

The Democratic Watchman.

DE LAFONTE PA

ETHEL ROMER'S MISTAKE.

Valentine's Day is soft and sweet as any bird could wish for mating in; promise of violets in its breath—promise of roses in its sunshine. Though, to be sure, the loughs are bare as yet, and there were no green things growing, save in the pots which Ethel Romer had been putting out upon the broad window-sill to catch the sunshine. The thing that savored most of spring was Ethel Romer herself, as beautiful a woman as ever artist painted, or poet sung of. Within, near the fire, sat Dr. Ralph Romer himself. Spring had let him long before. His winter boots were not upon his feet, autumn had touched it with gray.

Ethel's musing was interrupted. The postman's rap did it. An envelope, with a pretty bow, fancifully sealed, and her name upon it, was put into her hand. At the sight she blushed rosy red, knowing well what lay there in, and went back to the fire-side with the thing in her hand.

"For me?" asked Ralph. "No," she said, "for me." He had only shown some curiosity that it had only looked at her jealously, and there had been some shadow of the light in his eyes, all might have been different, but he went on with his book, and she carried her valentine to her own room, to read it there in quiet.

Yes, it was a valentine. Three times had that day returned since she married Dr. Ralph Romer, and each time had it brought just such an envelope, with just such passionate lines upon the page within, written in the same feigned hand. Again and again she read it over again and again just as she had the others, and thought, oh, how bitterly! what a beautiful thing life might have been to her, blest with such a glowing love as this life that must be always cold and wintry, having only the calm, quiet, commonplace affection which her gray-haired husband gave her for all the wealth of golden spring time warmth that she felt within her soul. For all the beauty that many an ardent youth had coveted in her girlhood.

Could it be the fair-haired student who sat near them in church? or the dark-eyed soldier, with an empty sleeve, who passed their garden so often? On whom had she made such an impression? while he whose life she shared saw in her only a good little woman, who needed much sage advice and counsel.

Her poor heart ached, as her head did. She felt wicked and ashamed, and very miserable, and forgot how time was flying, and her household duties pressed upon her, until the sinking sun reminded her of them.

Even then she took one look in the glass, and thought if she did not say it, that a great deal of beauty had been cast away on quiet, unromantic Ralph Romer.

After tea they walked out together, and stood beside the pond in the garden, and saw the goldfish in its depth, and he told her of the general habits of gold fish. The writer of valentines would have spoken so thought Ethel—of her golden hair. The stars came out, and he spoke of them, not of her bright eyes.

paper, frozen village women, who will scorn me so—what it is for a loving woman to lead a loveless life? It withers one as neglect and cold have withered those poor flowers there."

For Ethel had set forth no flower-pots in the sun to-day, nor for many days. That morning she had watched her husband ride away on his great brown horse, thinking how grave and serious he was, how old in all his ways, how old-mannish was his gray overcoat and broad rimmed hat; saying to herself, "If I were to leave him, and he were to find the house empty, he would go on reading, or comfort himself with a new insect or a new planet. No need to wonder how he would take it."

And since then she had watched at the window, and miserably for the valentine, so sure she thought to come.

At last she saw a figure coming fast towards the house, and the blood flew to her cheeks and her heart beat fast; but it was not the post-man! Only a neighbor with blanched face and lightened eyes, that told bad news before he uttered it.

She went out to meet him, and they stood there looking at each other for a moment. Over the hills a little crowd was coming slowly, something in its midst.

"Don't be too frightened, Mrs. Romer," gasped the man at last. "It may not be as bad as they think. The horse died just before the post-office, and the doctor was thrown. He hasn't come to yet. Oh, no, no. For she had thrown herself upon her knees and cried out that he was dead. 'Not dead, not dead yet,' Mrs. Romer."

But the wretched woman knew that death was very near, and the flood of agony that swept across her heart told her that she had not ceased to love her quiet husband.

They brought him in, and from that moment for many long days and nights she kept watch beside his bed, thinking of no other thing on earth, praying only that he might be spared to her. She suffered agonies of remorse. Every false thought pursued her with a revengeful stab.

The gray overcoat hanging on the wall, which she had thought old manish and like him, as he rode away, seemed to taunt her with the thought that it would never be worn again. She could not bear the sight of it long, and so one day she took it softly in her hand to hang it in a certain closet. As she lifted it, something fell from one of the pockets—a letter or a paper. She stooped to recover it, and saw a beautiful envelope with a bright seal, and her name upon it. Such were the valentines that came to her. This was surely one of them. What could it mean? Had her husband discovered the writer? had there been some cause for the accident, of which she knew nothing? She looked at the valentine again. It had never been posted.

A Slack Husband Punished.

"Mr. Moncton," said my grandmother, "I have no wood to burn to-day. What shall I do?" "Oh, send Louise to rick up some," said the good man, making a stride toward the door.

"But she has picked up all she can find." "Then let her break up some old stuff." "But she has broken up everything already." "Oh! well, then, do the next best thing—I must be off," said the farmer, and off he was, whistling as he went, and no doubt wondering in his heart what the next best thing would turn out to be.

Non came and with it came my grandfather and four hungry laborers. My grandmother stood in the kitchen spinning on her great wheel and gazing at a pleasant little fussy; Louise was scouring in the back room, and the cat sat purring on the hearth before a black and fireless chimney, while the table set in the middle of the room, spread for dinner with empty dishes.

"Well, wife, here we are," said my grandfather, cheerily. "So I see," replied she, placidly; "have you had a good morning in the corral?" "Why, yes, so so. But where is the dinner?" "In the pot on the fire. Won't you see if it is done?"

And on the door step, to be sure, sat the great iron pot nicely covered, but not looking particularly steamy. My grandfather raised the cover and there lay all the ingredients of a nice boiled dinner, everything prepared in the nicest manner, and the pot filled with the clearest water, and all the vegetables as raw as they had ever been. My grand father stared and my grandmother joined another roll of the yarn upon the distaff, and began another verse of her song.

"Why, woman, what does this mean?" began my grandmother, indignantly. "This dinner isn't cooked at all!" "Dear me, is it not? Why it has sat in the sun these three hours." "Sat in the sun!" "Yes, you told me to try the next best thing to have a fire, and I thought setting my dinner in the sun was about that."

My grand father stood doubtful for a moment, but finally his sense of humor overcame his sense of injury, and he laughed aloud. Then picking up his hat, he said: "Come, boys, we may as well start for the woods. We shall have no dinner till we have earned it, I perceive." "Won't you have some bread and cheese before you go?" asked my grandmother generously in her victory, as women almost always are. And so she won the day.

The cellar stairs in the old farmhouse had become broken and so unsafe that my grandmother beset her husband, early and late, to repair them, lest some accident should happen. He always promised to do so, and always forgot to fulfill his promise. At last, one day, my grandmother fell in going down, and spalled the milk she was carrying.

"Are you hurt?" asked my grandfather, snuffing his pipe before the fire. "No matter whether I am or not! returned the angry housewife, reaping with her empty pan. "That is the last time I carry milk down those stairs until they are mended!" "Please yourself and find the next best way to get it down," said the husband, a little vexed at her tone. "I will," said my grandmother, and she was as good as her word. The next evening my grandfather went down to the cellar to draw some cider.

perfectly au fait in matters of this kind in court. How long have you been married?" "Nine years." "You must have been very young when you entered that blissful—I mean wretched state."

"I was a mere child—a foolish, inexperienced school girl. A doting mother placed me in the arms of a man old enough to be my father; but he was rich, and for two or three years I did not know the difference. I was as happy as though my husband had been twenty years younger. But association with other married women opened my eyes, and I became wretched. I pined for—well, for a heart that was more congenial with my own. A man of your age, now, would have suited me better."

"Exactly so," exclaimed the lawyer, rubbing his hands and twisting his incipient moustache. "But your sufferings will soon terminate. I will get you a divorce and then—"

"Oh dear me!—and then—but I must not be too sanguine. My husband is very rich, and he will never let me get a divorce if he can help it."

"Madame, you don't know the law—its majesty, its glorious certainty—its magnanimity. Consider yourself divorced, and rest easy."

"Well, sir, how shall I proceed?" "Let me see in the first place, give me a statement of your resources." "That would take a whole week. You can imagine what a woman like me must suffer with such a husband."

"Yes, yes, cruel and barbarous treatment, condition intolerable—neglect, and all that sort of thing. I will just get you a few lines. Your name is—"

"Mrs. — You must know my husband." "What, the merchant? He's rich as Croesus." "Yes, he's rich, but I don't care for his money—I want a divorce."

The lawyer wrote down a sketch of the lady's matrimonial infelicities, and assured her that he would have no difficulty in procuring a divorce, with at least \$10,000 alimony. "How much are you going to charge me for making me so happy?" inquired the lady.

"I Want to Know."

We heard a friend tell the following incident the other day with not a little zeal, and to the amusement of a good many bystanders:

"Jumping in to an old fashioned stage coach last month, in company with nine others to jostle over ten miles of unfinished road, I was very much amused with the following characteristic dialogue between a regular question-asker 'Down Easter,' and a high-heeled Southerner. We were scarcely seated before our Yankee began:

"Traveling east, I expect?" "Yes, sir." "Goin' to Philadelphia?" "No, sir." "Goin' to New York, my be?" "Yes, sir." "Never been there before, I wouldn't wonder?"

"No, sir; never." "New York is a wonderful place." "Such is my impression, sir." "Got letters, I expect?" "Yes, sir; I am provided with letters of introduction."

"Wouldn't mind showin' you around myself a spell, if you wanted." "I thank you, sir; but I shall not require your assistance." "The last remark of the polite but reserved stranger, was a poser, and the inquirer fell back a moment to take breath and a change of tactics. The halt suppressed smile upon the faces of the other passengers soon aroused the Yankee to still further exertions, and then summing up more resolution he began again:

"Stranger, perhaps you are not aware how almighty hard it is for a Yankee to control his curiosity. You'll please excuse me, but I really would like to know your name and residence, and the business you follow. I expect you ain't ashamed of either of 'em; so now won't you just oblige me?"

"My name is General Andrew Washington. I reside in the State of Mississippi. I am a gentleman of leisure, and I am glad to be able to say, of pretty extensive means. I have heard much of New York, and I am on my way to see it, and if I like it as well as I am led to expect, I intend to buy it."

"Recollections of Don Quixote. Here are a few extracts from Don Quixote. 'Keep your mouth shut and your eyes open. Self-praise depreciates. All women, let them be ever so homely, are pleased to hear themselves celebrated for beauty. Liberty may be carried too far in those who have children to inherit them. Virtue is more persecuted by the wicked than beloved by the righteous. Honey is not for the mouth of an ass. No padlocks, bolts or bars, can secure a maiden so well as her own reserves. Wit and humor belong to genius alone. We are all as God made us, and oftentimes a great deal worse. Covetousness bursts the bag. It is easy to undertake, but more difficult to finish a thing. This term is equally applicable to all ranks. Whoever is ignorant is vulgar. By the streets of 'by and by' one arrives at the house of Never. Between the yes and no of a woman, I would not undertake to thrust the point of a pin. Patience and shuffle the cards. Other men's pains are easily borne. Pray devoutly and hammer on stoutly. When a thing is once begun it is almost half finished. The jest that gives pain is no jest. SELFISHNESS.—There are people in the world so selfish that they seem to be moved by nothing but what directly affects themselves. If their own private and personal interests sustain no damage, if their own affairs and purposes sustain their wishes and succeed in design, if their own 'graveling pleasures are uninterrupted, they care not who is happy in the world, or what quarter of it is struck by the just hand of heaven. This is extreme selfishness, and a trait of character not to be desired. A lecturer undertook to explain to a village audience the word 'philanthropy.' 'Max, be you don't know what a philanthropion is,' 'Well, I tell you; You have seen a cow, doubt. Well, a cow is not a philanthropion. But when you see the cow go up the tail foremost, to pick the apples, it is a philanthropion.' Two young men of slight acquaintance met a young lady not noted for her personal charms. 'Jack,' remarked one, 'here comes the craziest looking girl in New York.' 'Yes, I am engaged to her,' was the crushing reply.

A Western paper, describing the debut of a young orator, says: "He broke the ice felicitously with his opening, and was almost immediately drowned with applause." I have this afternoon been preaching to a congregation of asses," said a conceited young person. "Then that was the reason you always called them beloved brethren," replied a strong-minded lady. Speaking of the Treasury girls, Gail Hamilton says: "Is there anything especially agreeable in counting greenbacks till your fingers bleed?" Few of us will ever know. "Mother, Father won't be in heaven with us, will he? 'Why, my child? 'Because he can't leave the store."

All Sorts of Paragraphs.

Sky lights—Stars. Saturday Notes—Our salaries. Ocean timber—The sea board. Creature comforts—Good wives. How was Jonah punished—Whaled. Never trouble trouble, till trouble troubles you. Academy of designs—A young lady, boarding school. For farmers—A good thing to "put a head on"—lettuce. The height of a young lady's ambition—Two little feet. When does a chair dislike you? When it can't bear you. Twenty quires make one ream, or Ream makes a statue. The most pompous soldier ever known—General Importance. Mrs. Romer wants Congress to give her somebody else to "do."

Providence young men are fond of discussing tails—cocktails. At this season fast horses go over the snow and under the rein. Seeing through a glass darkly—Inspecting the contents of a black bottle. How does the woodpecker get its food? Why it runs up a bill for it. A good house-wife's affairs are like a motion to adjourn—"always in order." Good—Mark Twain says that since his marriage he feels more than twice ever. Advice to children—Mind your manners. Advice to mothers—Mind your children. My first is equality, my second is superiority, and my whole is superiority. Good resolutions are like holes who faint in a lecture room—they should be carried out. Jones opines, from the unearthly squeal, that locomotive-whistles are made of pag-iron. A Michigan judge has decided the cost of bonding a rooster two days—one cent. Nursing revenge is like nursing a young hog—long—the older he gets the sharper his quills. Why is a grain of sand in the eye like a schoolmaster's cane? Because it hurts the pupil. Your field may be furrowed with care, but it cannot be harrowed by its recollection. During peace a regiment is quartered during war times it is occasionally quartered to pieces. Perhaps we shouldn't say it, but it is a fact that Jenny Lind will be fifty years old in October. Some one asserts on good authority that the 'early bird' caught cold instead of a worm. Oriental unity—The Simons two-Italian unity. The monkey chained to the organ-grinder. When is Bridget like the kitchen fire. When she's gone out, and likewise when she flares up. Greeley wrote of a will 'admitted to probate.' The compositor made it administered in polish. There is every reason to believe the some of the prevailing blonds are made of light fantastic tow. Why is a young lawyer like an anti-al currency? Because he is a legal tender, and somewhat green. A breaking wave is the only thing in nature that is the most beautiful at the moment of its dissolution. A Chicago window who has had two husbands, insists that the law of the land entitles her to her third. An exchange says "there is nothing that more deserves to be considered and taught as an art than advertising. In suits are like counterfeit money, we can't hinder them being offered, but we are not bound to take them. Why do schoolboys having their ears boxed resemble captured housebreakers? Because they are handcuffed. Why does the gorilla prefer the tropics to any other part of the world? Because it is the only place he call his zone. Interviewing is nothing new, it existed in Caesar's time, for did not young Julius ask, 'Who is it in the press that calls?' Somebody has discovered in this country a tomb-stone, to a good step mother! But it was erected a hundred years ago. In the opinion of Mrs. Muloney, the man that dies on a wash-day, does it out of spite. Husbands will please notice. A Chicago girl says that she don't get married for the reason that she don't know whose husband she might be marrying. A Chicago hotel once had a sign in the reading-room, thus: 'Gentlemen learning to spell will please take yesterday's paper.' 'The good are taken first,' does not apply at photograph establishments or barber-shops. Each must take his or her turn, good or wicked. A Boston paper declares Boston to be the paradise of the organ-grinders. That all our organ-grinders might speedily enter our paradises. Boston is in a convulsion of laughter over a woman who refused to buy beef on account of the cattle disease, and took a pound of liver instead. Terre Haute claims more banks than any other city of its size. One is a National, and the other thirteen are of the faro and keno varieties. Agricultural Greeley favors that his fellow-farmers can economize by double-draining their lands; the idea is to trench well, and then re-trench. A man recently advertised his wife as "leaving his bed and board," and soon after applied to her for two dollars to pay for the advertisement. The inquiry as to, where all the pins go to has been satisfactorily answered. The theory now is that they go into the ground and become terrapins. What is the difference between the last riddle and a man's mind who squint? One is a query with answer, the other an aunt, sir, with a queer eye.

A New Kink in Divorces.

A lawyer learns wisdom from a Pretty Woman.

A day or two ago a talented young lawyer of a neighboring city, whose name is not Smith, and whose griefs have been like an angel's visits, was delighted by finding in his office a richly-dressed lady, who announced her desire to employ him professionally.

With a beaming smile that could hardly be restrained from bursting into a full blown laugh, the young Blackstone handed the lady a cushioned arm chair, and he assured her that he was "entirely and devotedly at her service." Seating herself in the proffered office chair, the lady ungloried a small white hand that literally glistened with diamonds, and applied a sugared-scented handkerchief to her lips, blushed, and, casting her eyes upon the floor, said: "My business is very particular—it is—pardon me, sir, but you will not betray me?" "Betray you? Not for the world, madam. You can confide in me with the same reliance as in a priest at the confessional."

Habits and Doings of the New King of Spain.

He ordered the Palace gates to be locked and the lights put out at midnight. He himself, so far, has retired to rest soon after ten. These royal habits—or, I may better say, a Spanish habits—or, here the natives break that at 11, and go to bed when the cock crows—are creating great astonishment. He has had one or two receptions of officials, at which he has abolished the hand-kissing of royalty for the hand-shaking of democracy. What the Mrs Grundys of England will say to this I know not. He gave 1,000 pounds to the poor of Madrid, and another 1,000 to the needy among the citizen militia. He is soon to hold a review of the troops, and insist on reviewing the militia-also. He walks about the streets, goes shopping without any escort, and accompanied by only one or two Adjutants. He called upon poor Naudin, who had his hand shot away by the same wretches who killed Rin, and he told him he was to consider his service as Adjutant transferred to himself. He has done the same with all the Adjutants of Gen. Prim. Learning that the public school-masters are months behindhand in their pay, he has told Minister Moret that he will touch none of his pay till their claims are satisfied. The first week of his reign is nearly over, and he has not been mirrored or insulted, and no insurrection has occurred, as prophesied by many. Indeed, so little likelihood is there now of any of these things that the Queen intends to come here before the end of the month, and it is reported to-day that the ex-Empress Eugenie is to make a visit to her mother, the Countess de Montijo. Another good thing I have recorded of the King. He expressed his intention to grant a general amnesty for political offences; but on reference to the constitution, it was found that one of the articles expressly prohibited the King granting general indulgences, unless authorized by a special law of the Cortes, and this special law was forgotten to be asked for in the mad haste with which the Cortes were closed.

Justice should be the rule of a man's life; but it should be tempered by generosity.

"If it comes to that," she said, answering her own thoughts, "how my name will ring. It will be blacker than Satan. Do you know—those