

ALAS!

Alas, alas, eheu!
That the sky is only blue
To gather from the grass
The rain and dew!

Hamilton Pinkney Fairfax.
AGED ONE DAY.

BY JOHN J. A'BECKET.

At the simmering close of an August
afternoon two young gentlemen might
have been seen climbing out of a dog cart
drawn up in front of a whitewashed Negro
shanty, on the ragged edge of a Maryland
wood—very tidy young fellows, of the
class whose chief claim upon the gratitude
of the race lies in their lending a
holiday aspect to a worn-out world.

The misty Blue Ridge Mountains were
casting long shadows, quite in the manner
of a Virgilian eclog, athwart the luxuriance
of the Frederick Valley, while the
broad cornfields had lapsed from a riotous
gold into russet lassitude, now that the
potent alchemist of the sky had majestically
retired behind the line of undulating
hills. The grass, too, had intensified into
a bluer green, which the walls, fences and
outhouses diversified with the effective
white of a wash, severely economical, but
of decided artistic value.

"Tom," said the younger of the two
men, as he bustled himself in fastening the
horse to the tumble-down fence skirting
a kitchen garden, "you potter around in the
graveyard there while I go in and see
Aunt Sarah. I won't be but a minute;
and you know you hate the smell of
bacon in a Negro's quarters. There are
some very nice people buried there," he
added, encouragingly.

"All right," said Barnard, and, turning,
he strolled leisurely toward the
cemetery which lay just this side of the
church, unkempt and neglected. The
little church was attended once a month
from Frederick. The small, whitewashed
box, a thin blue smoke floating indolently
from its brick chimney, and its wooden
porch smothered with Virginia
creepers, was the abode where Aunt
Sarah ate, breathed and slept, with
intermittent attention to her brood, and
bustling ministrations to the priest on his
monthly visits.

She stood in the doorway of her castle
now, her head swathed in a faded
bandana, her arms akimbo. Her white
teeth flashed a warm welcome on Paul
Theron as he picked his way toward the
door.

"Lord a-massy, ef dat nint' you, Mis'r
Theron!" she cried, with a colored wo-
man's emotionless vivacity. "I jes done
thought you'd gone back to New York
it's so long since I seen you."

She flitted her checked apron across
the bottom of a wooden chair, and made
him sit down for a moment in the kitchen.
The smell of the bacon was there,
with its warm grip on the nostrils; but
Theron did not mind it. It only gave
him an appetite.

He found out from Aunt Sarah that
Father Heber would come to the chapel
the following Sunday. His sister had
asked him to see when the priest would
be there, as it would spare her a trip to
Frederick if she could speak to him when
he came to the mission.

Theron could not get away without
partaking of the Negro's hospitality to
the extent of a glass of milk, which she
brought, cool and creamy, from the
dairy, where the water-cresses grow so
thickly around the spring. He pronounced
it delicious as he dried his lips with
a silk handkerchief. Then he shook
hands with Aunt Sarah, pinched the
black cheek of a pickaninny who was
dragging at her skirts, and went toward
the cemetery where he saw Barnard
standing up to his knees in the long
grass.

Barnard looked up at his approach, a
broad smile parting his lips.

"Paul, just see what I have discovered,"
he said, as Theron tore his way
gingerly through the vines and blackberry
bushes. He pointed to a small, conical
shaft of marble, stained yellow-white by
the weather, and half a yard high.
There was something amusing in the
digified stand it seemed to take among
the impressive tombs whose brick walls
supported thick slabs. Some of them
had sunk into the earth on one side, and
he letters cut into the marble were so
blackened with lichens as to be almost
undecipherable.

"Shades of Gulliver!" said Theron, as
he caught sight of the perky shaft.
"Who is the dead giant?"

"Read!" exclaimed Barnard, with his
hands thrust into his pockets. "The in-
scription gives his whole history."

Theron got down on one knee, brushed
aside the slender grasses, which rose to
the full height of the monument, and cast
a delicate tracery of shadow over the
name:

"HAMILTON PINKNEY FAIRFAX:
AGED ONE DAY."

He rose with a smile.
"Poor little beggar! What a short
fining he had, didn't he? Some of these
crumbly old tombs are the abodes of
past Fairfaxes. There are others around
in the neighborhood still, I believe, wait-
ing for interment. They are not quite
dead enough to justify their burial yet."

ment now. Laden with so much name,
too!"

Barnard was a young lawyer from
New York who had run down to Frederick
County to put in a few days with
Theron, who had just started a stock
farm there. He was a "society man,"
with a good position in an old law firm
and a moderate, Barnard thought al-
together too moderate, income. During
the past winter he had conducted two or
three important cases with success, and
had been very epris with an extremely
elegant woman who had an enormous
"pull" in society. Barnard had really
cares more for his success with the lady
than his success with the law. She was
beautiful, rated as wealthy, and full of
the most charming tact.

Mrs. Amidon was not of the impres-
sionable order, and the men who danced
attendance on her were wont to give
more than they received. Barnard's
comparative success had been matter of
envy.

"I can't help thinking of that little
beggar," Barnard said, with a smile, as
he pulled a cigar from his pocket and lit
it, while Theron gathered up the reins
and they drove off, followed by the open
admiration of Aunt Sarah's "olive
branches." "How unnecessarily he slip-
ped into and out of life. The lifetime of
a day! Most of us do little enough with
a much longer span, but he did absolutely
nothing! If he had been born
twenty-one years old, and in New York,
he might have had a fuller existence, if it
were short. Poor little Jack-in-the-box!"

Two months later Barnard met Mrs.
Amidon in New York at an afternoon tea.
She had only returned from Europe a
week before, and the newspaper accounts
of her doings there had not been the most
grateful reading for him. Her greeting
was friendly. But Barnard had the
sense that it would have been quite the
same if they had chanced upon one an-
other in an Eskimo hut at the extreme
North. It was so independent of condi-
tions. She would have said: "How do
you do?" and would have made
some remark about the icebergs as a
timely conversational topic. As it was,
she said he looked brown. Had he been
yachting?

He had never seen her appear so
charming. She was to him the ideal
grande dame. Her exquisite figure could
have warmed an antique statue to an
envious thrill. It woke her man dress-
maker to extravagant admiration. And
her face was so softly, coolly beautiful.
Yet her charm of manner almost made
one ignore the graces of her form and
face.

Mrs. Amidon resumed Barnard where
the close of the season had interrupted
him. He fell into his rafter favored po-
sition in the line with a well-defined pur-
pose of playing himself with such success
that he could secure an enduring post at
her side. He knew that she had taken
him up; he meant to assume her.

By November, he felt that he had made
a distinct advance. Toward the end of
that month some fashionable woman gave
an entertainment at which Mrs. Amidon
and himself were present. The large
rooms were not stuffily full. Barnard
was very much at Mrs. Amidon's elbow
this evening, and there were two or three
nuances in her treatment of him which he
construed delightedly as a gratified ac-
ceptance of his devotion, something so
much better than if she had merely shown
a consciousness of being able to command
it.

Several of the people present had
drawn eodemously on their powers of
entertaining. Somebody had played on
the violin, a young woman with a brazen
accent had recited something from Andre
Chenier, and a Creole girl had sung two
or three folk-songs of French Louisiana
with bizarre quality in the lilting chant.
Then Barnard stepped a little forward
with a bit of paper in his hand.

"In my travels of last summer in the
wilds of Maryland," he began, in his
full tones and slightly drawing manner,
"I chanced upon a warrior's grave. For
if, as they tell us, life is a warfare, then
was he a Knight though he jostled but
for a day."

Mrs. Amidon's fan moved more gently,
until it came to repose. The allegory
was amusing.

"He had his monument, had this knight,
one proportioned to his life and deeds;
for the summer grasses threw slender
shadows quite across its top. This me-
morial shaft chronicled nought beyond
the name of him who had fought the
good fight, save that he waged it in a
day. I thought that even so small a poet
as myself might sing of this inconse-
quential warrior, and, if you will of your
patience suffer it, I will read what
for lack of better title, I have called
"Verses on Hamilton Pinkney Fairfax:
aged one day."

Mrs. Amidon had sunk back in the
broad chair, her fan lightly resting on
her bosom, till the glistening gardenias
seemed veiled in a film of mourning, as
if for the dear, dead summer.

"Life's fitful day is o'er, and here he
lies,
Tucked fast asleep beneath his native
skies,
Earth's warm, brown blanket folded on
his breast,
His wisdom monumentally confessed,
For when he came, he did not like the
place,

And had the wit to wander into space.
The crow of chanticleer hailed him be-
gun,
Noon saw his prime, and twilight found
him done,
Hamilton Fairfax, at the crack of doom,
Will flicker forth to judgment from his
tomb,

To find how little of the Book of Life
Was needed to recount his earthly
strife,
This to the world his modest shaft must
say,
When it records his span of but a day:
White was his soul at dawn, as white at
noon,
White when it passed, at curfew, not too
soon!

Had he but known life's way he would
have chuckled
That at her breast he was so briefly
suckled,
Hamilton Fairfax, lucky might were
you,
To get to heaven for what you did not
do!"

There was a murmur of soft laughter
as he bowed gravely at the close, and
moved away. Smiling faces and mock
protests met him. One volatile young
woman tapped him with her fan, and
cried in a high voice: "You hard-
hearted thing, to make fun of that dar-
ling little creature! I didn't know
whether to weep or to laugh over this
abominable Fairfax. I watched you
and if you had shown any regret for
him, I should have cried. But you
didn't—not a bit!"

"Ah, Miss Worden, I spent my emotion
at his grave," retorted Barnard, quickly.
"You should have wept."

He was making his way, laughing,
to Mrs. Amidon. Almost as soon as the
verses were done she had risen, and with
willowly dignity of movement passed
through the crowd to the hostess and
bade her good night. There was in her
a faint suggestion of what the flowers
must find in the breath of the autumn.
She was standing in the hall wrapped in
her furs and talking volubly to three or
four men as she waited for her carriage,
when Barnard found her.

"Are you going so soon, Mr. Amidon?"
he exclaimed. "I hope Hamilton
Pinkney Fairfax has not acted the exor-
cist, and driven you forth."

"How gallant!" said Mrs. Amidon,
with a brilliant smile at the other men.
"Don't you remember what exorcisms
are directed against? You must have
been deeply stirred, Mr. Barnard, to have
betaken yourself to verse. How very
amusing you found that little boy. It is
absurdly ridiculous to live only for a
day, is it not? Good night."

She had spoken hurriedly but gaily,
and the man opened the door, and with
a nod she disappeared, the light falling
softly in a parting gleam on the smooth
coils of her hair. Barnard noted it with
a sort of pain. He had wished to ask
her when he could call the following day,
but she had offered him no chance for
speech.

There was just enough of the canker
of doubt in him the next day to make
him irritably impatient to see her again.
He went to the large brick house on
Washington Square rather early in the
afternoon for a call. Her coupe was
standing at the door as he approached,
and when he reached the stoop Mrs.
Amidon was descending the steps. She
bowed, smiled, paused for a moment when
she reached the sidewalk and made some
remark on the lovely day as she arranged
the last button of her glove. This was
all she could have been expected to do;
yet Barnard felt he had been relegated
some rods to the rear of the position
which he thought he had won for him-
self.

"I am unfortunate," he said. "I had
hoped for some little time with you."

"I have got to make a dozen calls,"
she returned airily, as if this were the
nearest approach to a sympathetic re-
mark which she could volunteer.

"Won't you name some day when
you will be at home to see me?" he
asked, as the footman opened the carriage
door.

"I am always at home Sunday after-
noons," she said, suavely.

"Yes; but you have a mob of callers
then," he retorted.

"They are all nice people," and Mrs.
Amidon arched her brows.

"Oh, of course! But I would like so
much if you would allow me to come
some time when you will be
alone," he urged, with a pleading look
in his eyes.

She hesitated a moment.

"Come Monday afternoon at five," she
said, and stepped into the coupe.

He repaired to Washington Square at the
designated time, feeling that he might, or
might not, put the question fraught with
such intense interest for him. It should
depend on how he found her. He would
not attempt to settle the point independ-
ently of that. His determination to
speech should be the outcome of the cir-
cumstances.

As he entered the room where she was
sitting, a warming sense of satisfaction
made him think he would speak before
he left her. The whole made such a
charming picture. Mrs. Amidon was
sitting in a low, broad chair of pale blue
velvet. The exquisite lines of her figure
had never seemed more perfect. Her
dress was of heavy silk of a lustrous black
with which some white fabric was com-
bined, the severity of the gown softened
by a profusion of lace.

She gave him her hand and motioned
him to a seat. What a perfectly pre-
served woman she was, he thought; every
turn, every movement, suggesting a
queenly serenity. Ah, if he could call
this glorious creature his!

"Do you know what a comfortable
picture you make, you and your sur-
roundings?" he exclaimed, with the pas-
sion of an artist.

"Comfortable! That is a very moderate
compliment. I am a poor rival to the cat
there as a picture of comfort."

She smiled slightly, as with a move-
ment of her foot she indicated a yellow
plush basket in which was coiled an An-
gors whose soft sides pulsated to the most
blissful content.

One month later the grandfather died
also. When his will was read it was
found that he had bequeathed his prop-
erty to the issue of his grandson, leaving
to him only a modest income. The death
of the grandson had spared him this ex-
pression of ill-will.

Mrs. Amidon paused again. "Very
soon after the grandfather's death a
posthumous child, a son, was born to the
young widow. He inherited the large
estate bequeathed to his will. The
mother saw for one dim moment the little
boy's violet eyes before she relapsed into
a state of weakness in which her life was
despaired of. But she rallied, and when
she recovered sense of her surroundings
asked for her child that she might look
for comfort in his father's eyes. They
told her as gently as they could that he
was lying by his father's side in the
graveyard of the little church."

"Through the death of this short-lived
child the mother came into full posses-
sion of the large fortune which he seemed
to have come only to inherit and transmit
to her. It enabled her to gratify every
reasonable taste and to assume a position
in society which, without it, would have
been impossible.

"Later," continued Mrs. Amidon, rais-
ing her eyes to Barnard's face, "she mar-
ried again. It was a marriage unhappy
in its results, for there developed the
greatest disaffection. Two years ago the
woman was again left free. She has had
a brief, but rarely perfect, wedded life.
She has had one not so brief and wretch-
edly imperfect. Not long since," and
Mrs. Amidon's eye returned to the blaz-
ing log, "this woman, a widow for her
second time, had not yet set her heart
against marriage."

"She remained with her gaze steadily
fixed on the glowing heart of the log
with its soft, silvery coating of white
ashes, as if in reverie, her hands folded
passively in her lap.

"Is that the end of the story?" inquired
Barnard, softly.

"Yes, it is the end of the story," Mrs.
Amidon answered slowly. "It is the
story of a perfect love and of the substi-
tute for love which came closest to the
woman's desires in the wealth and luxury
of her life, which she owed to this
little boy who lived only a day."

Barnard drew a slow breath. Then he
said: "And his name?"

"Hamilton Pinkney Fairfax," replied
Mrs. Amidon. "You found his tiny
monument and his little life a very amus-
ing theme for your verses at Mrs. Van
Brugh's the other night. I thought it right
that you should know how they affected
me, his mother. You see," she said,
smiling faintly, as she looked at Barnard,
while the expression which so often
seemed about to come and never came,
dawned upon her face, "there was some-
thing more than the humorous in them
for me, for whom he seemed to have
lived only that he might be the little in-
termediary between his father's tender
love and the grandfather's stiff-necked
opposition. I have seldom been more
affected by verses, Mr. Barnard."

"Mrs. Amidon," said Barnard, with
the utmost contrition, "I beg you to
pardon me for wounding your feelings.
Believe me, nothing could have been
further from my thought."

"I quite feel it, Mr. Barnard," she
answered, quietly. "You have no need
to apologize. You did not know you
were reading your verses to the mother
of the little boy, aged one day. Nor did
you know what that brief life accom-
plished."

"And now," she added, rising slowly,
her tone and manner consigning the wo-
man who had told him, so simply, the
life of Mrs. Amidon, irrevocably to the
past, "I must ask you to excuse me, as I
have to dress for dinner. Good-by."

As Barnard took her hand and bowed,
he felt that it was a farewell over the
grave of Hamilton Pinkney Fairfax.—
[Independent.]

AROUND THE HOUSE.

To polish kitchen knives nicely, mix
a little bicarbonate of soda with the brick
dust and rub them thoroughly.

Slate floors should be polished, rub-
bing first with a smooth, flat piece of
pumice stone, and finally polish with rot-
ten stone.

Coffee is used for mixing blacking for
the stove, in order to make it stick close
and last longer. Most housekeepers prefer
the old-fashioned blacking to any of the
new ones, because of its lasting qualities.
The cement is easier to apply as it re-
quires no labor in polishing. No stove
should be blacked more than once a
month, but it should be kept clean by
wiping off any clots of grease which may
be spilled upon it. The flues of a stove
should certainly be cleaned as often as
once a month.

The proper washing of silk stockings
is a matter of moment, now that they are
commonly worn. White silk stockings
should be washed in a strong lather made
of castile soap or any good white soap
and warm water. Lay the stockings in
the lather and rub the soiled spots gen-
tly with the hands. Then rinse them
very thoroughly to free them from all
soap. Wring them dry in a cloth, turn-
ing them wrong side out. When they are
almost dry stretch and rub them in
the hands to make them smooth and
bring them in shape, but do not iron them.
Black stockings may be washed in the
same way, but should be kept separate
from white stockings in the washing.
Some people go so far as to rub their
stockings when they are dry with a cold
iron, always making the passes one way
to make them smooth and glossy. It is
a great mistake, however, to iron any
stockings. It always makes an ugly
crease down the center and does not add
to the appearance. It is far better to rub
them into shape, fold them up and allow
them to fit themselves to the limb.

CORN AND TOMATO SOUP.—To make
a soup of corn and tomatoes, scald one
quart of tomatoes. Add a quart of stock,
a slice of carrot, a small onion, a bay
leaf, a sprig of thyme, one clove, six
peppercorns, and if convenient a tea-
spoonful of minced ham. Let this all
cook slowly for half an hour, then add
two tablespoonfuls of butter melted and mixed
with two tablespoonfuls of flour. Strain
the soup through a pure sieve, so that
every portion except the seeds and sea-
soning will pass through. Return the
strained tomato puree to the stove. Add
liberal teaspoon of scraped corn. Let
the soup boil for five minutes after the
corn is added.

THE JOKER'S BUDGET.

JESTS AND YARNS BY FUNNY MEN
OF THE PRESS.

The Sorrow of It—Saw the Sun Rise
—Not by the Ear—Good Cause.

THE SORROW OF IT.

Miss Highton—Allow me to congrat-
ulate you, Mrs. Newbride. Your wedding
ceremony was one of the most successful
of the season.

Mrs. Newbride—So they say, and now
it's all over, there seems nothing in life
to live for.

Miss Highton—Why, how you talk!
Isn't your husband kind to you?

Mrs. Newbride—Oh, yes! It isn't that,
but he's so awfully healthy, you know.
I don't believe I'll ever have a chance to
officiate as a bride again.—[Boston Cour-
ier.]

SAW THE SUN RISE.

The old man and his aged wife had
gone to bed. The air was still and all
nature was silent. But they could not
sleep. Voices from the parlor were just
loud enough to disturb their peace.
Finally the old man said:

"Maria, who is that talking?"

"It's Dora and Jim, I expect," said
she.

"And what time is it?" he inquired.
But she did not know. Neither did the
clock which sat on the mantel, for Dora
had stopped it early in the evening.

"I will find out," said the old man.
He slipped on his pants and boots and
went downstairs. Suddenly there was a
noise resembling the falling of a brick
house. Then the slow footsteps of the
old man could be heard ascending the
stairs. When he went into the room he
said:

"Why, Maria, it's only 12 o'clock, and
strange to say, I saw a sun rise—in fact,
I assisted in bringing about the perform-
ance."

"Maria."

"Well?"

"Did it ever hurt your toes when look-
ing at a sun rise?" and the old man
laughed out loud enough to wake the
chickens roosting in the tree tops in the
yard.—[St. Louis Republican.]

NOT BY THE EAR.

Citizen—What do you think of hang-
ing a man up by his thumbs?

Tailor—Some of my customers hang me
up by the year.—[Judge.]

GOOD CAUSE.

Acquaintance—You are not wearing
your watch to-day. Is it broke?

Seedling—No, but I am.

AN HONEST HORSE TRADE.

"I'll have you arrested for making
false representations. I bought that horse
of you only because you told me he had
a record."

"Very true, but the record is a bad
one. You didn't ask me what kind of a
record he had."—[Rider and Driver.]

A SNUG FIT.

Rose—How strange, Edith, my engage-
ment ring just fits you.

Edith—Dear old Herbert had it made
for me not a month ago.—[Chicago Inter-
Ocean.]

HER MOTHER'S DAUGHTER.

"You need not deny it. I know that
he kissed you while you were sitting on
the steps last night."

"Yes, mamma, eight or ten times, I
guess."

"Eight or ten times! Why—I—
you—"

"Yes, mamma, dear. I told him the
first time if he did it again I wouldn't
speak to him, and after that I could not
tell him to stop without breaking my
word. And I know you would not want
your daughter to tell a fib."—[Chicago
Tribune.]

ANSWERED.

Her Father—Are you ambitious?

Her Adorer—Well, if my desire to
marry your daughter is not ambition, I'd
like to know what is.

A LONG ENGAGEMENT.

Penelope—You look positively ecsta-
tic. Has she promised to marry you?

Cholly—Yaas.

Penelope—When?

Cholly—When I become great.

HAD GROWN TIRED OF VEGETABLES.

"George," said Mrs. Bean, according
to the Buffalo Enquirer, to her only un-
married daughter, "wasn't young Mr.
Pease here last evening?"

"Yes, mother."

"Didn't he propose to you?"

"Yes, mother."

"Didn't you refuse him?"

"Yes, mother."

"Why did you do it? Mr. Pease is
rich, handsome and of good family."

"I had good reasons."

"What were they, I am your mother,
and wish to know."

"It is because you are my mother that
I hate to tell you."

"I must know."

"Well, when I get a husband I must
have a man whose name is to be found
out of the vegetable kingdom."

HE WAITED, OF COURSE.

He—If I were to try and kiss you what
would you do?

She—Scream.

He—Do you mean it?

She—[Impressively]—Indeed I do, so
you had better wait until we are out of
hearing of the hotel.—[Harlem Life.]

AT A MENAGERIE.

The spectators stand in a group round
the wife of the tamer, asking questions.
Said one, "Is it true, Madame, that a
lion costs as much as 5000 francs?"

"That depends; there are lions and
lions."

"I mean your lions; Brutus, for in-
stance, how much is he worth?"

"Oh! I would not part with Brutus
for 10,000 francs. He devoured my first
husband."—[Il Popolo Romano.]

A PREVENTIVE.

Tom—Why do you sit on the piano
stool at Miss Charms's, when there are
plenty of comfortable chairs in the
room?

Jack—You never heard her play, did
you?

THE GAME OF DISS.

At the Tennis Tournament:
She—Oh, I do hope Mr. Watkins will
win!

He—Why, Watkins can't play a little
bit.

She—I don't care; his suit is perfectly
lovely.—[Elmira Gazette.]

THEY ARE ALL ALIKE.

Smart Errand Boy—Is Mr. Soughtfor
in?

Clerk—No, but I expect him in every
minute.

Smart E. B.—That so? Well, he'll
have to be awful numerous, won't he, to
come in every minute?—[Boston Cour-
ier.]

WOULD DO HER PART.

Day (about to wed)—I suppose it is
proper to let one's wife have her own way
in everything?

Weeks—Don't you go to bothering
your head; she will attend to that.—
[New York Herald.]

TUNING THE TABLES.

"Was there any evasion on his part
when you asked him for the money?"
inquired the manager.

"No, sir," replied the collector. "The
evasion was all on my side. He tried to
kick me out."—[Judge.]

EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT.

"I wonder what your father will say
when I ask him for your hand?"

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