(*Continued from first page.*)

But there was no choice of brothers, and when she heard him call out to the baggage-master: 'I'll send for my trunks,' she ran up to him and asked: 'Is this Thomas?'

'Yes!' he shouted. 'But how you have grown!'

He lifted her in his great strong arms to a level with his sunburnt face, and kissed her three or four times so heartily that the few lingerers in the depot found their curiosity excited over the cause of such an affectionate meeting. Then he drew her hand into his arm, and they set off together, laughing and chatting for a five minutes' walk home.

'I never was so happy before in all my life, and neither was mother! I've got lots of nice things to eat, and a real soft bed for you to sleep on,—and—and'—

'And a warm welcome, which is better than all! It seems a mile; why didn't you let me take a carriage, little girl?' the young man asked.

"Oh, we never, never spend our money so!' was the answer.

'Oh, you are too prudent! I'm afraid mother is growing miserly, and hoarding up her money,' said Thomas, laughing.

'Well, here we are!' cried the young girl, as she ran up the steps of a decent brick house, and then up the stairs, followed by the new comer.

She threw open the door of the 'parlor-kitchen,' and as she did so the pale old lady came towards them, with outstretched arms.

She then drew back a little, and gazed up at the dark, stalwart fellow before her, exclaiming:

'Surely this can never, never be Thomas!'

'Yes this is Thomas but you are not my mother, he said, still holding her thin hand tenderly.

'Oh yes, she is your mother! She's only pale and thin!' cried Bella.

'No! no!' said the poor woman, sadly.

The stranger replied: 'No! no!' Turning to his young guide, he added: 'Then I suppose you are not my niece Katie?'

'No; I'm this mother's child," replied Bella, with tears of mortification and disappointment in her fine eyes: 'Oh, this is dreadful!'

'Who is? I? My mother won't say so,' said the young man, playfully.

'But where is my Thomas? Did you leave him in the mines?' asked the disappointed woman.

'The mines? I never saw a mine in my life. I'm the first mate of the Orient, and have just returned from China. But your son's safe, I hope. He'll be here by the midnight train, take my word for it'—a remarkable exhibition of ideal confidence, as he had never seen nor heard of the missing son and brother before!

'I hope you'll let me come back tomorrow, and see if this is not so,' he added.

'Oh, no, I shall be ashamed ever to see you again—I made such an exhibition of myself at that depot!' said Bella. 'I ought to have asked you if you were my brother, Thomas Haynes. I ought to have known there were hundreds and thousands of Thomases in the world!

'Oh, I see now what the 'dreadful' thing was! I kissed this little girl at the depot, before all the people, thinking it was my niece grown beyond my knowledge. I don't see how I can help it now—she wouldn't let me take the kisses back, I know.'

'Well, call it a blunder that no one could help. But I do wish I could know where my boy is! He was to come, surely, by this train,' said Mrs. Haynes.

'He'll come to-night; don't worry. Now, let me say 'good-bye' to you both for there's another mother worrying now, on Prince street,' said the stranger. 'I wondered what she had moved for.'

The young stranger had scarcely left the house, when a messenger-boy came with a telegram with which he had been running about for an hour. Thomas Haynes had missed the morning train in New York, by the carelessness of a hack-driver; and would be at home at midnight. But how was he to find where the family lived now? for they had moved to their new home since he had left the mines. Bella left a message with a sleepy-looking official, as to how the inquiries of a stranger for 'Mrs. Mary Haynes' should be answered. But she might have saved herself the trouble; for "that other Thomas," as she now styled the jolly intruder whom she said she 'hoped never to see again,' was waiting the train.

He knew Thomas Haynes for a miner, as soon as he sprang from the cars; and 'hailing' him, told him his mother had moved lately, and that he had come to guide him home. It was a happy family that gathered round the fire and listened to each other's account of all that had occurred during their separation.

'Of all earthly blessings God can bestow on a woman,' said the aged mother, 'good and noble children are the greatest.'

After this, Bella called her brother. 'This Thomas,' and their new friend 'That Thomas.' Well life has its poetic episodes, its pleasant events that are like romances and stories. This Thomas and that Thomas were both tired of rough work on land and on sea. Each had a small amount of money; and after some weeks of very close intimacy, the two decided to buy a farm together, and when men enter into the friendly relation of brothers, their sisters are not ignored. It was so in this case. Bella was not forgotten.

The next spring the double family—or the two families were now one—moved into the farmhouse, the cosiest and pleasantest room in which was the 'parlor-kitchen,' which Bella had reproduced with the furniture of the old one in the city. And Bella—the sister of this Thomas and the wife of that Thomas—made the one home as happy as she had made the other; for a good daugter and true sister, and an agreeable and careful housekeeper in her 'teens,' is apt to prove a very appreciated wife, and become the head of a happy household.—*Youth's Companion.*

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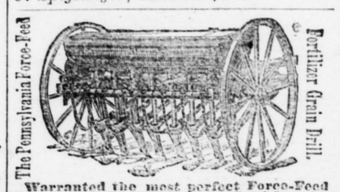

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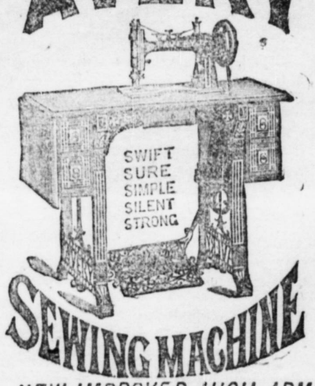

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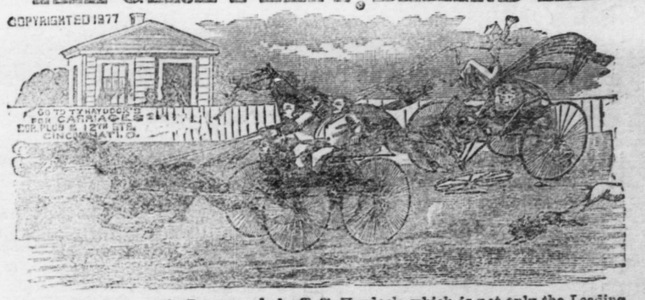

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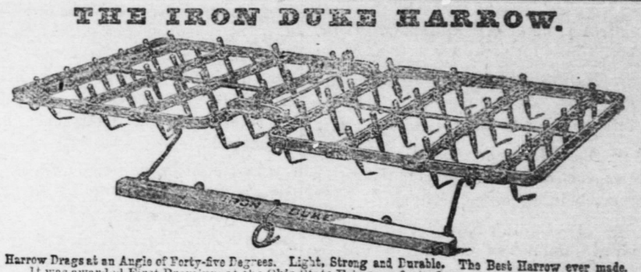

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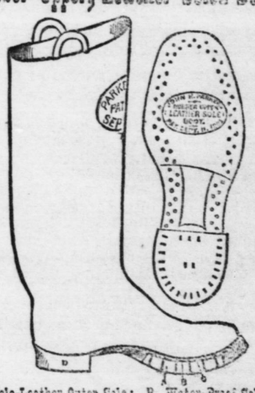

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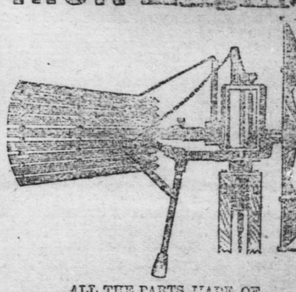

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