

"What has the old year brought you, friend? Joy and love and sweetness? Then pass them along to others, friend, that they, to imperfect lives, may lend A little of your completeness; For hearts should be brimming with hope and cheer...

Democratic Watchman

STATE RIGHTS AND FEDERAL UNION.

VOL. 45

BELLEFONTE, PA., DEC. 14, 1900.

NO. 49.

Christmas at Riversedge...

THE STORY OF A ROMANTIC YULETIDE AT A FINE COUNTRY SEAT ON THE HUDSON.

They had been out in the sharp icy weather till the light waned, a part of them curling on the overflooded and frozen meadows. Now they had lent a hand and joined the men, hauling home the yule log; and as they came, ruddy and laughing, and thronged into the house that was hung with Christmas green, the warm and spicy atmosphere seemed like that of another world, and Fidelia Seales, standing there in the soft white crepe and holding a spray of waxen mistletoe berries and leaves, seemed a being belonging to that other world, and not to this glowing and boisterous one of the out-door weather.

She was very fair, tall, with masses of pale hair, with great gray eyes under black brows and lashes, and with a mouth, that, when it curved in a rare sweet smile, wore still something like a glorified gravity. She was the Murray Douglas governess; and everyone marvelled at not having before discovered that she was also a beauty.

Everyone, that is to say, but the Bleekers. Archibald had known it a long while. And so had his sisters, the very elegant and well-born Anna and Helena Bleekcher, and they had done all in their power, after his repeated visits at Riversedge, to make their brother Archie of a different mind by persistent assertion regarding the limp and washed-out creature that Mrs. Murray Douglas was always putting forward. Mrs. Murray Douglas was a woman of facts, they said; and the idea of her making a friend and expecting them to make a companion of her governess! But the Misses Bleekcher had independent fortunes of their own; and their brother lived in chambers and at the club, and, as their life and pleasures were independent of him, he felt that his views need not materially affect their happiness.

Nevertheless, Fidelia Seales' sweetness and beauty were a magnet that drew him wherever he might be. An invitation from Mrs. Murray Douglas was something for which he went out of his way, and when the family were in town the lovely governess could never go out with the children but Archie Bleekcher knew it, and sometimes he went so far as to call. Frequently he sent her flowers. What the result of his attentions might be upon the feelings of the young woman who found herself surrounded by them he did not stop to consider. He knew he was in love with her—perhaps she knew it, too. But he had never told her; and as to her sentiments in regard to him, the perfect repose of her breeding forbade him to guess.

She had come down after superintending the dressing of the children's tree in the great drawing room of the old house, and then, to save time, dressed herself in the new and had been making the 5 o'clock tea in the smaller chintz drawing room where the gay party bustle like a troop of Bacchantes and brought the frosty smell of the Christmas weather with them.

Mrs. Murray Douglas had been assisting her at the tree, after the servants had done all they could for her. Gabor Vesaleny, as he had been introduced; and they had remained a long while under the shade of the fragrant boughs talking together, while Fidelia was in her own room. The conversation was apparently satisfactory and agreeable; and when Miss Seales came down he remained from a quiet walk in the garden paths and asked her for a cup of tea; and, sitting before the fire, he spoke to her more freely than he had done before of his hopes and plans, having on previous occasions told her of his home in the mountain regions of a Hungarian principality, and of the fine lands to which he had been endeavoring to bring the civilization which he himself had come over here to study.

"An old name, land, resources, rank," he said; "over here they are regarded as haubles, as playthings. But we—many of us—we know that they are burdens, that they are trunks that their possession involves the whole of fate to many others. The women we marry—they are not among the great ladies wearing jewels, titles, playing life away—they are bread-givers, torch-bearers; they reach down a hand to help others up."

"They must be happy," Fidelia said. "I am considered a revolutionary," he had said to Mrs. Murray that afternoon, "I am not in good odor at court, and live almost entirely at Vesaleny. We have neighbors over the hills and across the forests. We have friends. The mesalliance of which you speak, is not an occasion for my wife or myself. Inconvenient, it is, an estate, there is no other quality in marriage than that of love and goodness. I would make my wife happy." And his proud and rugged face had glowed, and she had felt the warmth of his heart in the pressure of his hand.

He had set down his own cup now, and was carrying another to Mrs. Bleekcher, and giving Fanny Forbes' furs to a servant. "There isn't a man in this room," murmured Helena Bleekcher under her voice, "with the air of his. You rather like being waited on by a prince?" "What prince is this?" "Why, the Vesaleny there."

"Oh, come off," said Fanny, who loved to shock the Bleekchers, feeling it not im-

possible on the cards that she might one day marry her brother Archibald. "A prince, is he? This tea is of a strength equal to that I exerted in hauling the log. Will there be presents for us on the tree? Dear me, I have earned mine."

"Yes, a prince. It isn't generally known," said Anna, "but Archibald says the Murray Douglas has been entertained by him on his estates. There was some great story of a wolf hunt, and there was a royal breakfast."

"The genuine article. What is he doing here, then?" "Studying social questions," said Miss Bleekcher, with a superior air. "I wonder, could I have some cream?" "Oh! One of the great nobles, sense of responsibility, tremendously radical in theory, improving the condition of the people and wringing a gold mine out of them all the same. Perhaps he has come over here for another sort of gold mine—the American wife and her bank account. I shouldn't mind being a princess myself. As far as looks go, he's not half bad. A sort of centaur."

"He doesn't need more gold mines. All you and I have wouldn't make a ripple in his wealth."

"You've looked the situation over pretty well, Anna Bleekcher?" "There isn't any situation," said Anna, calmly. "We may be all we choose to consider ourselves; but to the great nobles we are still the canaille which our grandfathers were. And great nobles do not marry in the canaille."

"Anna Bleekcher! It takes you to say the pleasant thing! You may be all the canaille you please. But Helena and Archie and Louise and I are sovereign people. Does Dr. Steel over there look like a canaille? Does Mrs. Vansliken? Goodness, we must really go and dress! The old frump with the wonderful alacolo has come down—Mrs. Murray Douglas does surround herself with a queer lot."

"She is a seventh daughter, or has an astral body, or something of the sort."

"How much you know! Oh, there is Fidelia Seales—"

"I should think you were intimate!" "I should like to be, the lovely thing!" "Well!" said Miss Bleekcher, lifting her eyebrows.

"But I don't believe Archie will allow me the chance," said Fanny Forbes. And Miss Bleekcher felt around for her lorgnon to give her a stare, but couldn't find it, and moved off majestically, with her impedimenta on her arm.

The falling fire sent a red blaze through the room that had emptied itself at last, of nearly everyone but Mrs. Beardsley, a spare dark woman, whose eyes, when they open, were now a shadow and now flashes of green fire. Just now they closed, and she nodded, dropping her jewelled alter piece on the floor. Fidelia sat there, too, in a window seat, looking out at the splendor of the quickly-fallen night, where the stars seemed to shake in the wind. A hand lifted the curtain that had shielded her, and a flame of the firelight reddened the pane and shut out the night and overlay her white gown till she was rosier than the rose. "This firelight," said Archie Bleekcher, "makes a man feel what a thing a home would be with a woman he loved in it. What a color the fire gives you—or is it—I wish it were a blush!" he said.

"If you have ever blushed you would know it was an unkind wish," she replied. "I dare say I have had plenty of reason to blush. But I am not altogether so shameless as you imply. I notice you do not make room for me."

"Do you know, everyone is dressing for dinner, and it is already late."

"So much the better, I have not had an hour with you—and I came down here for nothing else. You were not on the ice—and I had meant to have you in my ice-boat, and have the wind take the sail before another could step aboard, and know what it would be to fly off alone with you through space."

"It would be very unbecoming," said Fidelia, looking up and wondering a little where the charm had gone out of those dark eyes, out of the smile, the smile that used to make the face radiant.

"I would be heaven!"

"Fanny was nearer heaven while dressing the great Christmas tree for the children."

"And you can endure, can enjoy, that slavery?"

"I do not find it slavery."

"I suppose you fancy, too, that you love the children?"

"It does not require much fancy."

"Love! I don't believe you know what it means!"

"It does not signify," said Fidelia, rising. It occurred to her, just then, that she had from time to time heard a great deal of this sort of talk that never arrived anywhere.

"Stay a moment! Why should you say that. It may signify—all the world to me!"

"No, indeed, nothing."

"Fidelia!" leaning lower. "Have you any idea how beautiful you are?"

"That also does not signify," she said and she gently moved by him.

"Your heart is adamant!" he exclaimed. "You tread mine under your feet!"

"It has never been placed under my feet," she said, a little amazed at herself as she panted. "Your words remind me of the moths that hover around a flame without ever alighting."

"Fidelia!"

But she was gone. The blaze had dropped into a bed of coals; Mrs. Beardsley's eyes were wide open, and the servants were lighting the candles. There was nothing to do but to go and dress. As he met

Vesaleny on the staircase he had half a mind to turn about; but he heard him presently playing some haunting music of Schumann's and went on less unwillingly. The hunting music, however, broke off rather abruptly. The player saw Fidelia looking at Mrs. Beardsley's work, and joined her. It was a wonderful scarf of jewels, the strong white silk net being embroidered in bright and large designs of gold thread, to which some Hebrew characters gave an Oriental and cabalistic effect, and the jewels—which were a tribute she had levied on all the accumulation of old and broken rings and pins and fineries among her world wide friends—were fastened on the great petals, in the heart of the wide blossoms, a high light on the leaves, wandering in and out the intricacies of texts, topazes, aquamarines, amethysts, garnets, sparks, yellow pearls, the whole a sheet of splendor. Mrs. Beardsley left it in their hands, saying she must have a breath of air, and throwing on a cloak that lay in the hall she stepped out upon the terrace, and paused a moment, listening to the bells that were ringing in the Christmas eve from the village down the river. When she presently passed the window she looked in and saw the two still standing there, Fidelia bent forward and gazing into the fire, he bent forward and gazing at her, she could only conjecture what they were saying, "if I put my mind on it, I should know. It's hardly worth the effort. But I like the man. He loves humanity, for Archie Bleekcher, he loves himself." She saw Fidelia turn quickly to her companion with a sweet and long and searching look. And then she passed on. When she again crossed the window and glanced in the two were standing together, and there was such a light on their faces as she could not remember to have seen before; and there was a cluster of people coming in at the lower door, and she knew dinner was about to be announced.

They were quite at the other end of the

"Oh, yes," Mrs. Beardsley was saying in her clear and resonant voice. "I have seen ghosts!" "You! Mrs. Beardsley! You have seen ghosts!" came a chorus of voices. "I can make you see them." "Mrs. Beardsley!" "Would you like?" There was an instant's silence. "Oh, something apropos of Christmas eve," she said. "Startling, perhaps, but illuminating."

They had all gathered behind Mrs. Murray Douglas, who sat fanning herself on the opposite side of the fire from Mrs. Beardsley. "Madame," said Archie, whom Mrs. Murray Douglas has retained and kept by herself, "this is very creepy!" "It shall be more so, if you will. Obey me, and I promise you—"

"A ghost to make our hair curl," said Fanny Forbes. "Bring him on, Mrs. Beardsley. It will have to be a real midnight prowler to chill my blood, after the ghost I saw in the hunting field last month when Hassan came a crupper, and the whole winter without a dance started up before my eyes."

"I suppose this old house is full of historic and ghostly possibilities," said Mrs. Vansliken.

"I shall not show you the ghosts of this old house. I shall show you only the ghosts that have walked in your own particular churchyards. There is one condition. You will promise to tell what you see."

"Oh, we promise!"

"Where shall we look for them," said Archie.

"You can look at Miss Seales. Here!" She rose quickly, detaching her needle, and threw her jeweled altar-scarf over the head of Fidelia, who happened to be standing half way down the room. "You can fix your eye on that, Archie Bleekcher."

"An agreeable thing to do," said young Peters. "You are going to call spirits from the vasty deep, Mrs. Beardsley," said Archie, his unabashed gaze on Fidelia. "Well, I am with Etespaur. Will they come when you summon them by our fixing our eyes upon this shining thing? A ghost apiece?" "You will have two, Archibald Bleekcher," said Mrs. Beardsley. "I don't know why I should be so distinguished," said Archie, humbly. "But if my merits warrant it—"

He stopped suddenly and felt himself grow white. Where was he? What had happened? What were the warts of cool air in his face? He was surrounded by darkness; he was conscious of a shudder, as if cold steel had touched his back. And—what was this before him—tall and fair, exquisitely fair, clad in trailing cloth of silver, and wearing a coronet, every spike of which glittered with a great diamond. What a glory was this on the face full of all sweet and strong benignities—the face full of the bright spirit that was doing some great work among a wild people, as he knew, but knew not by what means he knew. Was it the face of some young princess wearing the honors graciously—or was it that his obsession was not quite complete? Then he trembled and his glance wandered, and he came to himself, if from himself he had been away.

"Are you satisfied, Mr. Bleekcher?" asked Mrs. Beardsley. "Have you seen a ghost?" "To haunt me all my life," said Archie. And he hoped no one saw the drops on his forehead.

"You shall see the other now," said Mrs. Beardsley. "I am enough, he managed to say. You shall see the other. Do not look

table at dinner, which was not the fraction the Christmas banquet itself was to be, with the children waiting upstairs for their tree; and Mrs. Beardsley's great eyes did not fairly take in the people who were interesting her till she saw Fidelia standing against the dark background of the forest tree with its great star glittering over her head, while Vesaleny passed her the last gifts to distribute, which Mrs. Beardsley observed she did as a young queen might do. And then she led the children in their shrill choral, Mr. Vesaleny playing for them at the piano, and the maids came and swept the little people off their treasures.

"It's as good as German favors with a nonvau riche," said Fanny Forbes. "What was your lot, Maria?" as she held up her own jeweled stick pin. "Look at Anna's prayer book, if you please. If those are not sixteenth century covers, may I guess again?"

"You seem so slangy, Fanny!" "Seems, madame—nay, I am! As well be of the world as not of the world. I assure you I can talk English, though, as well as the Prince yonder. What are they going to do now? Ghost stories! Oh, fine!"

"Mrs. Beardsley is going to do some sort of ghost business," said Archie, crossing the room to them.

"Who is this Mrs. Beardsley?" said Mrs. Vansliken, lifting her glass.

"It's not so easy to say who she is—"

began Anna.

"As what she is," said Archie. "You can call her a hypnotist, or a mind reader, if you prefer, a Mahatma, a gaudianda, a power of the air."

"That doesn't frighten me for a cent," said Fanny Forbes.

But Archie saw Fidelia standing alone, and was off.

at her now. Look at me, all of you. There was a burst of several minutes in the great room. A brand fell down and cracked into coals; a candle sputtered; had one had ears to hear, the wind outside and up the hills would have sounded like the cry of a lost soul.

"Well!" said Mrs. Beardsley, softly; but her voice like silver rattle on their startled senses. And one long sigh followed her word as a bound follows its master. "What did you see, Archie?" she demanded.

"Don't ask me," murmured Archie Bleekcher, half inarticulately. "I couldn't tell you. It was darkness—it was void—it was blank horror."

"But you saw something in that void, that darkness?" "No matter what I saw!" exclaimed Archie.

"But you, Miss Fanny?" "Oh, I am just reeling with giddiness. I have come out of a whirlwind! I am going round and round! What did I see? Why, Mrs. Beardsley, you know what I saw—there is nothing, I can't—oh! I didn't know I was such a fool."

"And you, Miss Anna Bleekcher?" said Mrs. Beardsley, still in that remorseless tolling voice that seemed to compel reply. "I am very faint," Miss Bleekcher whispered, putting out her hand gropingly. "Where are my salts? Will anyone bring me some wine? Doctor Steele? Oh, Doctor Steele, if you will take my hand! Oh, it was so cold, it was so wide! It is hard, it is hard to come back and puff up—that is to grow—to become a person when one has been only an atom out in the universe!"

"Very," said Mrs. Beardsley. "And it is your turn, Doctor."

The Doctor shrugged his shoulders; he shook himself slightly, as a dog does coming out of water. "Well, it's not my fault," he said. "I have done the best I could. I saw—must I really say? Well, I saw churchyards yawn."



"Now Miss Louise." The girl was laughing. "There was nothing," she said, "absolutely nothing." "Indeed?" said Mrs. Beardsley. "I thought everyone had a soul." She looked over the little company, the most of them with damp foreheads, with eyes darkened, still in a sort of dumb terror. "I suppose you know what you have seen?" she said. "It has been given to each of you for one instant to see your own self."

"One instant is quite enough," said Mrs. Murray Douglas, recovering herself. "Mrs. Beardsley, you are in league with the powers of evil!"

"No. With the powers of good!" "Well, lift your wand now, enchantress."

"You are Circe come again," said Archie, with an effort to be gay. "You turned us all to beasts."

"Not all," said Mrs. Beardsley. And she looked at Vesaleny, whose face was shining, white and glad, as if he had looked on an angel.

"You have made a Saturnalia again on Christmas eve," said the doctor. It seems to some apparition, a little more cheerful, Mrs. Beardsley, some smiling 'bonnes fortunes,' shaking their golden hair would have been more in character with the spirit of Christmas eve."

"The spirit of Christmas eve," said Mrs. Beardsley, taking a step to recover her altarpiece. "Is that which helps us outward and upward. And if to see the truth shall help us away from it if it be evil, and toward it if it be good, why that is a kindly, cheerful Christmas apparition."

"Anyway, we have broken the spell now," said Mrs. Murray Douglas. "So we will go back into the dining room and light the big yule-log you brought home and have a game of snap dragon."

Concluded on page 4.

Spawns from the Keystone.

The Patton Clay manufacturing company a few days ago announced that a reduction of 10 per cent. in the wages of its employees would go into effect December 10th. The men, from 150 to 175 in number, refused to submit to the reduction and went out on a strike.

The large barn of Murray Simpson, near Huntington, was burned Friday night together with three horses, two cows, 900 bushels of wheat, 600 bushels of oats, sixty tons of hay and a number of agricultural implements. Loss, \$8,000; insurance \$3,700. The fire is supposed to have been of incendiary origin.

Natural gas has been struck in the well which is being drilled at Cedar Run on Pine creek. The gas sand was struck at a depth of 1,300 feet. It will be some time yet before it is known whether the flow of gas is from a pocket or whether a big reservoir has been tapped. The well is nine miles from the Gallagher township well and twenty-six miles in a direct line from Lock Haven.

A fire occurred at Goinza, about twelve miles from Tionesta on Thursday, which resulted in the death of three children of E. W. Grubbs. The mother had gone to call on a neighbor, leaving the children in the house, when an unexpected pressure of gas came on, overheating the stove and igniting the building. When discovered the fire had gained such headway that it was impossible to enter the building and the little ones, who were aged 5 and 2 years and 6 months, were burned to death.

Hugh Broiley, of Cresson, disappeared from his home November 19th. His family are very much worried over his disappearance and have written to many friends in different towns and cities, but they have received letters in reply stating that they saw nothing of him. Mr. Broiley is 21 years of age, of small stature, measuring about 5 feet, and when he disappeared was wearing a light-colored suit, a brown hat, blue cotton shirt and congress shoes.

A terrible railroad accident was averted last Thursday morning, by P. A. Henman, the tower dispatcher, at Selingsgrove junction. He closed the railroad bridge spanning the Susquehanna river at that place, when he noticed that thirty-five feet of the track bed had fallen into the river. He ran to the tower and notified the Selingsgrove officer to hold the train. It had started to cross the bridge but was intercepted in time to prevent a disaster.

R. Frank Johnson, justice of the peace, of Wayne township, Clinton county, had two young horses, which he valued at \$300. Thursday he was away from home and the horses showed no inclination to eat. That night when he returned he at once went to the barn and found them both dead. The animals were opened, when it was discovered that their stomachs had been eaten away by a substance that looked very much like arsenic which had evidently been given them by a brutal fiend.

A sample of rock just taken from the Nicholas Lewis farm at Arch Springs, eight miles from Tyrone, was sent to State College for analysis and was found to contain selenium, arsenic and a trace of silver sufficient to cause considerable excitement in that vicinity. The farm was offered at public sale and in a sense was sold for \$3,700 to the highest bidder, but subject to being still open to higher bidders for a limited period. The property, regardless of the mineral interests, which belong to the farm, right, has always been valued at a much higher figure than the above.

Centre Hall has a preacher who makes fiddles, and good ones too, for he gets as much as \$50 for a single instrument. His name is Rev. W. W. Rhoads and he preaches for the United Evangelical church. During the past year he has made 5 violins, 2 guitars and a cane and has another violin and cane partly finished. One of the canes was made from a piece of wood taken from the Charran, an American vessel that was sunk during the Revolutionary war, and is inlaid with 500 different pieces of wood. Besides being a skilled maker of instruments, Rev. Rhoads is also an expert in bringing music out of instruments, being able to play almost any kind of musical instruments.

About 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon James M. Austin in some mysterious way fell from a trestle, a distance of eighteen or twenty feet to the ground below, alighting on his head, at the Nagney limestone quarries of A. G. Morris, about two miles out of branch railroad from Milroy. The ground where he fell was strewn with stones and wooden blocks, and it is thought Mr. Austin's shoulder struck one of the blocks, which checked the force of the fall, and probably saved his life. He was picked up in an unconscious condition. Mr. Morris happened to be present, and he at once had the injured man conveyed to Milroy on a car, where he is now resting comfortably at a hotel, having regained full consciousness. No bones are broken but he is badly stove, and will not be able to return to work for some time. Mr. Austin is employed as engineer and draftsman at the Nagney quarries.

In the Clearfield court this week seven merchants were convicted of violating the pure food law. They were: H. A. Vesborg, of DuBois, who pled guilty to selling adulterated lemon extract; sentenced to a fine of \$50 and costs. A. J. Kline, of DuBois, pled guilty to selling adulterated vinegar; same sentence imposed. A. J. Haug, DuBois, pled guilty to selling adulterated lemon extract; same sentence imposed. J. A. Slungenhorst, DuBois, pled guilty to selling adulterated vanilla extract; same sentence imposed. Fred J. Dryer, Curwensville, pled guilty to selling adulterated vanilla extract; same sentence imposed. Joseph Deleunt, of Houtzdale, pled guilty to selling oleomargarine containing coloring matter. The judge deferred the imposing of a sentence on Mr. Deleunt until after the disposition of a case now on trial before the supreme court. The important case of the whole lot was the one charging George, Shiffer, formerly of Gallitzin, but now of Pittsburg, with selling oleomargarine without a license, selling oleo containing coloring matter, and selling oleo which was not stamped according to law. After being out but a short time the jury brought out a verdict of guilty on all three counts and the court sentenced the defendant to pay a fine of \$300 and costs.