go anywhere else. If people did not know where it was, it would be well for us to go and look for it. We knew the road that it was on, and the locality in which it was to be found.

Still, it was somewhat strange that a stage-driver, passing along the road every week-day,—one day one way, and the next the other way,—should not know a public-house like Dutton’s.

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“If I remember rightly,” I said, “the stage used to stop there for the passengers to take supper.”

“Well, then, it ain’t on this side o’ the ridge,” said the driver; “we stop for supper, about a quarter of a mile on the other side, at Pete Lowry’s. Perhaps Dutton used to keep that place. Was it called the ’Ridge House’?”

I did not remember the name of the house, but I knew very well that it was not on the other side of the ridge.

“Then,” said the driver, “I’m sure I don’t know where it is. But I’ve only been on the road about a year, and your man may ‘a’ moved away afore I come. But there ain’t no tavern this side the ridge, arter ye leave Delhi, and, that’s nowhere’s nigh the ridge.”

There were a couple of farmers who were sitting by the driver, and who had listened with considerable interest to this conversation. Presently, one of them turned around to me and said:

“Is it Dave Dutton ye’re askin’ about?”

“Yes,” I replied, “that’s his name.”

“Well, I think he’s dead,” said he.

At this, I began to feel uneasy, and I could see that my wife shared my trouble.

Then the other farmer spoke up.

“I don’t believe he’s dead, Hiram,” said he to his companion. “I heerd of him this spring. He’s got a sheep-farm on the other side o’ the mountain, and he’s a livin’ there. That’s what I heerd, at any rate. But he don’t live on this road any more,” he continued, turning to us. “He used to keep tavern on this road, and the stages did used to stop fur supper—or else dinner. I don’t jist ree-collect which. But he don’t keep tavern on this road no more.”

“Of course not,” said his companion, “if he’s a livin’ over the mountain. But I b’lieve he’s dead.”

I asked the other farmer if he knew how long it had been since Dutton had left this part of the country.

“I don’t know fur certain,” he said, “but I know he was keeping tavern here two year’ ago, this fall, fur I came along here, myself, and stopped there to git supper—or dinner, I don’t jist ree-collect which.”

It had been three years since our friend had boarded at Dutton's house. There was no doubt that the man was not living at his old place now. My wife and I now agreed that it was very foolish in us to come so far without making more particular inquiries. But we had had an idea that a man who had a place like Dutton's tavern would live there always.

"What are ye goin' to do?" asked the driver, very much interested, for it was not every day that he had passengers who had lost their destination. "Ye might go on to Lowry's. He takes boarders sometimes."

But Lowry's did not attract us. An ordinary country-tavern, where stage-passengers took supper, was not what we came so far to find.

"Do you know where this house o' Dutton's is?" said the driver, to the man who had once taken either dinner or supper there.

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“Oh yes! I’d know the house well enough, if I saw it. It’s the fust house this side o’ Lowry’s.”

“With a big pole in front of it?” asked the driver.

“Yes, there was a sign-pole in front of it.”

“An’ a long porch?”

“Yes.”

“Oh! well!” said the driver, settling himself in his seat. “I know all about that house. That’s a empty house. I didn’t think you meant that house. There’s nobody lives there. An’ yit, now I come to remember, I have seen people about, too. I tell ye what ye better do. Since ye’re so set on staying on this side the ridge, ye better let me put ye down at Dan Carson’s place. That’s jist about quarter of a mile from where Dutton used to live. Dan’s wife can tell ye all about the Duttons, an’ about everybody else, too, in this part o’ the country, and if there aint nobody livin’ at the old tavern, ye can stay all night at Carson’s, and I’ll stop an’ take you back, to-morrow, when I come along.”

We agreed to this plan, for there was nothing better to be done, and, late in the afternoon, we were set down with our small trunk—for we were traveling under light weight—at Dan Carson’s door. The stage was rather behind time, and the driver whipped up and left us to settle our own affairs. He called back, however, that he would keep a good look-out for us to-morrow.

Mrs. Carson soon made her appearance, and, very naturally, was somewhat surprised to see visitors with their baggage standing on her little porch. She was a plain, coarsely dressed woman, with an apron full of chips and kindling wood, and a fine mind for detail, as we soon discovered.

“Jist so,” she said, putting down the chips and inviting us to seats on a bench. “Dave Dutton’s folks is all moved away. Dave has a good farm on the other side o’ the mountain, an’ it never did pay him to keep that tavern, ’specially as he didn’t sell liquor. When he went away, his son Al come there to live with his wife, an’ the old man left a good deal o’ furniture and things for him, but Al’s wife aint satisfied here, and, though they’ve been here, off an’ on, the house is shet up most o’ the time. It’s for sale an’ to rent, both, ef enybody wants it. I’m sorry about you, too, fur it was a nice tavern, when Dave kept it.”

We admitted that we were also very sorry, and the kind-hearted woman showed a great deal of sympathy.

“You might stay here, but we haint got no fit room where you two could sleep.”

At this, Euphemia and I looked very blank.

“But you could go up to the house and stay, jist as well as not,” Mrs. Carson continued. “There’s plenty o’ things there, an’ I keep the key. For the matter o’ that, ye might take the house for as long as ye want to stay; Dave ’d be glad enough to rent it; and, if the lady knows how to keep house, it wouldn’t be no trouble at all, jist for you two. We could let ye have all the victuals ye’d want, cheap, and there’s plenty o’ wood there, cut, and every thing handy.”

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We looked at each other. We agreed. Here was a chance for a rare good time. It might be better, perhaps, than any thing we had expected.

The bargain was struck. Mrs. Carson, who seemed vested with all the necessary powers of attorney, appeared to be perfectly satisfied with our trustworthiness, and when I paid on the spot the small sum she thought proper for two weeks' rent, she evidently considered she had done a very good thing for Dave Dutton and herself.

"I'll jist put some bread, an' eggs, an' coffee, an' pork, an' things in the basket, an' I'll have 'em took up for ye, with yer trunk, an' I'll go with ye an' take some milk. Here, Danny!" she cried, and directly her husband, a long, thin, sun-burnt, sandy-headed man, appeared, and to him she told, in a few words, our story, and ordered him to hitch up the cart and be ready to take our trunk and the basket up to Dutton's old house.

When all was ready, we walked up the hill, followed by Danny and the cart. We found the house a large, low, old-fashioned farm-house, standing near the road with a long piazza in front, and a magnificent view of mountain-tops in the rear. Within, the lower rooms were large and low, with quite a good deal of furniture in them. There was no earthly reason why we should not be perfectly jolly and comfortable here. The more we saw the more delighted we were at the odd experience we were about to have. Mrs. Carson busied herself in getting things in order for our supper and general accommodation. She made Danny carry our trunk to a bedroom in the second story, and then set him to work building a fire in a great fire-place, with a crane for the kettle.

When she had done all she could, it was nearly dark, and after lighting a couple of candles, she left us, to go home and get supper for her own family.

As she and Danny were about to depart in the cart, she ran back to ask us if we would like to borrow a dog.

"There aint nuthin to be afeard of," she said; "for nobody hardly ever takes the trouble to lock the doors in these parts, but bein' city folks, I thought ye might feel better if ye had a dog."

We made haste to tell her that we were not city folks, but declined the dog. Indeed, Euphemia remarked that she would be much more afraid of a strange dog than of robbers.

After supper, which we enjoyed as much as any meal we ever ate in our lives, we each took a candle, and after arranging our bedroom for the night, we explored the old house. There were lots of curious things everywhere,—things that were apparently so "old timey," as my wife remarked, that David Dutton did not care to take them with him to his new farm, and so left them for his son, who probably cared for them even less than his father did. There was a garret extending over the whole house, and filled with

old spinning-wheels, and strings of onions, and all sorts of antiquated bric-a-brac, which was so fascinating to me that I could scarcely tear myself away from it; but Euphemia, who was dreadfully afraid that I would set the whole place on fire, at length prevailed on me to come down.

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We slept soundly that night, in what was probably the best bedroom in the house, and awoke with a feeling that we were about to enter on a period of some uncommon kind of jollity, which we found to be true when we went down to get breakfest. I made the fire, Euphemia made the coffee, and Mrs. Carson came with cream and some fresh eggs. The good woman was in high spirits. She was evidently pleased at the idea of having neighbors, temporary though they were, and it had probably been a long time since she had had such a chance of selling milk, eggs, and sundries. It was almost the same as opening a country store. We bought groceries and every thing of her.

We had a glorious time that day. We were just starting out for a mountain stroll when our stage-driver came along on his down trip.

“Hello!” he called out. “Want to go back this morning?”

“Not a bit of it,” I cried. “We wont go back for a couple of weeks. We’ve settled here for the present.”

The man smiled. He didn’t seem to understand it exactly, but he was evidently glad to see us so well satisfied. If he had had time to stop and have the matter explained to him, he would probably have been better satisfied; but as it was, he waved his whip to us and drove on. He was a good fellow.

We strolled all day, having locked up the house and taken our lunch with us; and when we came back, it seemed really like coming home. Mrs. Carson, with whom we had left the key, had brought the milk and was making the fire. This woman was too kind. We determined to try and repay her in some way. After a splendid supper we went to bed happy.

The next day was a repetition of this one, but the day after it rained. So we determined to enjoy the old tavern, and we rummaged about everywhere. I visited the garret again, and we went to the old barn, with its mows half full of hay, and had rare times climbing about there. We were delighted that it happened to rain. In a wood-shed, near the house, I saw a big square board with letters on it. I examined the board, and found it was a sign,—a hanging sign,—and on it was painted in letters that were yet quite plain:

“FARMERS’
AND
MECHANICS’
HOTEL.”

I called to Euphemia and told her that I had found the old tavern sign. She came to look at it, and I pulled it out.

“Soldiers and sailors!” she exclaimed; “that’s funny.”

I looked over on her side of the sign, and, sure enough, there was the inscription:

"SOLDIERS'
AND
SAILORS'
HOUSE."

"They must have bought this comprehensive sign in some town," I said. "Such a name would never have been chosen for a country tavern like this. But I wish they hadn't taken it down. The house would look more like what it ought to be with its sign hanging before it."

"Well, then," said Euphemia, "let's put it up."

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I agreed instantly to this proposition, and we went to look for a ladder. We found one in the wagon-house, and carried it out to the sign-post in the front of the house. It was raining, gently, during these performances, but we had on our old clothes, and were so much interested in our work that we did not care for a little rain. I carried the sign to the post, and then, at the imminent risk of breaking my neck, I hung it on its appropriate hooks on the transverse beam of the sign-post. Now our tavern was really what it pretended to be. We gazed on the sign with admiration and content.

“Do you think we had better keep it up all the time?” I asked of my wife.

“Certainly,” said she. “It’s a part of the house. The place isn’t complete without it.”

“But suppose some one should come along and want to be entertained?”

“But no one will. And if people do come, I’ll take care of the soldiers and sailors, if you will attend to the farmers and mechanics.”

I consented to this, and we went in-doors to prepare dinner.—*Rudder Grange*.

A PIECE OF RED CALICO.

Mr. Editor:—If the following true experience shall prove of any advantage to any of your readers, I shall be glad.

I was going into town the other morning, when my wife handed me a little piece of red calico, and asked me if I would have time during the day, to buy her two yards and a half of calico like that. I assured her that it would be no trouble at all; and putting the piece of calico in my pocket, I took the train for the city.

At lunch-time I stopped in at a large dry-goods store to attend to my wife’s commission. I saw a well-dressed man walking the floor between the counters, where long lines of girls were waiting on much longer lines of customers, and asked him where I could see some red calico.

“This way, sir,” and he led me up the store. “Miss Stone,” said he to a young lady, “show this gentleman some red calico.”

“What shade do you want?” asked Miss Stone.

I showed her the little piece of calico that my wife had given me. She looked at it and handed it back to me. Then she took down a great roll of red calico and spread it out on the counter.

“Why, that isn’t the shade!” said I.

“No, not exactly,” said she; “but it is prettier than your sample.”

“That may be,” said I; “but, you see, I want to match this piece. There is something already made of this kind of calico, which needs to be made larger, or mended, or something. I want some calico of the same shade.”

The girl made no answer, but took down another roll.

“That’s the shade,” said she.

“Yes,” I replied, “but it’s striped.”

“Stripes are more worn than any thing else in calicoes,” said she.

“Yes; but this isn’t to be worn. It’s for furniture, I think. At any rate, I want perfectly plain stuff, to match something already in use.”

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“Well, I don’t think you can find it perfectly plain, unless you get Turkey-red.”

“What is Turkey-red?” I asked.

“Turkey-red is perfectly plain in calicoes,” she answered.

“Well, let me see some.”

“We haven’t any Turkey-red calico left,” she said, “but we have some very nice plain calicoes in other colors.”

“I don’t want any other color. I want stuff to match this.”

“It’s hard to match cheap calico like that,” she said, and so I left her.

I next went into a store a few doors farther up Broadway. When I entered I approached the “floor-walker,” and handing him my sample, said:

“Have you any calico like this?”

“Yes, sir,” said he. “Third counter to the right.”

I went to the third counter to the right, and showed my sample to the saleman in attendance there. He looked at it on both sides. Then he said:

“We haven’t any of this.”

“That gentleman said you had,” said I.

“We had it, but we’re out of it now. You’ll get that goods at an upholsterer’s.”

I went across the street to an upholsterer’s.

“Have you any stuff like this?’ I asked.

“No,” said the salesman. “We haven’t. Is it for furniture?”

“Yes,” I replied.

“Then Turkey-red is what you want?”

“Is Turkey-red just like this?” I asked.

“No,” said he; “but it’s much better.”

“That makes no difference to me,” I replied. “I want something just like this.”

“But they don’t use that for furniture,” he said.

“I should think people could use any thing they wanted for furniture,” I remarked, somewhat sharply.

“They can, but they don’t,” he said quite calmly. “They don’t use red like that. They use Turkey-red.”

I said no more, but left. The next place I visited was a very large dry-goods store. Of the first salesman I saw I inquired if they kept red calico like my sample.

“You’ll find that on the second story,” said he.

I went up-stairs. There I asked a man:

“Where will I find red calico?”

“In the far room to the left. Right over there.” And he pointed to a distant corner.

I walked through the crowds of purchasers and salespeople, and around the counters and tables filled with goods, to the far room to the left. When I got there I asked for red calico.

“The second counter down this side,” said the man.

I went there and produced my sample. “Calicoes down-stairs,” said the man.

“They told me they were up here,” I said.

“Not these plain goods. You’ll find ’em down-stairs at the back of the store, over on that side.”

I went down-stairs to the back of the store.

“Where will I find red calico like this?” I asked.

“Next counter but one,” said the man addressed, walking with me in the direction pointed out.

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“Dunn, show red calicoes.”

Mr. Dunn took my sample and looked at it.

“We haven’t this shade in that quality of goods,” he said.

“Well, have you it in any quality of goods?” I asked.

“Yes; we’ve got it finer.” And he took down a piece of calico, and unrolled a yard or two of it on the counter.

“That’s not this shade,” I said.

“No,” said he. “The goods is finer and the color’s better.”

“I want it to match this,” I said.

“I thought you weren’t particular about the match,” said the salesman. “You said you didn’t care for the quality of the goods, and you know you can’t match goods without you take into consideration quality and color both. If you want that quality of goods in red, you ought to get Turkey-red.”

I did not think it necessary to answer this remark, but said:

“Then you’ve got nothing to match this?”

“No, sir. But perhaps they may have it in the upholstery department, in the sixth story.”

So I got in the elevator and went up to the top of the house.

“Have you any red stuff like this?” I said to a young man.

“Red stuff? Upholstery department,—other end of this floor.”

I went to the other end of the floor.

“I want some red calico,” I said to a man.

“Furniture goods?” he asked.

“Yes,” said I.

“Fourth counter to the left.”

I went to the fourth counter to the left, and showed my sample to a salesman. He looked at it, and said:

“You’ll get this down on the first floor—calico department.”

I turned on my heel, descended in the elevator, and went out on Broadway. I was thoroughly sick of red calico. But I determined to make one more trial. My wife had bought her red calico not long before, and there must be some to be had somewhere. I ought to have asked her where she bought it, but I thought a simple little thing like that could be bought anywhere.

I went into another large dry-goods store. As I entered the door a sudden tremor seized me. I could not bear to take out that piece of red calico. If I had had any other kind of a rag about me—a pen-wiper or any thing of the sort—I think I would have asked them if they could match that.

But I stepped up to a young woman and presented my sample, with the usual question.

“Back room, counter on the left,” she said.

I went there.

“Have you any red calico like this?” I asked of the lady behind the counter.

“No, sir,” she said, “but we have it in Turkey-red.”

Turkey-red again! I surrendered.

“All right,” I said, “give me Turkey-red.”

“How much, sir?” she asked.

“I don’t know—say five yards.”

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The lady looked at me rather strangely, but measured off five yards of Turkey-red calico. Then she rapped on the counter and called out “cash!” A little girl, with yellow hair in two long plaits, came slowly up. The lady wrote the number of yards, the name of the goods, her own number, the price, the amount of the bank-note I handed her, and some other matters, probably the color of my eyes, and the direction and velocity of the wind, on a slip of paper. She then copied all this in a little book which she kept by her. Then she handed the slip of paper, the money, and the Turkey-red to the yellow-haired girl. This young girl copied the slip in a little book she carried, and then she went away with the calico, the paper slip, and the money.

After a very long time,—during which the little girl probably took the goods, the money, and the slip to some central desk, where the note was received, its amount and number entered in a book, change given to the girl, a copy of the slip made and entered, girl’s entry examined and approved, goods wrapped up, girl registered, plaits counted and entered on a slip of paper and copied by the girl in her book, girl taken to a hydrant and washed, number of towel entered on a paper slip and copied by the girl in her book, value of my note and amount of change branded somewhere on the child, and said process noted on a slip of paper and copied in her book,—the girl came to me, bringing my change and the package of Turkey-red calico.

I had time for but very little work at the office that afternoon, and when I reached home, I handed the package of calico to my wife She unrolled it and exclaimed:

“Why, this don’t match the piece I gave you!”

“Match it!” I cried. “Oh, no! it don’t match it. You didn’t want that matched. You were mistaken. What you wanted was Turkey-red—third counter to the left. I mean, Turkey-red is what they use.”

My wife looked at me in amazement, and then I detailed to her my troubles.

“Well,” said she, “this Turkey-red is a great deal prettier than what I had, and you’ve got so much of it that I needn’t use the other at all. I wish I had thought of Turkey-red before.”

“I wish from my heart you had,” said I.

ANDREW SCOGGIN.

—*The Lady or the Tiger, and other stories.*

HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

(BORN, 1835.)

* * * * *

AUNT PEN'S FUNERAL.

Poor Aunt Pen! I am sorry to say it, but for a person alive and well—tolerably well and very much alive, that is—she did use to make the greatest business of dying! Alive! why, when she was stretched out on the sofa, after an agony of asthma, or indigestion, or whatever, and had called us all about her with faltering and tears, and was apparently at her last gasp, she would suddenly rise, like her own ghost, at the sound of a second ringing of the door-bell, which our little renegade Israel had failed to answer, and declare if she could only once lay hands on Israel she would box his ears till they heard!

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For the door-bell was, perhaps, among many, one of Aunt Pen's weakest points. She knew everybody in town, as you might say. She was exceedingly entertaining to everybody outside the family. She was a great favorite with everybody. Countless gossips came to see her, tinkling at the door-bell, and hated individually by Israel, brought her all the news, heard all the previous ones had brought, admired her, praised her, pitied her, listened to her, and went away leaving her in such satisfied mood that she did not die any more that day. And as they went away they always paused at the door to say to some one of us what a cheerful invalid Aunt Pen had made herself, and what a nest of sunbeams her room always was, and what a lesson her patience and endurance ought to be. But, oh dear me, how very little they knew about it all!

We all lived together, as it happened; for when we children were left alone with but a small income, Aunt Pen—who was also alone, and only five years my senior—wrote word that we might as well come to her house in the city, for it wouldn't make expenses more, and might make them less if we divided them; and then, too, she said she would always be sure of one out of three bright and reasonable nurses. Poor Aunt Pen! perhaps she didn't find us either so bright or so reasonable as she had expected; for we used to think that in her less degree she went on the same principle with the crazy man who declared all the rest of the world except himself insane.

In honest truth, as doctor after doctor was turned away by the impatient and distempered woman up-stairs, each one took occasion to say to us down-stairs that our aunt's illness was of that nature that all the physic it required was to have her fancies humored, and that we never need give ourselves any uneasiness, for she would doubtless live to a good old age, unless some acute disease should intervene, as there was nothing at all the matter with her except a slight nervous sensitiveness, that never destroyed anybody. I suppose we were a set of young heathen, for really there were times, if you will believe it, when that was not the most reassuring statement in the world.

However. Sometimes Aunt Pen found a doctor, or a medicine, or a course of diet, or something, that gave her great sensations of relief, and then she would come down, and go about the house, and praise our administration, and say every thing went twice as far as it used to go before we came, and tell us delightful stories, of our mother's housewifely skill, and be quite herself again; and she would make the table ring with laughing, and give charming little tea-parties; and then we all did wish that Aunt Pen would live forever—and be down-stairs. But probably the next day, after one of the tea-parties, oysters, or claret punch, or hot cakes, or all together, had wrought their diablerie, and the doctor was sent for, and the warming-pan was brought out, and there was another six weeks' siege, in which, obeyed

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by every one, and physicked by herself, and sympathized with to her heart's content by callers, and shut up in a hot room with the windows full of flowering plants, and somebody reading endless novels to her with the lights burning all night long—if she wasn't ill she had every inducement to be, and nothing but an indomitable constitution hindered it. It was perfectly idle for us to tell her she was hurting herself; it only made her very indignant with us, and more determined than ever to persist in doing so.

Of course, then, the longer Aunt Pen staid in her own room the worse she really did get, and her nerves, with confinement and worry and relaxation, would by-and-by be in a condition for any sort of an outburst if we attempted the least reasoning with her. She would become, for one thing, as sleepless as an owl; then she was thoroughly sure she was going to be insane, and down would go the hydrate of chloral till the doctor forbade it on pain of death. After the chloral, too, such horrid eyes as she had! the eyes, you know, that chloral always leaves—inflamed, purple, swollen, heavy, crying, and good for any thing but seeing. Immediately then Aunt Pen went into a new tantrum; she was going to be stone-blind, and dependent on three heartless hussies for all her mercies in this life; but no, thank goodness! she had friends that would see she did not go absolutely to the wall, and would never suffer her to be imposed on by a parcel of girls who didn't care whether she lived or died—who perhaps would rather she did die—who stood open-handed for her bequests; she would leave her money to the almshouse, and if we wanted it we could go and get it there! And after that, to be sure, Aunt Pen would have a fit of remorse for her words, and confess her sin chokingly, and have us all come separately and forgive her, and would say she was the wretchedest woman on the face of the earth, that she should live undesired until her friends were all tired, and then die unlamented; and would burst into tears and cry herself into a tearing headache, and have ice on her head and a blister on the back of her neck, and be quite confident that now she was really going off with congestion of the brain.

After that, for a day or two, she would be in a heavenly frame of mind with the blister and cabbage leaves and simple cerate, and a couple of mirrors by which to examine the rise and fall of the blister; and, having had a hint of real illness, she would consent quite smilingly to the act of convalescence, and a descent to the healthy region of the parlors once more.

But no sooner were we all gay and happy in the house again, running out as we pleased, beginning to think of parties and drives and theatres and all enjoyment—and rather unobservant, as young folks are apt to be unobservant of Aunt Pen's slight habitual pensiveness in the absence of guests or excitement, and of her ways generally—than Aunt Pen would challenge some lobster-salad to mortal combat, and, of course,

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come out floored by the colic. A little whiskey then; and as a little gave so much ease, she would try a great deal. The result always was a precipitate retreat up-stairs, a howling hysteric, bilious cramps, the doctor, a subcutaneous injection of morphine in her arm; then chattering like a magpie, relapsed into awful silence, and, convinced that the morphine had been carried straight to her heart, a composing of her hands and feet, an injured dismissal of every soul from the room, with the assurance that we should find her straight and stiff and stone-dead in the morning.

We never did. For, as we seldom had opportunity of an undisturbed night's rest, we usually took her at her word if any access of ill temper, or despair, or drowsiness occasioned banishment from the presence. Not that we had always been so calm about it; there was a time when we were excited with every alarm, thrown into flurries and panics quite to Aunt Pen's mind, running after the doctor at two o'clock of the morning, building a fire in the range ourselves at midnight to make gruel for her, rubbing her till we rubbed the skin off our hands, combing her hair till we went to sleep standing; but Aunt Pen had cried wolf so long, and the doctors had all declared so stoutly that there was no wolf, that our once soft hearts had become quite hard and concrete.

When at last Aunt Pen had had an alarm from nearly every illness for which the pharmacopoeia prescribes, and she knew that neither we nor the doctors would listen to the probability of their recurrence; she had an attack of "sinking." No, there was no particular disease, she used to say, only sinking; she had been pulled down to an extent from which she had no strength to recuperate; she was only sinking, a little weaker to-day than she was yesterday—only sinking. But Aunt Pen ate a very good breakfast of broiled birds and toast and coffee; a very good lunch of cold meats and dainties, and a great goblet of thick cream; a very good dinner of soup and roast and vegetables and dessert, and perhaps a chicken bone at eleven o'clock in the evening. And when the saucy little Israel, who carried up her tray, heard her say she was sinking, he remarked that it was because of the load on her stomach.

One day, I remember, Aunt Pen was very much worse than usual. We were all in her room, a sunshiny place which she had connected with the adjoining one by sliding-doors, so that it might be big enough for us all to bring our work on occasion, and make it lively for her. She had on a white-cashmere dressing-gown trimmed with swan's-down, and she lay among the luxurious cushions of a blue lounge, with a paler blue blanket, which she had had one of us tricot for her, lying over her feet, and altogether she looked very ideal and ethereal; for Aunt Pen always did have such an eye to picturesque effect that I don't know how she could ever consent to the idea of mouldering away into dust like common clay.

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She had sent Maria down for Mel and me to come up-stairs with whatever occupied us, for she was convinced that she was failing fast, and knew we should regret it if we did not have the last of her. As we had received the same message nearly every other day during the last three or four weeks, we did not feel extraordinarily alarmed, but composedly took our baskets and scissors, and trudged along after Maria.

“I am sure I ought to be glad that I’ve succeeded in training my nieces into such industrious habits,” said Aunt Pen, after a little while, looking at Mel; “but I should think that when a near relative approached the point of death, the fact might throw needle and thread into the background for a time.” Then she paused for Maria to fan a little more breath into her. “It’s different with Helen,” soon she said; “the white silk shawl she is netting for me may be needed at any moment to lay me out in.”

“Dear me, Aunt Pen!” cried Mel; “what a picture you’d be, laid out in a white net shawl!” For the doctor had told us to laugh at these whims all we might.

“Oh, you heartless girl!” said Aunt Pen. “To think of pictures at such a time!” And she closed her eyes as if weary of the world.

“I never saw anybody who liked to revel in the ghastly the way you do, Aunt Pen.”

“Mel!” said Aunt Pen, with quite a show of color in her cheek; “I shall send you down stairs.”

“Do,” said Mel; “where I can cut out my gown in peace.”

“Cutting a gown at the bedside of the dying! Are you cold-blooded, or are you insensible?”

“Aunt Pen,” said Mel, leaning on the point of her scissors, “you know very well that I have to make my own dresses or go without them. And you have kept me running your idle errands, up and down two flights of stairs, to the doctor’s and the druggist’s, and goodness knows where and all, till I haven’t a thread of any thing that is fit to be seen. You’ve been posturing this grand finale of yours, too, all the last three weeks, and it’s time you had it perfect now; and you must let me alone till I get my gown done.”

“It will do to wear at my funeral,” said Aunt Pen bitterly, as she concluded.

“No, it won’t,” said Mel, doggedly; “it’s red.”

“Red!” cried Aunt Pen, suddenly opening her eyes, and half raising on one hand. “What in wonder have you bought a red dress for? You are quite aware that I can’t bear the least intimation of the color. My nerves are in such a state that a shred of red makes me—”

“You won’t see it, you know,” said Mel in what did seem to me an unfeeling manner.

“No,” said Aunt Pen. “Very true. I sha’n’t see it. But what,” added she presently snapping open her eyes, “considered as a mere piece of economy, you bought a red dress for when you are immediately going into black, passes common-sense to conjecture! You had better send it down and have it dyed at once before you cut it, for the shrinkage will spoil it forever if you don’t.”

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“Much black I shall go into,” said Mel.

Maria laughed. Aunt Pen cried.

“Aunt Pen,” said the cruel Mel, “if you were going to die you wouldn’t be crying. Dying people have no tears to shed, the doctors say.”

“Somebody ought to cry,” said poor Aunt Pen, witheringly. “Don’t talk to me about doctors,” she continued, after a silence interrupted only by the snipping of the scissors. “They are a set of quacks. They know nothing. I will have all the doctors in town at my funeral for pall-bearers. It will be a satire too delicate for them to appreciate, though. Speaking of that occasion, Helen,” she went on, turning to me as a possible ally, “I have so many friends that I suppose the house will be full.”

“Wouldn’t you enjoy it more from church, auntie?” said I.

“Oh, you hard and wicked girls!” she cried. “You’re all alike. Listen to me! If you won’t hear my wishes, you must take my commands. Now, in the first place, I want the parlors to be overflowing with flowers, literally lined with flowers. I don’t care how much money it takes; there’ll be enough left for you—more than you deserve. And I want you to be very sure that I’m not to be exposed unless I look exactly as I’d like to look. You’re to put on my white silk that I was to have been married in, and my veil, and the false orange blossoms. They’re all in the third drawer of the press, and the key’s on my chatelaine. And if—if—well,” said Aunt Pen, more to herself than us, “if he comes, he’ll understand. The Bride of Death.”

After that she did not say any more for some minutes, and we were all silent and sorry, and Mel was fidgeting in a riot of repentance; we had never, either of us, heard a word of any romance of Aunt Pen’s before. We began to imagine that there might be some excuse for the overthrow of Aunt Pen’s nervous system, some reality in the overthrow. “You will leave this ring on my finger;” said she; by-and-by. “If Chauncey Read comes, and wants it, he will take it off. It will fit his finger as well now, I suppose, as it did when he wore it before he gave it to me.” Then Aunt Pen bit her lip and shut her eyes, and seemed to be slipping off into a gentle sleep.

“By-the-way!” said she, suddenly, sitting upright on the lounge, “I won’t have the horses from Brown’s livery—

“The what, auntie?”

“The horses for the cortege. You know Brown puts that magnificent span of his in the hearse on account of their handsome action. I’m sure Mrs. Gaylard would have been frightened to death if she could only have seen the way they pranced at her funeral last fall. I was determined then that they should never draw me;” and Aunt Pen shivered for

herself beforehand. “And I can’t have them from Timlin’s, for the same reason,” said she. “All his animals are skittish; and you remember when a pair of them took fright and dashed away from the procession and ran straight to the river, and there’d have been four other funerals if the schooner at the wharf hadn’t stopped the runaways. And Timlins has a way, too, of letting white horses follow the hearse with the first mourning-coach, and it’s very bad luck, very—an ill omen; a prophecy of Death and the Pale Horse again, you know. And I won’t have them from Shust’s, either,” said Aunt Pen, “for he is simply the greatest extortioner since old Isaac the Jew.”

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“Well, auntie,” said Mel, forgetful of her late repentance, “I don’t see but you’ll have to go with Shank’s mare.”

Even Aunt Pen laughed then. “Don’t you really think you are going to lose me, girls?” asked she.

“No, auntie,” replied Maria. “We all think you are a hypo.”

“A hypo?”

“Not a hypocrite,” said Mel, “but a hypochondriac.”

“I wish I were,” sighed Aunt Pen; “I wish I were. I should have some hope of myself then,” said the poor inconsistent innocent. “Oh no, no; I feel it only too well; I am going fast. You will all regret your disbelief when I am gone;” and she lay back among her pillows. “That reminds me,” she murmured, presently. “About my monument.”

“Oh, Aunt Pen, do be still,” said Mel.

“No,” said Aunt Pen, firmly; “it may be a disagreeable duty, but that is all the better reason for me to bring my mind to it. And if I don’t attend to it now, it never will be attended to. I know what relatives are. They put down a slab of slate with a skull and cross-bones scratched on it, and think they’ve done their duty. Not that I mean any reflections on you; you’re all well-meaning, but you’re giddy. I shall haunt you if you do any thing of the kind! No; you may send Mr. Mason up here this afternoon, and I will go over his designs with him. I am going to have carved Carrara marble, set in a base of polished Scotch granite, and the inscription is—Girls!” cried Aunt Pen, rising and clasping her knees with unexpected energy, “I expressly forbid my age being printed in the paper, or on the lid, or on the stone! I won’t gratify every gossip in town, that I won’t! I shall take real pleasure in baffling their curiosity. And another thing, while I am about it, don’t you ask Tom Maltby to my funeral, or let him come in, if he comes himself, on any account whatever. I should rise in my shroud if he approached me. Yes, I should! Tom Maltby may be all very well; I dare say he is; and I hope I die at peace with him and all mankind, as a good Christian should. I forgive him; yes, certainly, I forgive him; but it doesn’t follow that I need forget him; and, so long as I remember him, the way he conducted in buying the pew over my head I can’t get over, dead or alive. And if I only do get well we shall have a reckoning that will make his hair stand on end—that he may rely on!” And here Aunt Pen took the fan from Maria, and moved it actively, till she remembered herself, when she resigned it. “One thing more,” she said. “Whatever happens, Helen, don’t let me be kept over Sunday. There’ll certainly be another death in the family within the year if you do. If I die on Saturday, there’s no help for it. Common decency won’t let you shove me into the ground at once, and so you will have to make up your minds for a second summons.” And Aunt Pen, contemplating the suttee of some one of us with great philosophy, lay down and closed

her eyes again. “You might have it by torchlight on Sunday night, though,” said she, half opening them. “That would be very pretty.” And then she dropped off to sleep with such a satisfied expression of countenance that we judged her to be welcoming in imagination the guests at her last rites herself.

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Whatever the dream was, she was rudely roused from it by the wreched little Israel, who came bounding up the stairs, and, without word or warning, burst into the room, almost white with horror. Why Israel was afraid I can't conjecture, but, at any rate, a permanent fright would have been of great personal advantage to him. "Oh, ma'am! oh, miss! dere's a pusson down stairs, a cullud woman, wid der small-pox!" he almost whistled in his alarm.

"With the small-pox!" cried Aunt Pen, springing into the middle of the floor, regardless of her late repose *in articulo mortis*. "Go away, Israel! Have you been near her? Put her out immediately! How on earth did she get there?"

"You allus telled me to let everybody in," chattered Israel.

"Put her out! put her out!" cried Aunt Pen, half dancing with impatience.

"We can't get her out. She's right acrost der door-step. We's feared ter tech her."

But Aunt Pen's head was out of the window, and she was shouting: "Police! fire! murder! thieves!" possibly in the order of importance of the four calamities, but quite as if she had a plenty of breath left; and, for a wonder, the police came to the rescue, and directly afterward an ambulance took the poor victim of the frightful epidemic to the hospital. I believe it turned out to be only measles after all, though.

"Run, Israel!" screamed Aunt Pen then; "run instantly and bring home a couple of pounds of roll-brimstone, and tell the maids to riddle the furnace fire and make it as bright and hot as possible, and to light fires in the parlor grates, and in the old Latrobe, and in every room in the house, without losing a minute. We'll make this house too warm for it!"

And, to our amazement, as soon as Israel came darting back with the impish material, Aunt Pen took a piece in each hand, directed us to do the same, and wrapping the blue afghan round her shoulders, descended to the lower rooms three steps at a time, sent for the doctor to come and vaccinate us, and having set a chair precisely over the register where a red-hot stream of air was pouring up, she placed herself upon it and issued her orders.

Every window was closed, every grate from basement to attic had a fire lighted in it, and little pans of brimstone were burning in every room and hall in the house, while we, astonished, indignant, frightened, and amused, sat enduring the torments of vapor and sulphur baths to the point of suffocation.

"I can't bear this another moment," wheezed Mel.

“It’s the only way,” replied Aunt Pen, serenely, with a rivulet trickling down her nose. “You kill the germs by heat, and since we can’t bake ourselves quite to death, we make sure of the work by the fumes.”

And as she sat there, her face rubicund, her swan’s-down straight, drops on her cheeks, her chin, her forehead, and wherever drops could cling, her eyes watering, her curls limp, and an atmosphere of unbearable odor enveloping her in its cloud, the front door opened, and a footstep rung on the tiles.

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“Jess you keep out o’ yer!” yelled Israel to the intruder, seeing it wasn’t the doctor. “We’s got der small-pox, and am a-killing de gemmens—”

“Pen!” cried a man’s voice through the smoke—a deep, melodious voice.

“What!” exclaimed Aunt Pen, starting up, and then pausing as if she fancied the horrid fumes might have befogged her brain.

“Pen!” the voice cried again.

“Chauncey! Chauncey Read!” she shrieked. “Where do you come from? Am I dreaming?”

“From the North Pacific,” answered the voice; and we dimly discerned its owner groping his way forward. “From the five years’ whaling voyage into which I was gagged and dragged—shanghaied, they call it. O, Pen, I didn’t dare to hope I should find—”

“Oh, Chauncey, is it you?” she cried, and fell fainting at his feet.

The draught from the open door after him was blowing away the smoke, and we saw what a great, sunburned, handsome fellow it was that had caught her in his arms, and was bearing her out to the back balcony and the fresh air there, used in the course of his whaling voyage, perhaps, to odors no more belonging to Araby the Blest than those of burning brimstone do; and, seeing the movement, we divined that he knew as much about the resources of the house as we did, and so we discreetly withdrew, Israel’s head being twisted behind him as he went to such extent that you might have supposed he had had his neck wrung.

Well, we put the white silk and the tulle on Aunt Pen after all; yellow as it was, she would have no other—only fresh, natural orange blossoms in place of the false wreath. And if we had not so often had her word for it in past times, we never should have taken her for any thing but the gayest bride, the most alive and happy woman in the world. They returned to the old house from their wedding journey, and we all live together in great peace and pleasantness. But though three years are passed and gone since Chauncey Read came home and brought a new atmosphere with him into our lives, Aunt Pen has never had a sick day yet; and we find that any allusion to her funeral gives her such a superstitious trembling that we are pleased to believe it indefinitely postponed, and by tacit and mutual consent we never say any thing about it.—*Harper’s Magazine*, June, 1872.

SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS.

("MARK TWAIN.")

(BORN, 1835.)

* * * * *

THE CELEBRATED JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY.

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend's friend, *Leonidas W.* Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append the result. I have a lurking suspicion that *Leonidas W.* Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous *Jim* Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some infernal reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless for me. If that was the design, it certainly succeeded.

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I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the old, dilapidated tavern in the ancient mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance. He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about a cherished companion of his boyhood named *Leonidas W.* Smiley—*Rev. Leonidas W.* Smiley—a young minister of the Gospel, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel's Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me any thing about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was any thing ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in *finesse*. To me, the spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling, was exquisitely absurd. As I said before, I asked him to tell me what he knew of Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and he replied as follows. I let him go on in his own way, and never interrupted him once:

There was a feller here once by the name of *Jim* Smiley, in the winter of '49—or may be it was the spring of '50—I don't recollect exactly, somehow, though what makes me think it was one or the other is because I remember the big flume wasn't finished when he first came to the camp; but any way he was the curiosest man about always betting on any thing that turned up you ever see, if he could get anybody to bet on the other side; and if he couldn't, he'd change sides. Any way that suited the other man would suit him—any way just so's he got a bet, *he* was satisfied. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner. He was always ready and laying for a chance; there couldn't be no solitry thing mentioned but that feller'd offer to bet on it, and take any side you please, as I was just telling you. If there was a horse-race, you'd find him flush, or you'd find him busted at the end of it; if there was a dog-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a cat-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a chicken-fight, he'd bet on it; why, if there was two birds sitting on a fence, he would bet you which one would fly first; or if there was a camp-meeting, he would be there reg'lar, to bet on Parson Walker, which he judged to be the

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best exhorter about here, and so he was, too, and a good man. If he even seen a straddle-bug start to go anywheres, he would bet you how long it would take him to get wherever he was going to, and if you took him up, he would foller that straddle-bug to Mexico but what he would find out where he was bound for and how long he was on the road. Lots of the boys here has seen that Smiley, and can tell you about him. Why, it never made no difference to *him*—he would bet on *any* thing—the dangdest feller. Parson Walker's wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they warn't going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley asked how she was, and he said she was considerable better—thank the Lord for his inf'nit mercy—and coming on so smart that, with the blessing of Prov'dence, she'd get well yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, "Well, I'll risk two-and-a-half that she don't, any way."

This-yer Smiley had a mare—the boys called her the fifteen-minute nag, but that was only in fun, you know, because, of course, she was faster than that—and he used to win money on that horse, for all she was so slow and always had the asthma, or the distemper, or the consumption, or something of that kind. They used to give her two or three hundred yards start, and then pass her under way; but always at the fag-end of the race she'd get excited and desperate-like, and come cavorting and straddling up, and scattering her legs around limber, sometimes in the air, and sometimes out to one side amongst the fences, and kicking up m-o-r-e dust, and raising m-o-r-e racket with her coughing and sneezing and blowing her nose—and always fetch up at the stand just about a neck ahead, as near as you could cipher it down.

And he had a little small bull pup, that to look at him you'd think he wan't worth a cent, but to set around and look ornery, and lay for a chance to steal something. But as soon as the money was up on him, he was a different dog; his under-jaw'd begin to stick out like the fo'castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover, and shine savage like the furnaces. And a dog might tackle him, and bully-rag him, and bite him, and throw him over his shoulder two or three times, and Andrew Jackson—which was the name of the pup—Andrew Jackson would never let on but what *he* was satisfied, and hadn't expected nothing else—and the bets being doubled and doubled on the other side all the time, till the money was all up; and then all of a sudden he would grab that other dog jest by the j'int of his hind leg and freeze to it—not chaw, you understand, but only jest grip and hang on till they throwed up the sponge, if it was a year. Smiley always come out winner on that pup, till he harnessed a dog once that didn't have no hind legs, because they'd been sawed off by a circular saw, and when the thing had gone along far enough, and the money was all up, and he come to make a snatch for his pet holt, he saw in a minute how he'd

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been imposed on, and how the other dog had him in the door, so to speak, and he 'peared surprised, and then he looked sorter discouraged-like, and didn't try no more to win the fight, and so he got shucked out bad. He give Smiley a look, as much as to say his heart was broke, and it was *his* fault, for putting up a dog that hadn't no hind legs for him to take holt of, which was his main dependence in a fight, and then he limped off a piece and laid down and died. It was a good pup, was that Andrew Jackson, and would have made a name for hisself if he'd lived, for the stuff was in him, and he had genius —I know it, because he hadn't had no opportunities to speak of, and it don't stand to reason that a dog could make such a fight as he could under them circumstances, if he hadn't no talent. It always makes me feel sorry when I think of that last fight of his'n, and the way it turned out.

Well, this-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, and chicken cocks, and tom-cats, and all them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'klated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he *did* learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut —see him turn one summerset, or may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most any thing —and I believe him. Why, I've seen him set Dan'l Webster down here on this floor—-Dan'l Webster was the name of the frog—and sing out, "Flies, Dan'l, flies!" and quicker'n you could wink, he'd spring straight up, and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor again as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn't no idea he'd been doin' any more'n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straight-for'ard as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it come to that, Smiley would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had travelled and been everywheres, all said he laid over any frog that ever *they* see.

Well, Smiley kept the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was—come across him with his box, and says,

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“What might it be that you’ve got in the box?”

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent like, “It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, may be, but it ain’t—it’s only just a frog.”

And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, “H’m—so’t is. Well, what’s *he* good for?”

“Well,” Smiley says, easy and careless, “he’s good enough for *one* thing, I should judge—he can out-jump ary frog in Calaveras county.”

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, “Well, I don’t see no p’ints about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog.”

“May be you don’t,” Smiley says. “May be you understand frogs, and may be you don’t understand ’em; may be you’ve had experience, and may be you ain’t, only a amature, as it were. Any ways, I’ve got *my* opinion, and I’ll risk forty dollars that he can out-jump any frog in Calaveras county.”

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, “Well, I’m only a stranger here, and I ain’t got no frog; but if I had a frog, I’d bet you.”

And then Smiley says, “That’s all right—that’s all right—if you’ll hold my box a minute, I’ll go and get you a frog.” And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley’s, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a teaspoon and filled him full of quail shot—-filled him pretty near up to his chin—and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketched a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

“Now, if you’re ready, set him alongside of Dan’l, with his fore-paws just even with Dan’l, and I’ll give the word.” Then he says, “One—two—three—jump!” and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off, but Dan’l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders—so—like a Frenchman, but it wan’t no use—he couldn’t budge; he was planted as solid as an anvil, and he couldn’t no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted too, but he didn’t have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulders—this way—at Dan’l, and says again, very deliberate, “Well, I don’t see no pints about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog.”

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan'l a long time, and at last he says, "I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw'd off for—I wonder if there ain't some thing the matter with him—he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow." And he ketched Dan'l by the nap of the neck, and lifted him up and says, "Why, blame my cats, if he don't weigh five pound!" and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man—he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketched him. And—

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(Here Simon Wheeler heard his name called from the front yard, and got up to see what was wanted.) And turning to me as he moved away, he said: "Just set where you are, stranger, and rest easy—I an't going to be gone a second."

But, by your leave, I did not think that a continuation of the history of the enterprising vagabond *Jim* Smiley would be likely to afford me much information concerning the Rev. *Leonidas W.* Smiley, and so I started away.

At the door I met the sociable Wheeler returning, and he buttonholed me and recommenced:

"Well, this-yer Smiley had a yaller one-eyed cow that didn't have no tail, only just a short stump like a bannanner, and—"

"Oh, hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!" I muttered, good-naturedly, and bidding the old gentleman good-day, I departed.

FITZ HUGH LUDLOW. (BORN, 1836—DIED, 1870.)

* * * * *

BEN THIRLWALL'S SCHOOLDAYS.

My name is Ben Thirlwall, and I am the son of rich but honest parents. I never had a wish ungratified until I was twelve years of age. My wish then was to stay on a two-year-old colt which had never been broken. He did not coincide with me, and a vast revelation of the resistances to individual will of which the universe is capable, also of a terrestrial horizon, bottom upward, burst upon me during the brief space which I spent in flying over his head. Picked up senseless, I was carried to the bosom of my family on a wheelbarrow, and awoke to the consciousness that my parents had decided on sending me to a boarding-school,—a remedy to this day sovereign in the opinion of all well-regulated parents for all tangential aberrations from the back of a colt or the laws of society.

The principal's name was Barker; and my only clue to his character consisted in overhearing that he was an excellent disciplinarian. I was afraid to ask what that meant, but on reflection concluded it to be a geographical distinction, and, associating him with Mesopotamia or Beloochistan, expected to find him a person of mild manners, who shaved his head, wore a tall hat of dyed sheep's wool, and did a large business in spices with people who visited him on camels in a front-yard surrounded by sheds, and having a fountain that played in the middle.

Having read several books of travels, I was corroborated in my view when I learned that Mr. Barker lived at the east, and still further, when on going around point Judith on the

steamboat with my father, I became very sick at the stomach, as all the travellers had done in their first chapter.

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I need not say that the reality of Mr. Barker was a very terrible awakening, which contained no lineament of my purple dream, save the bastinado. Without distinction of age or season the youths who, as per circular, enjoyed the softening influence of his refined Christian home, rose to the sound of the gong at five A.M., which may have been very nice in a home for the early Christians, but was reported among the boys to have entirely stopped the growth of Little Briggs. This was a child, whose mother had married again, and whose step-father had felt his duty to his future too keenly to deprive him of the benign influences of Barker at any time in the last six years. After rising, we had ten minutes to wash our faces and hands,—a period by the experience of mankind demonstrably insufficient, where the soap is of that kind very properly denominated cast-steel (though purists have a different spelling), and you have to break an inch of ice to get into the available region of your water-pitcher. Chunks, who has since made a large fortune on war-contracts, kept himself in peanuts and four-cent pies for an entire winter session, by selling an invention of his own, which consisted of soap, dissolved in water on the stove during the day-time, put in bottles hooked from the lamp-room by means of a false key, to be carried to bed and kept warm by boys, whose pocket-money and desire for a prompt detergent in the morning were adequate to the disbursement of half a dime a package. I myself took several violent colds from having the glass next my skin during severe nights; but that was nothing so bad as the case of Little Briggs, who from lack of the half-dime, often came down to prayers with a stripe of yesterday's pencil black on one side of his nose, and a shaving of soap, which, in the frenzy of despair he had gouged out of his stony cake, on the other. The state of mind consistent with such a condition of countenance did not favor correct recitation of the tougher names in Deuteronomy; so, it can be a cause of surprise to no one, that, when called on at prayers, and prompted by a ridiculous neighbor, little Briggs sometimes asserted Joshua to have driven out the Hivites and the Amorites, and the Canaanites and the Jebusites, and the Hittites and the Perizzites, and the Moabites and the Musquito-bites, for which he was regularly sent to bed on Saturday afternoon, as he had no pocket-money to stop, his papa desiring him to learn self-denial young, as he was intended for a missionary; though goodness knows that there wasn't enough of him to go round among many heathen.

From this specimen of discipline may be learned the entire Barkerian system of training. I was about to say, "*ex uno disce omnes*," but, as it's the only Latin I remember from the lot which got rubbed into—or rather over—me at Barker's, I'm rather sparing of it, not knowing but I can bring it in somewhere else with better effect. As with the Word of God, so with

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that of man,—the grand Barkerian idea of how to fix it in a boy's memory was to send him to bed, or excoriate his palm. If religion and polite learning could have been communicated by sheets, like chicken-pox, or blistered into one like the stern but curative cantharides, Mr. Barker's boys would have become the envy of mankind and the beloved of the gods; but not even Little Briggs died young from the latter or any other cause, which speaks volumes for his constitution....

The two Misses Moodle came to establish a young ladies' seminary in the village of Mungerville, on whose outskirts our own school was situated, bringing along with them, as the county paper stated, "that charming atmosphere of refinement and intellectuality in which they ever moved"; and, what was of more consequence, a capital of twenty girls to start with. Professional politeness inspired Mr. Barker to make a call on the fair strangers, which the personal fascinations of the younger Miss Moodle induced him to repeat. The atmosphere of refinement and intellectuality gradually acted on him in the nature of an intoxicating gas, until at length, after twenty-five years of successfully intrenched widowhood, he laid his heart in the mits of the younger Miss Moodle, and the two became one Barker.

As a consequence of this union, social relations began to be established between the two schools. Mrs. Barker, of an occasional evening, wished to run down and visit her sister. If Mr. Barker was engaged in quarrying a page of Cicero out of some stony boy in whom nature had never made any Latin deposit, or had just put a fresh batch of offenders into the penal oven of untimely bed, and felt compelled to run up now and then to keep up the fire under them, by a harrowing description of the way their parents would feel if they knew of their behavior—an instrument dear to Mr. Barker as a favorite poker to a boss-baker in love with his profession—then, after a clucking noise, indicative of how much he would like to chuck her under the chin, but for the presence of company, Mr. Barker would coo to Mrs. Barker, "Lovey, your pick, sweet!" waving his hand comprehensively over the whole school-room; or "Dear, suppose we say Briggs, or Chunks, or Thirlwall," as the case might be. The only difficulty about Briggs was clothes. That used to be obviated by a selection from the trunks of intimate friends; and Briggs was such a nice boy, that it was a real gratification to see him with your best jacket on. Many's the time the old fellow has said to Chunks or me, "What a blessing that I grew! If I hadn't, how could I ever wear your trousers?" In process of time these occasional visits, as escort to Mrs. Barker, expanded into an attendance of all the older boys (when not in bed for moral baking purposes) upon a series of bi-monthly soirees, given by the remaining Miss Moodle, with a superficial view to her pupils' attainment of ease in society; and a material substratum of sandwiches, which Miss Moodle preferred to see,

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through the atmosphere of refinement and intellectuality, as “a simple repast.” To this was occasionally added a refreshment, which I have seen elsewhere only at Sunday-school picnics,—a mild tap of slightly sweetened water, which tasted as if lemons had formerly been kept in the pail it was made in;—only for Sunday-schools they make it strong at the outset, and add water during the hymns, with a vague but praiseworthy expectation that, in view of the sacredness of the occasion, there will be some miraculous interposition, as in the case of the widow’s cruse, to keep the beverage up to proof; while Miss Moodle’s liquor preserved throughout the evening a weakness of which generous natures scorned to take advantage beyond the first tumbler.

At this portion of my career I was dawned upon by Miss Tucker. From mature years I look back with a shudder upon the number of parchmenty sandwiches which I ate, the reservoirs of lemony water which I drank, in order to be in that lovely creature’s society. I experienced agonies in thinking how much longer it might be before I could get a coat with tails, when I calculated how soon she would be putting up her back hair. Her eyes were as blue as I was when I thought she liked Briggs; and she had a complexion compared with which strawberries and cream were nowhere. When she was sent to the piano, to show people what the Moodle system could do in the way of a musical education, I fell into a cataleptic state and floated off upon a flood of harmony. Miss Moodle and her mits, self and lemon kids, even the sleepless eye of Barker, watching for an indiscretion, upon the strength of which he might defensibly send somebody to bed the next Saturday afternoon, all vanished from before me, swallowed up in a mild glory, which contained but two objects,—an angel with low neck and short sleeves, and an insensate hippopotamus of a piano, which did not wriggle all over with ecstasy when her white fingers tickled him.

At such moments I would gladly have gone down on all fours, and had a key-board mortised into my side at any expense of personal torture, if Miss Tucker could only have played a piece on me, and herself been conscious of the chords she was awakening inside my jacket. I loved her to that degree that my hair never seemed brushed enough when I beheld her; and I quite spoiled the shape of my best boots through an elevation of the instep, caused by putting a rolled-up pair of stockings inside each heel, to approximate the manly stature, at our bi-monthly meetings. Even her friend, Miss Crickey, a mealy-faced little girl, with saffron hair, who had been pushed by Miss Moodle so far into the higher branches, that she had a look of being perpetually frightened to death with the expectation of hearing them crack and let her down from a great height, —seemed beautiful to me from the mere fact of daily breathing the same air with such an angel, sharing her liquorice-stick, and borrowing her sweet little thimble.

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I had other reasons for prejudice in Miss Crickey's favor. She was the only person to whom I could talk freely regarding the depth of my passion for Miss Tucker. Not even to the object of that tremendous feeling could I utter a syllable which seemed in any way adequate. With an overpowering consciousness how ridiculous it was, and not only so, but how far from original, I could give her papers of lemon Jackson-balls, hinting simultaneously that, though plump as her cheeks, they were not half so sweet; and through a figure, whose correct name I have since learned to be periphrasis, I could suggest how much my soul yearned to expire on her ruby lips, by asking if she had ever played doorkeeper; regretting that the atmosphere of refinement and intellectuality did not admit of that healthful recreation at Moodle's, and begging her to guess whom I would call out if I were doorkeeper myself. When she opened her blue eyes innocently, and said, "Miss Crickey?" the intimation was rejected with a melancholy dissatisfaction, which would have been disdain but for the character of my feelings to its source. And when, on my pressing her for the name of the favored mortal whom she would call out if she were doorkeeper, she slyly dropped her eyes and asked if Briggs sounded any thing like it, I savagely refused to consider the proposition at all, and for the rest of the evening ate sandwiches to that degree I wonder my life was not despaired of, and fled for relief to the lemony bowl. The result of this mad vortex having been colic and calomel, after my return to Barker's on that evening, I foreswore such dangerous excesses at the next bi-monthly; but putting a larger pair of stockings in each boot-heel, to impress Miss Tucker with a sense of what she had lost, I devoted myself during the earlier part of the evening to a growing young woman, of the name of Wagstaff, considerably older than myself and runing straight up and down from whatever side one might contemplate her. Her conversation was not entertaining, unless from the Chinese point of view, which, I understand, distinctly favors monosyllables, and she giggled at me so persistently that I feared Miss Tucker would think I must be making myself ridiculous; but, on her being sent to the piano, I stood and turned over her music with a consciousness that if I ever looked impressive it was then. All this I did in the effort to seem gay, although my heart was breaking. I had no comfort on earth save the thought that I had been brutal to Briggs, and that he sat in an obscure corner of the room among some little girls in Long Division, hiding, behind an assistant teacher's skirts, the whitey-brown toe which my blacking-brush refused to refresh, while I bore my grief upon a pair of new boots plentifully provided with squeak-leather. When Miss Tucker slipped a little piece of paper into my hand, as I made a hollow show of passing her the sandwiches, I came very near dropping the plate; and when I had a chance to open it unobserved, and read

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the words, “Are you mad with me?” I could not occupy my cold and dreary pinnacle a moment longer, but sought an early opportunity of squeezing her hand two seats behind the voluminous asylum of Briggs’s toes, and whispering, slightly confused by intensity of feeling, that if I had done any thing I was sorry for, I was willing to be forgiven. From that moment I was Miss Tucker’s slave. Oh, woman, woman! The string on which you play us is as long as life; it ties your baby-bib; it laces your queenly bodice; and on its slenderest tag we dangle everywhere!—*Little Briggs and I.* (*From Little Brother and Other Genre Pictures*.)

SELECTIONS FROM A BRACE OF BOYS.

I am a bachelor uncle. That, as a mere fact, might happen to anybody; but I am a bachelor uncle by internal fitness. I am one essentially, just as I am an individual of the Caucasian division of the human race; and if, through untoward circumstances,—which Heaven forbid,—I should lose my present position, I shouldn’t be surprised if you saw me out in the *Herald* under “Situations Wanted—Males.” Thanks to a marrying tendency in the rest of my family, I have now little need to advertise, all the business being thrown into my way which a single member of my profession can attend to....

I meander, like a desultory, placid river of an old bachelor as I am, through the flowery mead of several nurseries. I am detained by all the little roots that run down into me to drink happiness, but I linger longest among the children of my sister Lu.

Lu married Mr. Lovegrove. He is a merchant, retired with a fortune amassed by the old-fashioned, slow processes of trade, and regards the mercantile life of the present day only as so much greed and gambling Christianly baptized.... Lu is my favorite sister; Lovegrove an unusually good article of brother-in-law and I cannot say that any of my nieces and nephews interest me more than their two children, Daniel and Billy, who are more unlike than words can paint them. They are far apart in point of years; Daniel is twenty-two, Billy eleven. I was reminded of this fact the other day by Billy, as he stood between my legs, scowling at his book of sums.

“’A boy has eighty-five turnips, and gives his sister thirty,’—pretty present for a girl, isn’t it?” said Billy, with an air of supreme contempt. “Could *you* stand such stuff,—say?”

I put on my instructive face and answered,—

“Well, my dear Billy, you know that arithmetic is necessary to you if you mean to be an industrious man and succeed in business. Suppose your parents were to lose all their property, what would become of them without a little son who could make money and keep accounts?”

“Oh,” said Billy, with surprise. “Hasn’t father got enough stamps to see him through?”

“He has now, I hope; but people don’t always keep them. Suppose they should go by some accident, when your father was too old to make any more stamps for himself?”

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“You haven’t thought of brother Daniel—”

True; for nobody ever had, in connection with the active employments of life.

“No, Billy,” I replied, “I forgot him; but then, you know, Daniel is more of a student than a business man, and—”

“O Uncle Teddy! you don’t think I mean he’d support them? I meant I’d have to take care of father and mother, and him too, when they’d all got to be old people together. Just think! I’m eleven, and he’s twenty-two so he is just twice as old as I am. How old are you?”

“Forty, Billy, last August.”

“Well, you aren’t so awful old, and when I get to be as old as you, Daniel will be eighty. Seth Kendall’s grandfather isn’t more than that, and he has to be fed with a spoon, and a nurse puts him to bed, and wheels him round in a chair like a baby. That takes the stamps, I bet! Well, I’ll tell you how I’ll keep my accounts; I’ll have a stick, like Robinson Crusoe, and every time I make a toadskin I’ll gouge a piece out of one side of the stick, and every time I spend one I’ll gouge a piece out of the other.”

“Spend a *what*?” said the gentle and astonished voice of my sister Lu, who, unperceived, had slipped into the room.

“A toadskin, ma,” replied Billy, shutting up Colburn with a farewell glance of contempt.

“Dear, dear! Where does the boy learn such horrid words?”

“Why, ma, don’t you know what a toadskin is? Here’s one,” said Billy, drawing a dingy five-cent stamp from his pocket. “And don’t I wish I had lots of ’em!”

“Oh!” sighed his mother, “to think I should have a child so addicted to slang! How I wish he were like Daniel!”

“Well, mother,” replied Billy, “if you wanted two boys just alike you’d oughter had twins. There ain’t any use of my trying to be like Daniel now, when he’s got eleven years the start. Whoop! There’s a dog-fight; hear ’em! It’s Joe Casey’s dog,—I know his bark!”

With these words my nephew snatched his Glengarry bonnet from the table and bolted downstairs to see the fun.

“What will become of him?” said Lu, hopelessly; “he has no taste for any thing but rough play; and then such language as he uses! Why *isn’t* he like Daniel?”

“I suppose because his Maker never repeats himself. Even twins often possess strongly marked individualities. Don’t you think it would be a good plan to learn Billy better before you try to teach him? If you do, you’ll make something as good of him as Daniel though it will be rather different from that model.”

“Remember, Ned, that you never did like Daniel as well as you do Billy. But we all know the proverb about old maid’s daughters and old bachelor’s sons. I wish you had Billy for a month,—then you’d see.”

“I’m not sure that I’d do any better than you. I might err as much in other directions But I’d try to start right by acknowledging that he was a new problem, not to be worked without finding out the value of X in his particular instance. The formula which solves one boy will no more solve the next one than the rule-of-three will solve a question in calculus,—or, to rise into your sphere, than the receipt for one-two-three-four cake will conduct you to a successful issue through plum-pudding.”

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I excel in metaphysical discussion, and was about giving further elaboration to my favorite idea, when the door burst open. Master Billy came tumbling in with a torn jacket, a bloody nose, the trace of a few tears in his eyes, and the mangiest of cur dogs in his hands.

“Oh my! my!! my!!!” exclaimed his mother.

“Don’t you get scared, ma!” cried Billy, smiling a stern smile of triumph; “I smashed the nose off him! He wont sass me again for nothing *this* while! Uncle Teddy, d’ye know it wasn’t a dog-fight, after all? There was that nasty, good-for-nothing Joe Casey, ’n Patsy Grogan, and a lot of bad boys from Mackerelville; and they’d caught this poor little ki-oodle and tied a tin pot to his tail, and were trying to set Joe’s dog on him, though he’s ten times littler.”

“You naughty, naughty boy! How did you suppose your mother’d feel to see you playing with those ragamuffins?”

“Yes, I *played* ’em! I polished ’em,—that’s the play I did! Says I, ’Put down that poor little pup; ain’t you ashamed of yourself, Patsy Grogan?’ ‘I guess you don’t know who I am,’ says he. That’s the way they always say, Uncle Teddy, to make a fellow think they’re some awful great fighters. So says I again, ’Well, you put down that dog, or I’ll show you who I am’; and when he held on, I let him have. Then he dropped the pup, and as I stooped to pick it up he gave me one on the bugle.”

“*Bugle*! Oh! oh! oh!”

“The rest pitched in to help him; but I grabbed the pup, and while I was trying to give as good as I got,—only a fellow can’t do it well with only one hand, Uncle Teddy,—up came a policeman, and the whole crowd ran away. So I got the dog safe, and here he is!”

With that Billy set down his “ki-oodle,” bid farewell to every fear, and wiped his bleeding nose. The unhappy beast slunk back between the legs of his preserver and followed him out of the room, as Lu, with an expression of maternal despair, bore him away for the correction of his dilapidated raiment and depraved associations. I felt such sincere pride in this young Mazzini of the dog-nation, that I was vexed at Lu for bestowing on him reproof instead of congratulation; but she was not the only conservative who fails to see a good cause and a heroic heart under a bloody nose and torn jacket. I resolved that if Billy was punished he should have his recompense before long in an extra holiday at Barnum’s or the Hippotheatron.

You already have some idea of my other nephew, if you have noticed that none of us, not even that habitual disrespecter of dignities, Billy, ever called him Dan. It would have seemed as incongruous as to call Billy William. He was one of those youths who never gave their parents a moment’s uneasiness; who never had to have their wills broken,

and never forget to put on their rubbers or take an umbrella. In boyhood he was intended for a missionary. Had it been possible for him to go to Greenland's icy mountains without catching cold, or India's coral strand, without getting bilious, his parents would have carried out their pleasing dream of contributing him to the world's evangelization. Lu and Mr. Lovegrove had no doubt that he would have been greatly blessed if he could have stood it....

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Both she and his father always encouraged old manners in him. I think they took such pride in raising a peculiarly pale boy as a gardener does in getting a nice blanch on his celery, and so long as he was not absolutely sick, the graver he was the better. He was a sensitive plant, a violet by a mossy stone, and all that sort of thing....

At the time I introduce Billy, both Lu and her husband were much changed. They had gained a great deal in width of view and liberality of judgment. They read Dickens, and Thackeray with avidity; went now and then to the opera; proposed to let Billy take a quarter at Dodworth's; had statues in their parlor without any thought of shame at their lack of petticoats, and did multitudes of things which, in their early married life, they would have considered shocking.... They would greatly have liked to see Daniel shine in society. Of his erudition they were proud even to worship. The young man never had any business, and his father never seemed to think of giving him any, knowing, as Billy would say, that he had stamps enough to "see him through." If Daniel liked, his father would have endowed a professorship in some college and given him the chair; but that would have taken him away from his own room and the family physician.

Daniel knew how much his parents wished him to make a figure in the world, and only blamed himself for his failure, magnanimously forgetting that they had crushed out the faculties which enable a man to mint the small change of every-day society, in the exclusive cultivation of such as fit him for smelting its ponderous ingots. With that merciful blindness which alone prevents all our lives from becoming a horror of nerveless self-reproach, his parents were equally unaware of their share in the harm done him, when they ascribed to a delicate organization the fact that, at an age when love runs riot in all healthy blood, he could not see a Balmoral without his cheeks rivalling the most vivid stripe in it. They flattered themselves that he would outgrow his bashfulness; but Daniel had no such hope, and frequently confided in me that he thought he should never marry at all.

About two hours after Billy's disappearance under his mother's convoy, the defender of the oppressed returned to my room bearing the dog under his arm. His cheeks shone with washing like a pair of waxy spitzenbergs, and other indignities had been offered him to the extent of the brush and comb. He also had a whole jacket on....

Billy and I also obtained permission to go out together and be gone the entire afternoon. We put Crab on a comfortable bed of rags in an old shoe-box, and then strolled hand-in-hand across that most delightful of New York breathing-places—-Stuyvesant Square.

"Uncle Teddy," exclaimed Billy, with ardor, "I wish I could do something to show you how much I think of you for being so good to me. I don't know how. Would it make you happy if I was to learn a hymn for you,—a smashing big hymn—six verses, long metre, and no grumbling?"

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“No, Billy; you make me happy enough just by being a good boy.”

“Oh, Uncle Teddy!” replied Billy, decidedly, “I’m afraid I can’t do it. I’ve tried so often, and I always make such an awful mess of it.” ...

We now got into a Broadway stage going down, and being unable, on account of the noise, to converse further upon those spiritual conflicts of Billy’s which so much interested me, amused ourselves with looking out until just as we reached the Astor House, when he asked me where we were going.

“Where do you guess?” said I.

He cast a glance through the front window, and his face became irradiated. Oh, there’s nothing like the simple, cheap luxury of pleasing a child, to create sunshine enough for the chasing away of the bluest adult devils.

“We’re going to Barnum’s!” said Billy, involuntarily clapping his hands.

So we were; and, much as stuck-up people pretend to look down on the place, I frequently am. Not only so, but I always see that class largely represented there when I do go. To be sure, they always make believe that they only come to amuse the children, or because they’ve country cousins visiting them, and never fail to refer to the vulgar set one finds there, and the fact of the animals smelling like any thing but Jockey Club; yet I notice that after they’ve been in the hall three minutes they’re as much interested as any of the people they come to pooh-pooh, and only put on the high-bred air when they fancy some of their own class are looking at them. I boldly acknowledge that I go because I like it. I am especially happy, to be sure, if I have a child along to go into ecstasies, and give me a chance, by asking questions, for the exhibition of that fund of information which is said to be one of my chief charms in the social circle, and on several occasions has led that portion of the public immediately about the Happy Family into the erroneous impression that I was Mr. Barnum, explaining his five hundred thousand curiosities.

On the present occasion, we found several visitors of the better class in the room devoted to the aquarium. Among these was a young lady, apparently about nineteen, in a tight-fitting basque of black velvet, which showed her elegant figure to fine advantage, a skirt of garnet silk, looped up over a pretty Balmoral, and the daintiest imaginable pair of kid walking-boots. Her height was a trifle over the medium; her eyes a soft, expressive brown, shaded by masses of hair which exactly matched their color, and, at that rat-and-miceless day fell in such graceful abandon as to show at once that nature was the only maid who crimped their waves into them. Her complexion was rosy with health and sympathetic enjoyment; her mouth was faultless, her nose sensitive, her manners full of refinement, and her voice musical as a wood-robin’s, when she spoke to the little boy of six at her side, to whom she was revealing the palace of the great show-

king. Billy and I were flattening our noses against the abode of the balloon-fish, and determining whether he looked most like a horse-chestnut burr or a ripe cucumber, when his eyes and my own simultaneously fell on the child and lady, In a moment, to Billy, the balloon-fish was as though he had not been.

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“That’s a pretty little boy!” said I. And then I asked Billy one of those senseless routine questions which must make children look at us, regarding the scope of our intellects very much as we look at Bushmen.

“How would you like to play with him?”

“Him!” replied Billy, scornfully, “that’s his first pair of boots; see him pull up his little breeches to show the red tops to ’em! But, crackey! isn’t *she* a smasher!”

After that we visited the wax figures and the sleepy snakes, the learned seal and the glass-blowers. Whenever we passed from one room into another, Billy could be caught looking anxiously to see if the pretty girl and child were coming, too.

Time fails me to describe how Billy was lost in astonishment at the Lightning Calculator,—wanted me to beg the secret of that prodigy for him to do his sums by,—finally thought he had discovered it, and resolved to keep his arm whirling all the time he studied his arithmetic lesson the next morning. Equally inadequate is it to relate in full how he became so confused among the wax-works that he pinched the solemnest showman’s legs to see if he was real, and perplexed the beautiful Circassian to the verge of idiocy by telling her he had read all about the way they sold girls like her in his geography.

We had reached the stairs to that subterranean chamber in which the Behemoth of Holy Writ was wallowing about without a thought of the dignity which one expects from a canonical character. Billy had always languished upon his memories of this diverting beast, and I stood ready to see him plunge headlong the moment that he read the sign-board at the head of the stairs. When he paused and hesitated there, not seeming at all anxious to go down till he saw the pretty girl and the child following after,—a sudden intuition flashed across me. Could it be possible that Billy was caught in that vortex which whirled me down at ten years,—a little boy’s first love?

We were lingering about the elliptical basin, and catching occasional glimpses between bubbles of a vivified hair trunk of monstrous compass, whose knobby lid opened at one end and showed a red morocco lining, when the pretty girl, in leaning over to point out the rising monster, dropped into the water one of her little gloves, and the swash made by the hippopotamus drifted it close under Billy’s hand. Either in play or as a mere coincidence the animal followed it. The other children about the tank screamed and started back as he bumped his nose against the side; but Billy manfully bent down and grabbed the glove not an inch from one of his big tusks, then marched around the tank and presented it to the lady with a chivalry of manner in one of his years quite surprising.

“That’s a real nice boy,—you said so, didn’t you, Lottie?—and I wish he’d come and play with me,” said the little fellow by the young lady’s side, as Billy turned away, gracefully thanked, to come back to me with his cheeks roseate with blushes.

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As he heard this, Billy idled along the edge of the tank for a moment, then faced about and said,—

“P’raps I will some day,—where do you live?”

“I live on East Seventeenth street with papa,—and Lottie stays there, too, now,—she’s my cousin. Where d’ you live?”

“Oh, I live close by,—right on that big green square, where I guess the nurse takes you once in a while,” said Billy, patronizingly. Then, looking up pluckily at the young lady, he added, “I never saw you out there.”

“No; Jimmy’s papa has only been in his new house a little while, and I’ve just come to visit him.”

“Say, will you come and play with me some time?” chimed in the inextinguishable Jimmy. “I’ve got a cooking-stove,—for real fire,—and blocks and a ball with a string.”

Billy, who belonged to a club for the practice of the great American game, and was what A. Ward would call the most superior battist among the I.G.B.B.C., or “Infant Giants,” smiled from that altitude upon Jimmy, but promised to go and play with him the next Saturday afternoon.

Late that evening, after we had got home and dined, as I sat in my room over Pickwick with a sedative cigar, a gentle knock at the door told of Daniel. I called “Come in!” and entering with a slow, dejected air, he sat down by my fire. For ten minutes he remained silent, though occasionally looking up as if about to speak, then dropping his head again to ponder on the coals. Finally I laid down Dickens, and spoke myself.

“You don’t seem well to-night, Daniel?”

“I don’t feel very well, uncle.”

“What’s the matter, my boy?”

“Oh-ah, I don’t know. That is, I wish I knew how to tell you.”

I studied him for a few moments with kindly curiosity, then answered,—

“Perhaps I can save you the trouble by cross-examining it out of you. Let’s try the method of elimination. I know that you’re not harassed by any economical considerations, for you’ve all the money you want; and I know that ambition doesn’t trouble you, for your tastes are scholarly. This narrows down the investigation of your symptoms—listlessness, general dejection, and all—to three causes,—dyspepsia, religious conflicts, love. Now, is your digestion awry?”

“No, sir; good as usual. I’m not melanancholy on religion, and”—

“You don’t tell me you’re in love?”

“Well—yes—I suppose that’s about it, Uncle Teddy.”

I took a long breath to recover from my astonishment at this unimaginable revelation, then said:

“Is your feeling returned?”

“I really don’t know, uncle; I don’t believe it is. I don’t see how it can be. I never did any thing to make her love me. What is there in me to love? I’ve borne nothing for her,—-that is, nothing that could do her any good,—though I’ve endured on her account, I may say, anguish. So, look at it any way you please, I neither am, do, nor suffer any thing that can get a woman’s love.”

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“Oh, you man of learning! Even in love you tote your grammar along with you, and arrange a divine passion under the active, passive, and neuter!”

Daniel smiled faintly.

“You’ve no idea, Uncle Teddy, that you are twitting on facts; but you hit the truth there; indeed you do. If she were a Greek or Latin woman, I could talk Anacreon or Horace to her. If women only understood the philosophy of the flowers as well as they do the poetry”—

“Thank God they don’t, Daniel!” sighed I, devoutly.

“Never mind,—in that case I could entrance her for hours, talking about the grounds of difference between Linnaeus and Jussieu. Women like the star business, they say,—-and I could tell her where all the constellations are; but sure as I tried to get off any sentiment about them, I’d break down and make myself ridiculous. But what earthly chance would the greatest philosopher that ever lived have with the woman he loved, if he depended for her favor on his ability to analyze her bouquet or tell her when she might look out for the next occultation of Orion? I can’t talk bread-and-butter talk. I can’t do any thing that makes a man even tolerable to a woman!”

“I hope you don’t mean that nothing but bread-and-butter talk is tolerable to a woman!”

“No; but it’s necessary to some extent,—at any rate the ability is,—in order to succeed in society; and it’s in society men first meet and strike women. And oh, Uncle Teddy! I’m such a fish out of water in society!—such a dreadful floundering fish! When I see her dancing gracefully as a swan swims, and feel that fellows, like little Jack Mankyn, who ‘don’t know twelve times,’ can dance to her perfect admiration; when I see that she likes ease of manners,—and all sorts of men without an idea in their heads have that,—while I turn all colors when I speak to her, and am clumsy, and abrupt, and abstracted, and bad at repartee,—Uncle Teddy! sometimes (though it seems so ungrateful to father and mother, who have spent such pains for me)—sometimes, do you know, it seems to me as if I’d exchange all I’ve ever learned for the power to make a good appearance before her!”

“Daniel, my boy, it’s too much a matter of reflection with you! A woman is not to be taken by laying plans. If you love the lady (whose name I don’t ask you, because I know you’ll tell me as soon as you think best), you must seek her companionship until you’re well enough acquainted with her to have her regard you as something different from the men whom she meets merely in society, and judge your qualities by another standard than that she applies to them. If she’s a sensible girl (and God forbid you should marry her otherwise), she knows that people can’t always be dancing, or holding fans, or running after orange-ice. If she’s a girl capable of appreciating your best points (and woe to you if you marry a girl who can’t!), she’ll find them out upon closer intimacy,

and, once found, they'll a hundred times outweigh all brilliant advantages kept in the show-case of fellows who have nothing on the shelves. When this comes about, you will pop the question unconsciously, and, to adapt Milton, she'll drop into your lap 'gathered—not harshly plucked.'"

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“I know that’s sensible, Uncle Teddy, and I’ll try. Let me tell you the sacredest of secrets,—regularly every day of my life I send her a little poem fastened round the prettiest bouquet I can get at Hanft’s.”

“Does she know who sends them?’”

“She can’t have any idea. The German boy that takes them knows not a word of English except her name and address. You’ll forgive me, uncle, for not mentioning her name yet? You see she may despise or hate me some day when she knows who it is that has paid her these attentions; and then I’d like to be able to feel that at least I’ve never hurt her by any absurd connection with myself.”

“Forgive you? Nonsense! The feeling does your heart infinite credit, though a little counsel with your head would show you that your only absurdity is self-depreciation.”

Daniel bid me good-night. As I put out my cigar and went to bed, my mind reverted to the dauntless little Hotspur who had spent the afternoon with me and reversed his mother’s wish, thinking,—

“Oh, if Daniel were more like Billy!”

It was always Billy’s habit to come and sit with me while I smoked my after-breakfast cigar, but the next morning did not see him enter my room till St. George’s hands pointed to a quarter of nine.

“Well, Billy Boy Blue, come blow your horn; what haystack have you been under till this time of day? We sha’n’t have a minute to look over our spelling together, and I know a boy who’s going in for promotion next week. Have you had your breakfast, and taken care of Crab?”

“Yes, sir; but I didn’t feel like getting up this morning.”

“Are you sick?”

“No-o-o—it isn’t that; but you’ll laugh at me if I tell you.”

“Indeed I won’t, Billy!”

“Well,”—his voice dropped to a whisper, and he stole close to my side,—“I had such a nice dream about *her* just the last thing before the bell rang; and when I woke up I felt so queer,—so kinder good and kinder bad,—and I wanted to see her so much, that if I hadn’t been a big boy I believe I should have blubbered. I tried ever so much to go to sleep and see her again; but the more I tried the more I couldn’t. After all, I had to get up without it, though I didn’t want any breakfast, and only ate two buckwheat cakes, when I always eat six, you know, Uncle Teddy. Can you keep a secret?”

“Yes, dear, so you couldn’t get it out of me if you were to shake me upside-down like a savings-bank.”

“Oh, ain’t you mean! That was when I was small I did that. I’ll tell you the secret, though,—that girl and I are going to get married. I mean to ask her the first chance I get. Oh, isn’t she a smasher!”

“My dear Billy, sha’n’t you wait a little while to see if you always like her as well as you do now? Then, too, you’ll be older.”

“I’m old enough, Uncle Teddy, and I love her dearly! I’m as old as the kings of France used to be when they got married,—I read it in Abbott’s histories. But there’s the clock striking nine! I must run or I shall get a tardy mark, and, perhaps, she’ll want to see my certificate sometimes.”

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So saying, he kissed me on the cheek and set off for school as fast as his legs could carry him. O Love, omnivorous Love, that sparest neither the dotard leaning on his staff nor the boy with pantaloons buttoning on his jacket,—omnipotent Love, that, after parents and teachers have failed, in one instant can make Billy try to become a good boy!

With both of my nephews hopelessly enamored, and myself the confidant of both, I had my hands full. Daniel was generally dejected and distrustful; Billy buoyant and jolly. Daniel found it impossible to overcome his bashfulness; was spontaneous only in sonnets, brilliant only in bouquets. Billy was always coming to me with pleasant news, told in his slangy New-York boy vernacular. One day he would exclaim,—"Oh, I'm getting on prime! I got such a smile off her this morning as I went by the window!" Another day he wanted counsel how to get a valentine to her,—because it was too big to shove in a lamp-post, and she might catch him if he left it on the steps, rang the bell, and ran away. Daniel wrote his own valentine; but, despite its originality, that document gave him no such comfort as Billy got from twenty-five cents' worth of embossed paper, pink cupids, and doggerel. Finally, Billy announced to me that he had been to play with Jimmy, and got introduced to his girl.

Shortly after this Lu gave what they call "a little company,"—not a party, but a reunion of forty or fifty people with whom the family were well acquainted, several of them living in our immediate neighborhood. There was a goodly proportion of young folk, and there was to be dancing but the music was limited to a single piano played by the German exile usual on such occasions, and the refreshments did not rise to the splendor of a costly supper. This kind of compromise with fashionable gayety was wisely deemed by Lu the best method of introducing Daniel to the *beau monde*,—a push given the timid eaglet by the maternal bird, with a soft tree-top between him and the vast expanse of society. How simple was the entertainment may be inferred from the fact that Lu felt somewhat discomposed when she got a note from one of her guests asking leave to bring along her niece, who was making her a few weeks' visit. As a matter of course, however, she returned answer to bring the young lady and welcome.

Daniel's dressing-room having been given up to the gentlemen I invited him to make his toilet in mine, and, indeed, wanting him to create a favorable impression, became his valet *pro tem.*, tying his cravat, and teasing the divinity-student look out of his side-hair. My little dandy Billy came in for another share of attention, and when I managed to button his jacket for him so that it showed his shirt-studs "like a man's," Count d'Orsay could not have felt a more pleasing sense of his sufficiency for all the demands of the gay world.

When we reached the parlor we found Pa and Ma Lovegrove already receiving. About a score of guests had arrived. Most of them were old married couples, which, after paying their devoirs, fell in two like unriveted scissors,—the gentlemen finding a new pivot in pa and the ladies in ma, where they mildly opened and shut upon such

questions as severally concerned them, such as “the way gold closed,” and “how the children were.”

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Besides the old married people there were several old young men of distinctly hopeless and unmarried aspect, who, having nothing in common with the other class, nor sufficient energy of character to band themselves for mutual protection, hovered dejectedly about the arch pillars, or appeared to be considering whether, on the whole, it would not be feasible and best to sit down on the centre-table. These subsisted upon such crumbs of comfort as Lu could get an occasional chance to throw them by rapid sorties of conversation,—became galvanically active the moment they were punched up, and fell flat the moment the punching was remitted. I did all I could for them, but, having Daniel in tow, dared not sail too near the edge of the Doldrums, lest he should drop into sympathetic stagnation and be taken preternaturally bashful, with his sails all aback, just as I wanted to carry him gallantly into action with some clipper-built cruiser of a nice young lady. Finally, Lu bethought herself of that last plank of drowning conversationists, the photograph album. All the dejected young men made for it at once, some reaching it just as they were about to sink for the last time, but all getting a grip on it somehow, and staying there in company with other people's babies whom they didn't know, and celebrities whom they knew to death, until, one by one, they either stranded upon a motherly dowager by the Fire-place Shoals, or were rescued from the Sofa Reef by some gallant wrecker of a strong-minded young lady, with a view to taking salvage out of them in the German.

Besides these, were already arrived a dozen nice little boys and girls, who had been invited to make it pleasant for Billy. I had to remind him of the fact that they were his guests, for, in comparison with the queen of his affections, they were in danger of being despised by him as small fry.

The younger ladies and gentlemen,—those who had fascinations to disport, or were in the habit of disporting what they considered such, were probably still at home consulting the looking-glass until that oracle should announce the auspicious moment for their setting forth.

Daniel was in conversation with a perfect godsend of a girl, who understood Latin and had begun Greek. Billy was taking a moment's vacation from his boys and girls, busy with "Old Maid" in the extension-room, and whispering with his hand in mine, "Oh, don't I wish *she* were here!" when a fresh invoice of ladies, just unpacked from the dressing-room in all the airy elegance of evening costume, floated through the door. I heard Lu say,—

"Ah, Mrs. Rumbullion! Happy to see your niece, too. How d'ye do, Miss Pilgrim?"

At this last word Billy jumped as if he had been shot, and the bevy of ladies opening about sister Lu disclosed the charming face and figure of the pretty girl we had met at Barnum's.

Billy's countenance rapidly changed from astonishment to joy.

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“Isn’t that splendid, Uncle Teddy? Just as I was wishing it! It’s just like the fairy books!” and, rushing up to the party of new-comers, “My dear Lottie!” cried he, “if I’d only known you were coming I’d have gone after you!”

As he caught her by the hand I was pleased to see her soft eyes brighten with gratification at his enthusiasm, but my sister Lu looked on naturally with astonishment in every feature.

“Why, Billy!” said she, “you ought not to call a strange young lady’ *Lottie*!’ Miss Pilgrim, you must excuse my wild boy.”

“And you must excuse my mother, Lottie,” said Billy, affectionately patting Miss Pilgrim’s rose kid, “for calling you a strange young lady. You are not strange at all,—you’re just as nice a girl as there is.”

“There are no excuses necessary,” said Miss Pilgrim, with a bewitching little laugh. “Billy and I know each other intimately well, Mrs. Lovegrove; and I confess that when I heard the lady aunt had been invited to visit was his mother, I felt all the more willing to infringe etiquette this evening by coming where I had no previous introduction.”

“Don’t you care!” said Billy, encouragingly. “I’ll introduce you to every one of our family; I know ’em if you don’t.”

At this moment I came up as Billy’s reinforcement, and fearing lest in his enthusiasm he might forget the canon of society which introduces a gentleman to a lady, not the lady to him, I ventured to suggest it delicately by saying,—

“Billy, will you grant me the favor of a presentation to Miss Pilgrim?”

“In a minute, Uncle Teddy,” answered Billy, considerably lowering his voice. “The older people first”; and after this reproof I was left to wait in the cold until he had gone through the ceremony of introducing to the young lady his father and his mother.

Billy, who had now assumed entire guardianship of Miss Pilgrim, with an air of great dignity intrusted her to my care and left us promenading while he went in search of Daniel. I myself looked in vain for that youth, whom I had not seen since the entrance of the last comers. Miss Pilgrim and I found a congenial common ground in Billy, whom she spoke of as one of the most delightfully original boys she had ever met; in fact, altogether the most fascinating young gentleman she had seen in New York society. You may be sure it wasn’t Billy’s left ear which burned when I made my responses.

In five minutes he reappeared to announce, in a tone of disappointment, that he could find Daniel nowhere. He could see a light through his keyhole, but the door was locked and he could get no admittance. Just then Lu came up to present a certain—no, an uncertain—young man of the fleet stranded on parlor furniture earlier in the evening. To

Lu's great astonishment Miss Pilgrim asked Billy's permission to leave him. It was granted with all the courtesy of a *preux chevalier*, on the condition, readily assented to by the lady, that she should dance one Lancers with him during the evening.

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“Dear me!” exclaimed Lu, after Billy had gone back like a superior being to assist at the childish amusement of his contemporaries, “Would any body ever suppose that was our Billy?”

“I should, my dear sister,” said I, with proud satisfaction; “but you remember I always was just to Billy.”

Left free, I went myself to hunt up Daniel. I found his door locked and a light shining through the keyhole, as Billy had stated. I made no attempt to enter by knocking; but going to my room and opening the window next his, leaned out as far as I could, shoved up his sash with my cane, and pushed aside his curtain. Such an unusual method of communication could not fail to bring him to the window with a rush. When he saw me he trembled like a guilty thing, his countenance fell, and, no longer able to feign absence, he unlocked his door and let me enter by the normal mode.

“Why, Daniel Lovegrove, my nephew, what does this mean? Are you sick?”

“Uncle Edward, I am not sick,—and this means that I am a fool. Even a little boy like Billy puts me to shame. I feel humbled to the very dust. I wish I’d been a missionary and got massacred by savages. Oh that I’d been permitted to wear damp stockings in childhood, or that my mother hadn’t carried me through the measles! If it weren’t wrong to take my life into my own hands, I’d open that window, and—and—sit in a draught this very evening! Oh, yes! I’m just that bitter! Oh, oh, oh!”

And Daniel paced the floor with strides of frenzy.

“Well, my dear fellow, let’s look at the matter calmly a minute. What brought on this sudden attack? You seemed doing well enough the first ten minutes after we came down. I was only out of your sight long enough to speak to the Rumbullion party who had just come in, and when I turned around you were gone. Now you are in this fearful condition. What is there in the Rumbullions to start you off on such a bender of bashfulness as this which I here behold?”

“Rumbullion indeed!” said Daniel. “A hundred Rumbullions could not make me feel as I do. But *she* can shake me into a whirlwind with her little finger; and *she* came with the Rumbullions!”

“What! D’you—Miss Pilgrim?”

“Miss Pilgrim!”

I labored with Daniel for ten minutes, using every encouragement and argument I could think of, and finally threatened him that I would bring up the whole Rumbullion party, Miss Pilgrim included, telling them that he had invited them to look at his conchological cabinet, unless he instantly shook the ice out of his manner and accompanied me down

stairs. This dreadful menace had the desired effect. He knew that I would not scruple to fulfil it; and at the same time that it made him surrender, it also provoked him with me to a degree which gave his eyes and cheeks as fine a glow as I could have wished for the purpose of a favorable impression. The stimulus of wrath was good for him, and there was little tremor in his knees when he descended the stairs. Well-a-day! So Daniel and Billy were rivals!

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The latter gentleman met us at the foot of the staircase.

“Oh, there you are, Daniel!” said he, cheerily. “I was just going to look after you and Uncle Teddy. We’ve wanted you for the dances. We’ve had the Lancers twice and three round dances; and I danced the second Lancers with Lottie. Now we’re going to play some games,—to amuse the children, you know,” he added, loftily, with the adult gesture of pointing his thumb over his shoulder at the extension-room. “Lottie’s going to play, too; so will you and Daniel, won’t you, uncle? Oh, here comes Lottie now! This is my brother, Miss Pilgrim,—let me introduce him to you. I’m sure you’ll like him. There’s nothing he don’t know.”

Miss Pilgrim had just come to the newel-post of the staircase, and, when she looked into Daniel’s face, blushed like the red, red rose, losing her self-possession perceptibly more than Daniel.

The courage of weak warriors and timid gallants mounts as the opposite party’s falls, and Daniel made out to say, in a firm tone, that it was long since he had enjoyed the pleasure of meeting Miss Pilgrim.

“Not since Mrs. Cramcroud’s last sociable, I think,” replied Miss Pilgrim, her cheeks and eyes still playing the tell-tale.

“Oho! so you don’t want any introduction!” exclaimed Master Billy. “I didn’t know you knew each other, Lottie?”

“I have met Mr. Lovegrove in society. Shall we go and join the plays?”

“To be sure we shall!” cried Billy. “You needn’t mind,—all the grown people are going too.”

On entering the parlor we found it as he had said. The guests being almost all well acquainted with each other, at the solicitation of jolly little Mrs. Bloomingal, sister Lu had consented to make a pleasant Christmas kind of time of it, in which everybody was permitted to be young again, and romp with the rompiest. We played Blindman’s-buff till we were tired of that,—Daniel, to Lu’s great delight, coming out splendidly as Blindman, and evincing such “cheek” in the style he hunted down and caught the ladies, as satisfied me that nothing but his eyesight stood in the way of his making an audacious figure in the world. Then a pretty little girl, Tilly Turtelle, who seemed quite a premature flirt, proposed “Door-keeper,”—a suggestion accepted with great *eclat* by all the children, several grown people assenting.

To Billy—quite as much on account of his shining prominence in the executive faculties as of his character as host—was committed the duty of counting out the first person to be sent into the hall. There were so many of us that “Aina-maina-mona-mike” would not

go quite round; but, with that promptness of expedience which belongs to genius, Billy instantly added on, “Intery-mintery-cutery-corn,” and the last word of the cabalistic formula fell upon me—Edward Balbus. I disappeared into the entry amidst peals of happy laughter from both old and young, calling, when the door opened again

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to ask me whom I wanted, for the pretty lisping flirt who had proposed the game. After giving me a coquettish little chirrup of a kiss, and telling me my beard scratched, she bade me, on my return, send out to her “Mithter Billy Lovegrove.” I obeyed her; my youngest nephew retired; and after a couple of seconds, during which Tilly undoubtedly got what she proposed the game for, Billy being a great favorite with the little girls, she came back, pouting and blushing, to announce that he wanted Miss Pilgrim. That young lady showed no mock-modesty, but arose at once, and laughingly went out to her youthful admirer, who, as I afterward learned, embraced her ardently, and told her he loved her better than any girl in the world. As he turned to go back, she told him that he might send to her one of her juvenile cousins, Reginald Rumbullion. Now, whether because on this youthful Rumbullion’s account Billy had suffered the pangs of that most terrible passion, jealousy, or from his natural enjoyment of playing practical jokes destructive of all dignity in his elders, Billy marched into the room, and, having shut the door behind him, paralyzed the crowded parlor by an announcement that Mr. Daniel Lovegrove was wanted.

I was standing at his side, and could feel him tremble,—see him turn pale.

“Dear me!” he whispered, in a choking voice; “can she mean me?”

“Of course she does,” said I. “Who else? Do you hesitate? Surely you can’t refuse such an invitation from a lady.”

“No, I suppose not,” said he, mechanically. And amidst much laughter from the disinterested, while the faces of Mrs. Rumbullion and his mother were spectacles of crimson astonishment, he made his exit from the room. Never in my life did I so much long for that instrument described by Mr. Samuel Weller,—a pair of patent double-million-magnifying microscopes of hextry power, to see through a deal door. Instead of this, I had to learn what happened only by report.

Lottie Pilgrim was standing under the hall burners with her elbow on the newel-post, looking more vividly charming than he had ever seen her before at Mrs. Cramcroud’s sociable or elsewhere. When startled by the apparition of Mr. Daniel Lovegrove instead of the little Rumbullion whom she was expecting,—she had no time to exclaim or hide her mounting color, none at all to explain to her own mind the mistake that had occurred, before his arm was clasped around her waist, and his lips so closely pressed to hers, that through her soft thick hair she could feel the throbbing of his temples. As for Daniel, he seemed in a walking dream, from which he waked to see Miss Pilgrim looking into his eyes with utter though not incensed stupefaction,—to stammer,—

“Forgive me! Do forgive me! I thought you were in earnest.”

“So I was,” she said, tremulously, as soon as she could catch her voice, “in sending for my cousin Reginald.”

“Oh, dear, what shall I do! Believe me, I was told you wanted me,—let me go and explain it to mother,—she’ll tell the rest,—I couldn’t do it,—I’d die of mortification. Oh, that wretched boy Billy!”

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On the principle already mentioned, his agitation reassured her.

“Don’t try to explain it now,—it may get Billy a scolding. Are there any but intimate family friends here this evening?”

“No—I believe—no—I’m sure,” replied Daniel, collecting his faculties.

“Then I don’t mind what they think. Perhaps they’ll suppose we’ve known each other long; but we’ll arrange it by-and-by. They’ll think the more of it the longer we stay out here,—hear them laugh! I must run back now. I’ll send you somebody.”

A round of juvenile applause greeted her as she hurried into the parlor, and a number of grown people smiled quite musically. Her quick woman-wit showed her how to retaliate and divide the embarrassment of the occasion. As she passed me she said in an undertone,—“Answer quick! Who’s that fat lady on the sofa, that laughs so loud?”

“Mrs. Cromwell Craggs,” said I, as quietly.

Miss Pilgrim made a satirically low courtesy, and spoke in a modest but distinct voice, —“I really must be excused for asking. I’m a stranger, you know; but is there such a lady here as Mrs. Craggs,—Mrs. *Cromwell* Craggs? For if so, the present doorkeeper would like to see Mrs. Cromwell Craggs.”

Then came the turn of the fat lady to be laughed at; but out she had to go and get kissed like the rest of us.

Before the close of the evening, Billy was made as jealous as his parents and I were surprised to see Daniel in close conversation with Miss Pilgrim among the geraniums and fuschias of the conservatory. “A regular flirtation,” said Billy, somewhat indignantly. The conclusion they arrived at was, that after all no great harm had been done, and that the dear little fellow ought not to be peached on for his fun. If I had known at the time how easily they forgave him, I should have suspected that the offence Billy had led Daniel into committing was not unlikely to be repeated on the offender’s own account; but so much as I could see showed me that the ice was broken....

—*Little Brother, and Other Genre Pictures*.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

(BORN, 1836.)

* * * * *

A RIVERMOUTH ROMANCE.

I.

At five o’clock in the morning of the tenth of July, 1860, the front door of a certain house on Anchor Street, in the ancient seaport town of Rivermouth, might have been observed to open with great caution. This door, as the least imaginative reader may easily conjecture, did not open itself. It was opened by Miss Margaret Callaghan, who immediately closed it softly behind her, paused for a few seconds with an embarrassed air on the stone step, and then, throwing a furtive glance up at the second-story windows, passed hastily down the street towards the river, keeping close to the fences and garden walls on her left.

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There was a ghost-like stealthiness to Miss Margaret's movements, though there was nothing whatever of the ghost about Miss Margaret herself. She was a plump, short person, no longer young, with coal-black hair growing low on the forehead, and a round face that would have been nearly meaningless if the features had not been emphasized—italicized, so to speak—by the small-pox. Moreover, the brilliancy of her toilet would have rendered any ghostly hypothesis untenable. Mrs. Solomon (we refer to the dressiest Mrs. Solomon, which ever one that was) in all her glory was not arrayed like Miss Margaret on that eventful summer morning. She wore a light-green, shot-silk frock, a blazing red shawl, and a yellow crape bonnet profusely decorated with azure, orange, and magenta artificial flowers. In her hand she carried a white parasol. The newly risen sun, ricocheting from the bosom of the river and striking point-blank on the top-knot of Miss Margaret's gorgeousness, made her an imposing spectacle in the quiet street of that Puritan village. But, in spite of the bravery of her apparel, she stole guiltily along by garden walls and fences until she reached a small, dingy frame-house near the wharves, in the darkened doorway of which she quenched her burning splendor, if so bold a figure is permissible.

Three quarters of an hour passed. The sunshine moved slowly up Anchor Street, fingered noiselessly the well-kept brass knockers on either side, and drained the heeltaps of dew which had been left from the revels of the fairies overnight in the cups of the morning-glories. Not a soul was stirring yet in this part of the town, though the Rivermouthians are such early birds that not a worm may be said to escape them. By and by one of the brown Holland shades at one of the upper windows of the Bilkins Mansion—the house from which Miss Margaret had emerged—was drawn up, and old Mr. Bilkins in spiral nightcap looked out on the sunny street. Not a living creature was to be seen, save the dissipated family cat—a very Lovelace of a cat that was not allowed a night-key—who was sitting on the curbstone opposite, waiting for the hall door to be opened. Three quarters of an hour, we repeat, had passed, when Mrs. Margaret O'Rourke, *nee* Callaghan, issued from the small, dingy house by the river, and regained the door-step of the Bilkins mansion in the same stealthy fashion in which she had left it.

Not to prolong a mystery that must already oppress the reader, Mr. Bilkins's cook had, after the manner of her kind, stolen out of the premises before the family were up, and got herself married—surreptitiously and artfully married, as if matrimony were an indictable offence.

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And something of an offence it was in this instance. In the first place Margaret Callaghan had lived nearly twenty years with the Bilkins family, and the old people—-there were no children now—had rewarded this long service by taking Margaret into their affections. It was a piece of subtle ingratitude for her to marry without admitting the worthy couple to her confidence. In the next place, Margaret had married a man some eighteen years younger than herself. That was the young man's lookout, you say. We hold it was Margaret that was to blame. What does a young blade of twenty-two know? Not half so much as he thinks he does. His exhaustless ignorance at that age is a discovery which is left for him to make in his prime.

"Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,
Billing and cooing is all your cheer;
Sighing and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybells window panes,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year!"

In one sense Margaret's husband *had* come to forty year—she was forty to a day.

Mrs. Margaret O'Rourke, with the baddish cat following closely at her heels, entered the Bilkins mansion, reached her chamber in the attic without being intercepted, and there laid aside her finery. Two or three times, while arranging her more humble attire, she paused to take a look at the marriage certificate, which she had deposited between the leaves of her Prayer-Book, and on each occasion held that potent document upside down; for Margaret's literary culture was of the severest order, and excluded the art of reading.

The breakfast was late that morning. As Mrs. O'Rourke set the coffee-urn in front of Mrs. Bilkins and flanked Mr. Bilkins with the broiled mackerel and buttered toast, Mrs. O'Rourke's conscience smote her. She afterwards declared that when she saw the two sitting there so innocent-like, not dreaming of the *comether* she had put upon them, she secretly and unbeknownt let a few tears fall into the cream-pitcher. Whether or not it was this material expression of Margaret's penitence that spoiled the coffee does not admit of inquiry; but the coffee was bad. In fact, the whole breakfast was a comedy of errors.

It was a blessed relief to Margaret when the meal was ended. She retired in a cold perspiration to the penetralia of the kitchen, and it was remarked by both Mr. and Mrs. Bilkins that those short flights of vocalism—apropos of the personal charms of one Kate Kearney, who lived on the banks of Killarney—which ordinarily issued from the direction of the scullery we're unheard that forenoon.

The town clock was striking eleven, and the antiquated time-piece on the staircase (which never spoke but it dropped pearls and crystals, like the fairy in the story) was lisping the hour, when there came three tremendous knocks at the street door. Mrs.

Bilkins, who was dusting the brass-mounted chronometer in the hall, stood transfixed, with arm uplifted. The admirable old lady had for years been carrying on a guerilla warfare with itinerant venders of furniture polish, and pain-killer, and crockery cement and the like. The effrontery of the triple knock convinced her the enemy was at her gates—possibly that dissolute creature with twenty-four sheets of note-paper and twenty-four envelopes for fifteen cents.

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Mrs. Bilkins swept across the hall, and opened the door with a jerk. The suddenness of the movement was apparently not anticipated by the person outside, who, with one arm stretched feebly towards the receding knocker, tilted gently forward, and rested both hands on the threshold in an attitude which was probably common enough with our ancestors of the Simian period, but could never have been considered graceful. By an effort that testified to the excellent condition of his muscles, the person instantly righted himself, and stood swaying unsteadily on his toes and heels, and smiling rather vaguely on Mrs. Bilkins.

It was a slightly-built but well-knitted young fellow, in the not unpicturesque garb of our marine service. His woollen cap, pitched forward at an acute angle with his nose, showed the back part of a head thatched with short yellow hair, which had broken into innumerable curls of painful tightness. On his ruddy cheeks a sparse, sandy beard was making a timid *debut*. Add to this a weak, good-natured mouth, a pair of devil-may-care blue eyes, and the fact that the man was very drunk, and you have a pre-Raphaelite portrait—we may as well say at once—of Mr. Larry O'Rourke of Mullingar, County Westmeath, and late of the United States sloop-of-war Santee.

The man was a total stranger to Mrs. Bilkins but the instant she caught sight of the double white anchors embroidered on the lapels of his jacket, she unhesitatingly threw back the door, which with great presence of mind she had partly closed.

A drunken sailor standing on the step of the Bilkins mansion was no novelty. The street, as we have stated, led down to the wharves, and sailors were constantly passing. The house abutted directly on the street; the granite door-step was almost flush with the sidewalk, and the huge, old-fashioned brass knocker—seemingly a brazen hand that had been cut off at the wrist, and nailed against the oak as a warning to malefactors—-extended itself in a kind of grim appeal to everybody. It seemed to possess strange fascinations for all seafaring folk; and when there was a man-of-war in port the rat-tat-tat of that knocker would frequently startle the quiet neighborhood long after midnight. There appeared to be an occult understanding between it and the blue-jackets. Years ago there was a young Bilkins, one Pendexter Bilkins—a sad losel, we fear—who ran away to try his fortunes before the mast, and fell overboard in a gale off Hatteras. "Lost at sea," says the chubby marble slab in the Old South Burying-Ground, "*aetat.* 18." Perhaps that is why no blue-jacket, sober or drunk, was ever repulsed from the door of the Bilkins mansion.

Of course Mrs. Bilkins had her taste in the matter, and preferred them sober. But as this could not always be, she tempered her wind, so to speak, to the shorn lamb. The flushed, prematurely-old face that now looked up at her moved the good lady's pity.

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“What do you want?” she asked, kindly.

“Me wife.”

“There’s no wife for you here,” said Mrs. Bilkins, somewhat taken aback. “His wife!” she thought; “it’s a mother the poor boy stands in need of.”

“Me wife,” repeated Mr. O’Rourke, “for betther or for worse.”

“You had better go away,” said Mrs. Bilkins, bridling up, “or it will be the worse for you.”

“To have and to howld,” continued Mr. O’Rourke, wandering retrospectively in the mazes of the marriage service, “to have and to howld till death—bad luck to him!—takes one or the ither of us.”

“You’re a blasphemous creature,” said Mrs. Bilkins, severely.

“Thim’s the words his riverince spake this mornin’, standin’ foreninst us,” explained Mr. O’Rourke. “I stood here, see, and me jew’l stood there, and the howly chaplain beyont.”

And Mr. O’Rourke with a wavering forefinger drew a diagram of the interesting situation on the door-step.

“Well,” returned Mrs. Bilkins, “if you’re a married man, all I have to say is, there’s a pair of fools instead of one. You had better be off; the person you want doesn’t live here.”

“Bedad, thin, but she does.”

“Lives here?”

“Sorra a place else.”

“The man’s crazy,” said Mrs. Bilkins to herself.

While she thought him simply drunk, she was not in the least afraid; but the idea that she was conversing with a madman sent a chill over her. She reached back her hand preparatory to shutting the door, when Mr. O’Rourke, with an agility that might have been expected from his previous gymnastics, set one foot on the threshold and frustrated the design.

“I want me wife,” he said sternly.

Unfortunately, Mr. Bilkins had gone uptown, and there was no one in the house except Margaret, whose pluck was not to be depended on. The case was urgent. With the energy of despair Mrs. Bilkins suddenly placed the toe of her boot against Mr.

O’Rourke’s invading foot, and pushed it away. The effect of this attack was to cause Mr. O’Rourke to describe a complete circle on one leg, and then sit down heavily on the threshold. The lady retreated to the hat-stand, and rested her hand mechanically on the handle of a blue cotton umbrella. Mr. O’Rourke partly turned his head and smiled upon her with conscious superiority. At this juncture a third actor appeared on the scene, evidently a friend of Mr. O’Rourke, for he addressed that gentleman as “a spalpeen,” and told him to go home.

“Divil an inch,” replied the spalpeen; but he got himself off the threshold, and resumed his position on the step.

“It’s only Larry, mum,” said the man, touching his forelock politely; “as dacent a lad as ever lived, when he’s not in liquor; an’ I’ve known him to be sober for days togither,” he added, reflectively. “He don’t mane a ha’p’orth o’ harum, but jist now he’s not quite in his right moind.”

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“I should think not,” said Mrs. Bilkins, turning from the speaker to Mr. O’Rourke, who had seated himself gravely on the scraper, and was weeping. “Hasn’t the man any friends?”

“Too many of ’em, mum, an’ it’s along wid dhrinkin’ toasts wid ’em that Larry got throwed. The punch that spalpeen has dhrunk this day would amaze ye. He give us the slip awhiles ago, bad ‘cess to him, an’ come up here. Didn’t I tell ye, Larry, not to be afther ringin’ at the owle gintleman’s knocker? Ain’t ye got no sinse at all?”

“Misther Donnehugh,” responded Mr. O’Rourke with great dignity, “ye’re dhrunk again.”

Mr. Donnehugh, who had not taken more than thirteen ladles of rum-punch, disdained to reply directly.

“He’s a dacent lad enough”—this to Mrs. Bilkins—“but his head is wake. Whin he’s had two sups o’ whiskey he belaves he’s dhrunk a bar’l full. A gill o’ wather out of a jimmy-john’d fuddle him, mum.”

“Isn’t there anybody to look after him?”

“No, mum, he’s an orphan; his father and mother live in the owld counthry, an’ a fine hale owld couple they are.”

“Hasn’t he any family in the town?”

“Sure, mum, he has a family; wasn’t he married this blessed mornin’?”

“He said so.”

“Indade, thin, he was—the pore divil!”

“And the—the person?” inquired Mrs. Bilkins.

“Is it the wife, ye mane?”

“Yes, the wife; where is she?”

“Well, thin, mum,” said Mr. Donnehugh, “it’s yerself can answer that.”

“I?” exclaimed Mrs. Bilkins. “Good heavens this man’s as crazy as the other!”

“Begorra, if anybody’s crazy, it’s Larry, for it’s Larry has married Margaret.”

“What Margaret?” cried Mrs. Bilkins, with a start.

“Margaret Callaghan, sure.”

“*Our* Margaret? Do you mean to say that Our Margaret has married that—that good-for-nothing, inebriated wretch!”

“It’s a civil tongue the owld lady has, any way,” remarked Mr. O’Rourke, critically, from the scraper.

Mrs. Bilkins’s voice during the latter part of the colloquy had been pitched in a high key; it rung through the hall and penetrated to the kitchen, where Margaret was thoughtfully wiping the breakfast things. She paused with a half-dried saucer in her hand, and listened. In a moment more she stood, with bloodless face and limp figure, leaning against the banister, behind Mrs. Bilkins.

“Is it there ye are, me jew’l!” cried Mr. O’Rourke, discovering her.

Mrs. Bilkins wheeled upon Margaret.

“Margaret Callaghan, *is* that thing your husband?”

“Ye—yes, mum,” faltered Mrs. O’Rourke, with a woful lack of spirit.

“Then take it away!” cried Mrs. Bilkins.

Margaret, with a slight flush on either cheek, glided past Mrs. Bilkins, and the heavy oak door closed with a bang, as the gates of Paradise must have closed of old upon Adam and Eve.

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“Come!” said Margaret, taking Mr. O’Rourke by the hand; and the two wandered forth upon their wedding journey down Anchor Street, with all the world before them where to choose. They chose to halt at the small, shabby tenement-house by the river, through the doorway of which the bridal pair disappeared with a reeling, eccentric gait; for Mr. O’Rourke’s intoxication seemed to have run down his elbow, and communicated itself to Margaret.

O Hymen! who burnest precious gums and scented woods in thy torch at the melting of aristocratic hearts, with what a pitiful penny-dip thou hast lighted up our little back-street romance.—*Marjorie Daw, and Other Stories*.

END OF VOL. II.