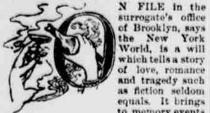
eral Sickles' Daughter's Life.

### **HOW HER BEAUTY FADED AWAY.**

Ruined by Dissipation and Excesses, the Once Brilliant Young Woman Dies Practically Friendless and Alone-Social Triumphs Years Ago.



love, romance and tragedy such as fiction seldom equals. It brings to memory events

of half a century ago that stirred society and the nation. Woman's frailty, woman's faithlessness, man's treachery and man's revenge-all are revealed in its two brief pages. It tells of broken homes, wrecked lives, and still above it all, like a halo, shines the glory of distinction at-tained, of brave deeds done.

Laura B. Sickles at one time could have claimed the hand of the bravest and best in America or Europe. Daughter of a man of distinction, wealth and power, there was nothing the future might not have brought to her. While still in her teens she reigned with a queenly sway at the court of Madrid. Cavaliers with the bluest blood of old Castile bowed before her. The horizon of her life was roseate tinted, but somewhere afar off was a dark

speck, a menacing blot upon her heritage. Laura Sickles was not a girl one would call beautiful, though her mother was gifted with radiant charms of feature and person. Her father, too, the famous General Daniel E. Sickles, was and still is a splendid specimen of physical manhood. His seventy years are carried with a dignity, a majesty even, from which his crutches cannot detract.

It was away back in 1853 that Daniel E. Sickles, then in his thirty-first year and corporation attorney for New York city, was married to Teresa Bagioli. She was only seventeen and the daughter of A. Bagioli, an Italian music teacher of New York. Beautiful as a dream of an Italian morning was the bride of the rising young lawyer politician. She was accomplished as well, a brilliant conversationist in several languages and in every way fitted to grace the home her talented husband gave

The young lawyer met her when he was studying Italian under Lorenzo Daponte, the librettist of Verdi's most celebrated opera. The elder Sickles, one of the richest men of New York in those days, had carefully educated his son, but the youth was self willed and there had been a quarrel. The son could get along without his father, and the old gentleman was pleased at his rapid advancement. The beautiful Teresa was self willed also. Her busy father could not devote much time to her moral education, and left to herself she grew to womanhood full of the choicest of feminine physical charms, but deficient in those beauties of soul which elevate woman above the sphere of ordinary humanity.

James Buchanan, already a power in the politics of New York, was sent to London as minister from the United States. His political acumen and knowledge of men led him to accept young Sickles as secre-tary of legation. In London Mrs. Sickles was the rage. She was presented to the queen, and at many of the great social functions in the English capital and at the country houses of the aristocracy she was the observed of all observers.

It was while her father was in London in 1854 that Laura was born at the old Sickles homestead in Bloomingdale. Laura Bagioli Sickles she was christened. The

A STRANGE, TRUE TALE Romance and Tragedy of Gen-aral Sickles' Daughter's Life

and when the general was appointed min-ister to Spain by President Grant she was fifteen years old. She went with him to Madrid, and there learned what it was to receive the homage of nobles and princes. In her train at Madrid was a handsome young cavalier who, though not wealthy, could trace his ancestry to the bluest blooded hidalgos of Castile and Arragon. She loved him. The courtship went on until the general concluded that the young Spaniard was after his daughter's money and broke off the engagement. About the same time he took to himself a young Spanish wife. Laura refused to submit. Imperious as

her father, and scorning the mediation of her stepmother, she came back to the United States. The quarrel that took place in the American minister's house at Madrid was never bealed. Father and daughter never saw each other again. Laura came to New York and went to

live with her grandmother, Mme. Bagioli, in Fifty-second street. At her grand-father's death she became possessed of about \$60,000, well invested in real estate.

The general resigned his post in Madrid and returned to this country in 1873. Laura's heritage of stubbornness began to manifest itself. She left her grandmoth-er's roof to plunge into the sea of dissipa-tion and self indulgence. Her name was linked with that of John Bloodgood, then with that of John Bloodgood, then with that of a Mr. Hughes and then with others by the score. Untrammeled by so-cial connections, reckless of her own and her family's name, she became the extravagant queen of the wildest set in New York. At one time she was known as Mrs. Carlton and lived at Morello's. Her favors were dispensed with a generous hand, but she exacted a devotion and a subservience to her will that resulted in frequent ruptures.

There was nothing mercenary about this butterfly of the gilded purlieus. Of a hardy race, strong and supple limbed, she bade fair to withstand the immense tax she put upon her endurance. But the pace was too rapid even for her. The attractiveness which brought to her feet the accomplished youths and wealthy bankers and merchants began to disappear. The splendid figure of which a Hebe or a Juno would have been proud began to take on flesh. The lines of beauty disappeared first into embonpoint and at the last were totally obliterated in gross obesity.

From champagne and the costliest wines that private and public cellars could afford she turned to gin and whisky. The girl who had graced the receptions at the court of Spain, whom princes and princesses had caressed, was now the Circe of back rooms in New York and Brooklyn groggeries. She still had her followers, though. Her income purchased what grace and charm had once commanded.

She moved over to Brooklyn four years ago, spending her time in recuperating from the effects of debauches, in which her intervals of strength would permit her to indulge. Her grandmother, to whom she returned for awhile, was then living at Croton Falls. But Laura could not remain in such a secluded, lifeless spot. She took up her home in Brooklyn at 11 Debevoise place, the house of George W. Cook. Mr. Cook is a clerk in the New York postoffice and is a brother of Mme. Bagioli, Laura Sickles' grandmother. Laura rented a suite of rooms from the Cooks and furnished them barself. She had a maid to whom she paid sixteen dollars a month, but al-lowed her to remain most of the time with Mme. Bagioli.

General Sickles often heard of his wayward daughter and through intermediaries tried to reclaim her, but all his efforts failed. The rancor born in her breast at the breaking off of the engagement in Madrid had intensified in the years of their separation, and her pride was too great to permit her to crawl to his feet in her degradation.

## Kitchen Extension.

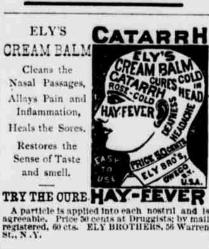
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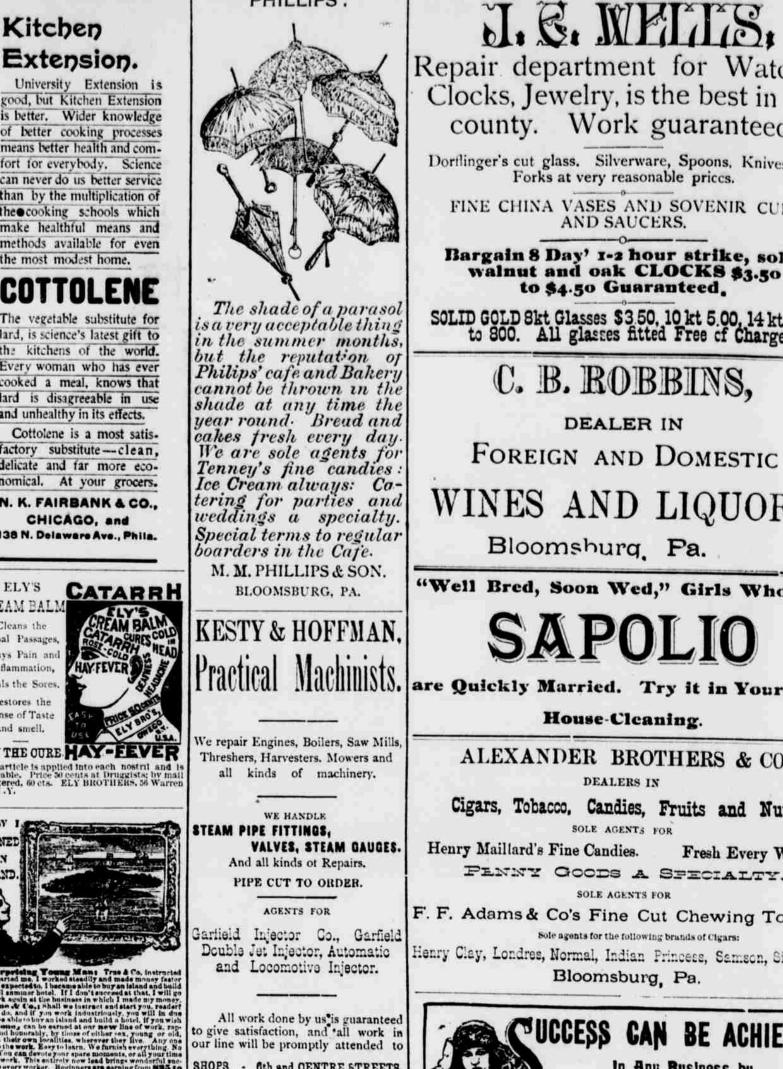


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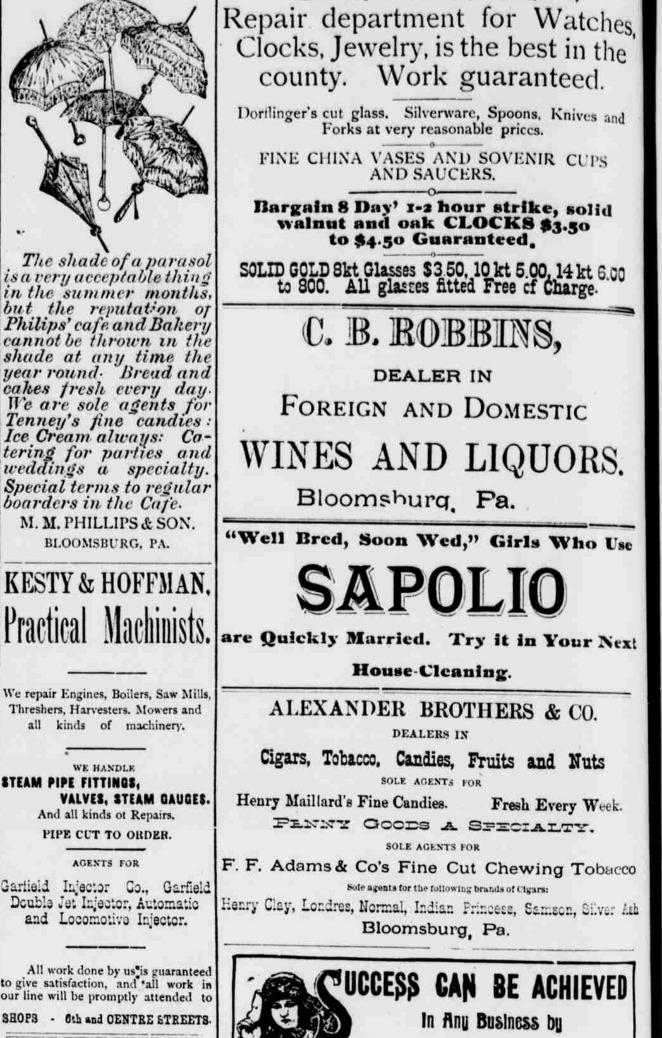
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next year the handsome secretary of lega-tion returned to this country to help elect James Buchanan president of the United States. At the same election he was chosen as a state senator, and the next year he was sent to congress from New York. He made his home on Lafayette square, then one of the most fashionable sections of the capital. Husband and wife were petted members of Washington's best society.

Among the chosen friends of both was handsome Philip Barton Key, son of Fran-cis Scott Key, the author of "The Star Spangled Banner." Key escorted Mrs. Sickles to the opera, and was a devoted ad-

Sickles to the opera, and was a devoted ad-mirer and attendant of hers at the recep-tions at the White House and the lega-tions. Mrs. Grundy began to whisper, and finally things were told Mr. Sickles. It was on Feb. 27, 1859, that Congress-man Sickles killed Key, then the United States attorney for the District of Colum-bla. He had two Derringers on his person and a five shot revolver. Mrs. Sickles had previously confessed her sin to her hus-band in writing. Sickles walked up to Key, told him to prepare to die for dishon-Key, told him to prepare to die for dishon-oring him and put three bullets into the body of his erstwhile friend.



### GENERAL DANIEL E. SICKLES.

The trial is a matter of history. It lasted twenty days, and among the lawyers for the defense were Edwin M. Stanton, afterward Lincoln's secretary of war; General Thomas Francis Meagher, James A. Brady, John Graham and other lawyers of national reputation. Sickles was ac-quitted. His wife, whom he had sent back to her father, was almost heartbroken. Public sentiment was with Mr. Sickles, but before long there was a revulsion. obedience to the pleadings of his little daughter Laura and his own love he took his beautiful wife again to his arms. It was not for long, though, and she soon died of a broken heart, shunned by her former admirers and friends.

Then came the war, when President Lincolo nominated Sickles as brigadier general in 1561, and after he had been reelected to congress from the Third district

she lived with the Cooks, but lately her life had been lonely indeed. Mr. Cook quarreled with his wife, and she and her children moved away. Then a colored servant attended to the wants of Laura. Now and then she would wants of Laura. Now and then she would have supper in her room, as in the old times, and the glasses would clink, and with merry jest and song heartaches and regrets were driven to the oblivion that stupefaction brings. But Laura could still talk of the old haleyon days of her belle-dom. If she had any regrets, any griefs, she never showed them. she never showed them.

She had drunk the cup of pleasure to its dregs, she frequently said, and solace was found in drink alone. Many and many a time, in the excitation of the hours she passed with the few of her acquaintances in her rooms at 11 Debevoise place, her memory would recall the verses she used to love when a brilliant girl, with a mind stored with the beauties of the poets. So passed the last days of Laura Bagioli

Sickles.

In a home that had been broken up since her entrance into it by the separation of husband and wife she fell ill and died. The Cooks did not separate because of her. It was because of the entrance of another and a stranger.

Was it fate?

Among the last attendants upon Laura was a young woman living in Brocklyn, who had gone to school with her. Only three weeks before death came Laura re-ceived a remittance of a little over \$1,000, her quarterly income from her grandfather's bequest. She bought new furni-ture, odds and ends of bousehold ornaments and costly lingerie. She never en-joyed any of it.

She was thirty-eight years old when she died. She made her will on March 24, 1991. It was filed in the surrogate's office of Brooklyn on June i, but has not yet been admitted to probate. Application for probate will be made soon, and it is possible there may be a contest. The document is only two pages long. In it she provides for the payment of her

funeral expenses and for a monument to cost \$500 to be placed over the graves of her-

timeral expenses and for a monument to cost \$300 to be placed over the graves of her-self and mother. She directs that she be buried in Greenwood by the side of her-mother. All her furriture and brica-brac she devises to Lizzie J. Cook, wife of George W. Cook. Her fortune, which had windled to something like \$20,000, was then divided thus: — One-third to Lizzie J. Cook, one-third to Laura Sickles Clark and one-third to Eliza C. Bagioli for life, and after her death the principal to go to Fred Walker, Laura Sickles Cook is the thirteen year-old daugh-ter of Mrs. Lizzie J. Cook, and Fred Walker is Mrs. Cook's grandson. Mrs. Cook is ap-pointed under the will as the guardian of Laura Sickles Cook and Fred Walker, and is made executrix with Edward Balley, of Pathogue, L. 1. Neither is to give bonds. At her death General Sickles sent flowers. And they are still on her grave and that of her mother in Greenwood. The general did not attend the funeral, however, and only the Cooks and the young lady who had attended her in ber last liness were there.

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