A RENUNCIATION.

Like noon's fierce sunlight doth the thought of thee
Flood the dim courts and chambers of my heart;
It penetrates the very innermost part
Of the poor house where I hold tenancy.
Alas! the dwelling once was fair to see,
A goodly bower, adorn'd with love's dear art,
But now the desolate walls asunder start
And rain sobs round the ruin piteously.

It is no home for thee—this spoil'd, dark place
Holds no fit shelter for a soul like thine;
I have a house-mate, too, whose very face
Would sadden all thy days with horrid fear:
Pass on, my friend, and take thy thought from mine—
For death and I keep house together here.
—Ethel Alleyne in the Atlantic.

A Fit of Temper

By Cecil Hayter.

Miss Anstruther was in a very bad temper.

The previous evening she and Dick Vandeleur had had a furious quarrel at the Dysarts dance. It was a most important quarrel, though its origin was hazy and indistinct, and Miss Anstruther had spent a sleepless night in consequence.

Under the circumstances, it was natural, therefore, that fate condemned her to sit next to him at Mrs. Barclay's dinner table. It was a large party, and they were all going on to a dance at the Grafton later.

Miss Anstruther had very properly started dressing with the determination of thoroughly snubbing the Vandeleur youth throughout the evening, of being icily dignified, and in heartlessly good spirits whenever she noticed him watching her from afar. There is nothing so invigorating or so conducive to self-respect as snubbing some one else.

But "the best laid schemes of mice and men aft gang" etc. I never could spell Scotch dialect. In pursuance of which proverb, when she came to put on her new frock fresh from the dressmaker's, and which was to form such an important item in the icily dignified part of the programme, it was an abominable misfit. The skirt hung all wrong, and, as for the bodice, it was—well, there, no words are adequate, or, at least, none of Miss Anstruther's was equal to the occasion.

She grew hot and angry, and the maid, with her mouth full of pins, and her head a bewildered maze of contradictory orders, grew hot and flustered. By the time the frock had been made presentable it was already late, so poor daisy Anstruther, instead of arriving according to the aforesaid alluring pictures, frigid, self-possessed and statuesque, bundled out of the carriage a good ten minutes late, was asked by her hostess if she had met with an accident, and fel: painfully conscious that something was amiss with her hair at the back.

Miss Anstruther succeeded in ignoring the Vandeleur youth throughout the soup and the fish, and half way through the first entree, devoting herself entirely to the extremely dull and pompous young man on her right, who conversed of Browning and himself—principally himself.

But during a sudden lull in the conversation the pompous young man having been temporarily annexed by his neighbor on the far side, a voice murmured in her ear:

"I say, Daisy, excuse me, but you've got a couple of hairpins sticking out at the back."

Involuntarily her hand went up to her head, and a judicious pat made things all right

She murmured a chilly "Thank you" without even turning toward him, and stared blankly across the table. But inwardly she was seething with rage.

"I say, don't glare like that," said the voice again presently. "I'm awfully sorry, you know."

This time she did look at him.

"Sorry! What on earth for?" she asked, raising her eyebrows.

"For being such an idiot last night, you know, and—"

"I really don't know what in the world you are talking about. You seemed to me much the same last night as any other night. Of course, your description of yourself may be accurate, for all that, Mr. Vandeleur."

"I say, Daisy, don't be so down on me!" said the voice penitently. "I'm really most awfully sorry! I didn't know it was your dance I cut; and you—you were down at supper the whole time yourself, so I don't see why you should be in such a temper."

"I'm not in a temper, Mr. Vandeleur; and I really must ask you not to call me Daisy."

Vandeleur was about to make a reply, but Miss Anstruther turned away and took refuge in the conversation of the pompous young man, so he devoted himself savagely to the entree instead.

Presently, however, he seized another opportunity. "What do you mean by that, Dais—I beg your pardon, Miss Anstruther? Do you mean you want me to go away—to give you up?"

"I wish you wouldn't speak so loud," said Miss Anstruther, "people might hear. As for giving me up, I should like to remind you that we were never formally engaged. And as to any ideas there may have been on the subject, I've changed my mind, that's all."

"I suppose there's some one else," said poor Dick gloomily, helping himself to salt for the third time.

"I suppose there is!" snapped Miss Anstruther. And for the remainder of the dinner she devoted herself exclusively to the pompous young man, who was afterward heard to admit that she was a most intelligent girl.

As a matter of fact, Daisy heard rather less than a quarter of what he said, and was wishing all the time that she had eyes in the back of her head to watch Dick with.

At the Grafton Galleries she met her mother and younger sister, who had been dining elsewhere, and had the satisfaction of seeing Vandeleur prowling gloomily about at the far end of the room, looking as disconsolate and unhappy as she had hoped even in her most sanguine moments.

But, somehow or another, the situation was not as enjoyable as she had imagined it would be.

She looked round for Dick, but he was nowhere to be seen; and her heart sank. "Poor boy!" she thought, "he has gone home. I suppose I am rather a cat."

A gentle feeling of remorse stole over her, and on her way down to supper she was busy mentally constructing a letter of reconciliation. A letter, kind, and redolent of condescension, conveying an impression that she might be willing to receive any explanation or apology he had to offer.

It was a touching epistle. She was almost moved to tears over it herself, when the whole airy castle came to the ground with a crash at the sight of an absolutely impossible situation.

In a corner of the supper room was seated a large and noisy party of four girls and four men, evidently enjoying themselves to the utmost, and cheeriest of them all, seated next to the prettiest girl, with whom he was carrying on a violent flirtation, was Dick—Dick whom she had pictured miserable, depressed, forsaken.

He looked up as she passed, and nodded to the man with her, but, horror inconceivable, he took not the faintest notice of her.

After a vain pretense of supper she returned to the ballroom, and complained to her mother that she felt tired. Mrs. Anstruther felt the same and said so, but then arose the perplexing question: How were they to get home? The small brougham held but two. Daisy was originally to have been taken home by Mrs. Barclay.

"I don't see how we can manage it, my dear," said Mrs. Anstruther. "We can't all squeeze in; your frock would be crushed to death."

"Perhaps Dick could take me home," suggested Daisy.

Poor dear Mrs. Anstruther, who was fat, placid and unobservant, beamed affably.

"Please tell Mr. Vandeleur that Mrs. Anstruther wants him," said Daisy to the man standing beside her. "You will find him in the supper room. Thanks so much!"

Dick said a word—quite a short instructions in stony silence. He was on the verge of open rebellion.

Mrs. Anstruther and the youngest daughter drove off.

Dick hailed a hansom, and ushered Daisy in.

"Barkston Gardens!" he called through the trap, and relapsed once more into silence.

"I'm sorry to be such a bother. It's so good of you to come. I was too tired to wait for the Barclays," said Daisy sweetly.

"Not at all," said Dick, grimly irrelevant.

"Do smoke! I know you're dying for a cigarette, and I like the smell of it, you know."

"Thanks," was the laconic answer as he dived into his pocket for a cigarette case.

He brought it out, but at the same time a small morocco case emerged with it and fell on to Daisy's lap.

Dick said a word—quite a short one, which it is unnecessary to write down here—besides, he apologized the moment after—and tried to grab it.

But Daisy was too quick for him.

"What on earth's this?" she said, holding it up.

"Nothing—nothing at all," groaned Vandeleur.

"May I look at it?"

"If you like—you'd better not."

Daisy pressed the spring, and there was a sparkle of jewels in the faint lamplight.

"Oh! Dick, how lovely!" she exclaimed. "Why, I—I almost believe it would fit me."

"It ought to. It was made for you, Miss Anstruther," said Vandeleur, stiffly.

Daisy slipped it on her finger and laughed.

"Dick, you're a darling," she said.

"Eh. What?" said Dick. "But—but I say, Daisy, do you mean it? What about somebody else, confound him?"

"You goose, Dick, I was only in a rage. My dress went all wrong and then you made me more angry about those wretched hairpins, so I was horrid."

"I'm an ass," said Dick, cheerfully, after an interval.

"You're a dear!" said Miss Anstruther.

"I say, Daisy, well—oh, hang it all, we're just at the house. Here, cabby! drive slowly once round the gardens."

—New York News.

Lightning's Queer Freak.

Lightning played one of its strange tricks near Palmyra a few nights ago. It struck a maple tree on W. L. Seymour's farm, set its rotten inside on fire and burned it completely out, but left the trunk and branches standing, apparently unharmed.—Kansas City Journal.

CASE OF LOCOMOTOR-ATAXIA.

An Arkansas Man Who Was Long a Puzzle to Physicians.

"Speaking of the curious cases which drift into the office of the specialist for diagnosis and treatment," said a well-known physician, "reminds me of a case which was reported to a medical society in one of the larger southern cities a few years ago by a nerve specialist, and up to that time it was the first case of the kind reported, in so far as the cause of the ailment was concerned. The patient had spent several years in the swamps of Arkansas. He was in the timber business and had been engaged in floating logs out into the St. Francis river, at some point below the swamp lands. He could scarcely walk when he shambled into the office of the specialist, according to the report made of the case, and showed every indication of some spinal complaint which interfered with the movements of his limbs. There was a jerkiness about his gait, a disturbance of locomotion, which was thoroughly characteristic of locomotor-ataxia.

The specialist soon exhausted such inquiries as would tend to develop the cause of the trouble under ordinary circumstances, and discovered that there was absolutely nothing in the history of the case which would explain its origin on ordinary grounds. A careful physical examination was made. Nothing was found which would explain the disturbance noticeable in the patient's walk and in the general movement of his limbs. The specialist became much interested in the case, because of the evident novelty of the cause, and he concluded that he would make the closets possible study of it. It was certainly a case of locomotor-ataxia. There could be no question about this. He announced his diagnosis, but continued his inquiry for the purpose of finding the cause of the complaint. In his report of the case he said he had been rewarded for his pains, and he ably defended the position he had assumed on the question.

The history of the patient showed that he had spent several years in the swamps of Arkansas, and that he had spent much of that time in the water, wading around, and swimming at times when he could not wade. Here the specialist found the only possible explanation of the effect observable in his patient's movements. The patient had practically lived in the water in all kinds of weather. The specialist, in reporting the case, advanced the theory that this continued exposure, this continued living and working in the water, was responsible for the man's condition. Water, in other words, had produced that condition which he had diagnosed as a well-defined case of locomotor-ataxia, and as far as my experience goes, it was the first case on record up to that time, and the profession accepted it as unique and distinctive in its way."

—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Stylish Organ Grinders.

Much amusement was afforded the residents of Logan square the other evening by the actions of a couple of gentlemen who were evidently exhilarated from taking too much liquid refreshment. The men were enacting the parts of Italian street musicians. Both men, who were attired in Prince Albert coats and wore shining silk hats, made a laughable sight as they pushed a large hurdygurdy clear around the square, stopping in front of a dozen houses en route.

While one man ground out music the other passed his silk hat for a collection. The donations were liberal, too; even the poorest-clothed workingman, seated on a bench in the square, tossed in a copper for the "two swells what got broke and had to take to the streets for a living."

An officer, who evidently knew the two men, finally persuaded them to go home, and the instrument was returned to the waiting Italian, from whom the had hired it.

Just as the two men had turned to go away they met a poor, lame old woman, whom they stopped and made wait while one of the men emptied his collection of nickels and pennies from his hat into the surprised woman's apron. Both men politely bowed to the woman as she stood pouring out thanks and blessings, and then they went their way arm in arm.—Philadelphia Record.

A Phenomenal Boy.

A merchant in Chestnut street has become very fond of an office boy he engaged last June. The boy entered very early in the morning when the merchant was reading the paper. The latter glanced up and went on reading without speaking. After three minutes the boy said:

"Excuse me—but I'm in a hurry?"

"What do you want?" he was asked.

"A job.'

"You do? Well,' snorted the man of business, "why are you in such a hurry?"

"Got to hurry," replied the boy. "Left school yesterday to go to work and haven't struck anything yet. I can't waste time. If you've got nothing for me, say so, and I'll look elsewhere. The only place I can stop long is where they pay me for it."

"When can you come?" asked the surprised merchant.

"Don't have to come," he was told. "I'm here now, and would have been to work before this if you'd said so."—Philadelphia Ledger and Times.

Thirteen is never considered unlucky by the man who gets that number for the price of a dozen.

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Prowess of a Wire Mattress

Bronson had never taken a wire mattress to pieces, but he always thought he could. The mattress was too big to go up the stairway of the new house except on the instalment plan, and it had to go up there, the thing being so ordered by Mrs. Bronson. Bronson examined the mattress and found that it was composed of four modified scantlings, framed together by bolts and kept firm by the wire web. He diagnosed the case as one requiring a monkey wrench, and after he had searcned half or three-quarters of an hour he found the wrench. He noticed that the nuts on the bolt turned hard, but said that they were rusty, and a little patience would conquer.

When the nuts finally came off the two end frames flew together like long-lost sisters and shut Bronson up in the folds of the web like a salmon in a gillnet. He got out after a while, and when he had expressed himself succinctly carried the mattress upstairs, where he set about putting it together again. To his great surprise he found that the web had shrunk about four sizes and that the frames refused to resume their former positions. He tugged and hauled for a while, but the sticks had an irritating habit of wrenching themselves out of his grasp and joining forces, and he always happened to be in the trajectory of one of them.

At last he nailed two of the scantlings to the floor and began drawing the other two into their places. Mrs. Bronson here entered the struggle, but still further reinforcements were required, and the children came. The family lined up along one stick and pulled till Bronson strained his wrist, and let go. Then the web got in its work, and two children were thrown violently to the ceiling, while Mrs. Bronson, caught by the escaping frame, was knocked breathless.

Bronson said a few things, gathered up the children and renewed the attempt. But the esprit de corps was gone from the community efforts, and after a few further trials, in which the list of injured was like that of an excursion train accident, Bronson summoned a neighbor. The two men toiled all the afternoon, and then the neighbor let go of the straining web at the wrong time. It was Bronson's jaw that suffered. Bronson thought he did it purposely, and the two fought earnestly and convincingly for half an hour, at the end of which time the neighbor's wife came and called him to supper.

"My dear," said Bronson that evening, when the doctor left the house, "I think if the second-hand man will give you 25 cents for that mattress you had better take it. I always despised that second-hand man, and this will be a glorious opportunity to show my ill will toward him."—Portland Oregonian.

Huge Sums for Church Work

One would not be surprised to learn that the attempt of the Northern Methodists to raise $20,000,000 as a twentieth century fund had been abandoned as impracticable. But the fact is that $17,000,000 has already been subscribed, and the remaining $3,000,000 may be fairly said to be in sight, says the Watchman of Boston. This great sum is to be devoted to freeing Methodist churches from debt, and for educational work. Methodism in the United States for the next five hundred years is certain to receive a mighty impulse from this great achievement.

The September number of the Church Economist gives the result of careful investigation to show how other denominatians are getting on with their twentieth century funds.

The Methodists of Canada set their figures at $1,000,000, and they have raised $250,000 more than that, and the Presbyterians of Canada put their mark at $1,000,000, and have already obtained $1,430,000, with a probability that they will receive $150,000 more. The English Methodists have raised $4,500,000; the English Congregationalists, who sought $2,000,000, have secured $3,312,000; the English Baptists, who put their figure at $1,250,000, have already received $1,000,000, and the Congregationalists of Wales, who set out to secure $100,000 in five years, have received $860,000 in three years.

The Economist reckons that the churches have secured $30,000,000 of the $40,000,000 proposed, and that the movement in all its branches is proving an unexpected and overwhelming success. Doubtless the entire sum proposed will be secured.

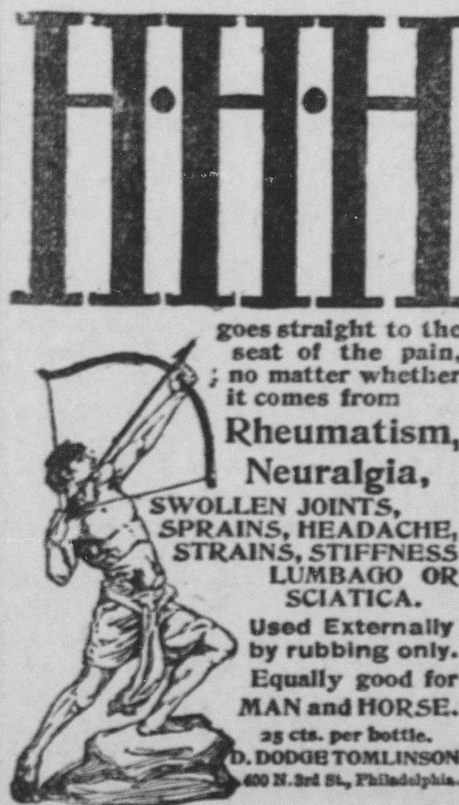
One of the interesting features connected with this movement is that the raising of these huge sums has not diminished regular contributions for denominational causes. It was feared that offerings for missions would be lessened, but that has not been the case.

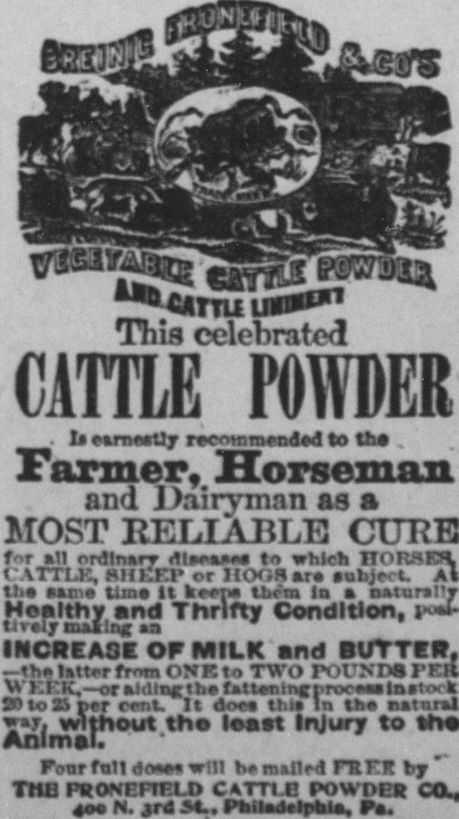
Again the assertion has been demonstrated that there is no fixed sum for benevolence, like the alleged "wage fund" of the political economists, which cannot be diverted to one cause except at the cost of others. It has been shown that gifts depend on the inculcation of the giving spirit and that the larger the gifts the larger they will be.

These great sums have not been contributed by syndicates of rich men. For the most part they have come from people in moderate circumstances.

A married man says the best alarm clock is his wife's elbow.

H-H-H





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