

# THE COLUMBIA SPY.

SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

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## Poetry.

### Contentment.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

"Man wants but little here below."  
Little I ask; my wants are few;  
I only wish a bit of stone,  
(A very plain brown stone will do.)  
That I may call my own—  
And close at hand is such a one,  
In yonder street that fronts the sun.  
Plain food is quite enough for me;  
Three courses are as good as ten—  
If nature can sustain on three,  
Thank Heaven for three. Amen!  
I always thought cold victuals sweet—  
My choice would be vanilla.  
I care not much for gold or land;  
Give me a mortgage here and there—  
Some good bank stock—some note of hand,  
Or trifling railroad share;  
I only ask that fortune send  
A little more than I shall spend.  
Honors are silly toys, I know,  
And titles are but empty names—  
I would, perhaps, be Pleniop,  
But only need St. James—  
I'm very sure I should not care  
To fill out Governor's chair.  
Jewels are trinkets; his is a sin  
To care for such unfruitful things—  
One good-sized diamond in a pin,  
Some, not so large, in rings—  
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,  
Will do for me—I laugh at show.  
My dame should dress in cheap attire,  
(Good, heavy silks are never dear)—  
I own perhaps I might desire  
Some shawls of fine cashmere—  
Some maroon capes of China wool,  
Like wrinkled silks or scaled milk.  
I would not have the horse I drive  
So fat that folks are sick and stare;  
An easy get-two, forty-five—  
Suits me; I do not care;  
Perhaps, for just a single sport,  
Some seconds less would do no hurt.  
Of pictures, I should like to own  
Titian and Raphael's three or four—  
I love so much their style and tone—  
One Turner, and no more  
(A landscape—foreground golden dirt;  
The sunshiny painted with a quilt).  
Of books but few—some fifty score  
For daily use, and bound for wear;  
The rest upon an upper floor—  
Some little luxury there  
Of red morocco's gilded gleam  
And velvet rich on antique cream.  
Bats, camels, gems—such things as these,  
Which others often show for pride,  
I value for their power to please,  
And sell-church's desire—  
One Sevillian, I confess, I own;  
Two Meerschaums I would find possess.  
Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,  
Nor ape the glitzy upstart's folly;  
Shall not carve tables serve my turn,  
But all must be of utility!  
Give grasping pomp its double share—  
I ask but one recumbent chair.  
Thus humble let me live and die,  
Nor long for Nidals' golden touch;  
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,  
I shall not miss them much.  
Too grateful for the blessing lent  
Of simple tastes and mind content!  
(Atlantic Monthly.)

## Selections.

### Promethean Fire.

Early one rainy morning in March, some four years since, a young man, enveloped in a large cloak, was standing under an awning in one of the oldest and narrowest parts of the Rue St. Denis, intently gazing on the windows of the opposite house.  
This house was one of those constructions to which age, if not beauty, imparted a sort of respectability. The brick work, according to the fashion of some two centuries past, was kept together by transversal pieces of wood, the two upper stories jutted out over the ground floor, and the roof terminated in a sharp point, ornamented by a long chimney. Over the door of the ground floor was an old, half-effaced, grotesque sign, to which the artist had modestly affixed a title, supposing that his pictorial delineation would scarcely designate to the curious the exceedingly singular subject he had intended to draw, and which, however, now was ascertained to be the representation of a "spinning cat."  
This was the sign (all the old commercial houses in Paris having, to this day, preserved the old fashion of a peculiar sign) of one of the oldest and richest wholesale clothiers of the Rue St. Denis, belonging, as the dirty gold letters indicated, to "Ambroise Simon, successor to Ambroise Pipelot." Ambroise Simon had a reputation for honesty, shrewdness and industry, that had become proverbial among the business men in Paris. In the way of business he was exacting, and as inexorable as the multiplication table itself; but for all this, he was neither a hard-hearted nor a disagreeable man. Business and the Rue St. Denis were his very existence, and now, as the young man watched from the opposite side, he be-

held the door open, and the stout old merchant himself stand on the threshold, looking around him as though to ascertain whether the most monotonous and unchangeable of streets had undergone any metamorphoses since he had last beheld it the night before. Having ascertained that all was in its right place, the attention of the merchant was attracted by the young man on the opposite side, who appeared to scan his house as though taking an inventory of each individual brick. Ambroise Simon, like all other shrewd business men, was a keen and quick observer of men and things. Although this young man was closely enveloped in his cloak, Ambroise Simon detected the silk stockings, the patent leather pumps, the white kid gloves, and the elegant black satin cravat; he scanned the fashionable hat, the curling locks, the long beard, the pale, refined features of the young man, and came to the conclusion that he was not of the Rue St. Denis, and that he was no business man.  
It was but just daylight, and the young man had evidently, from his dress, not risen at that hour, but was probably on his way from some ball or late supper. Ambroise Simon scanned him with a suspicious eye, and then looked back into the dark warehouse, in which the scanty daylight, admitted through the dirty windows, allowed the part raised off at the end for a private counting room, to be seen, as well as the little room back, serving at once as the dining, and ordinary sitting-room of the family.  
The young man, however, appeared perfectly indifferent to the curiosity he excited, for he continued to gaze at the house as intently as before, only instead of looking at M. Ambroise Simon, his eyes were directed towards the windows of the third story. All at once one of these windows was suddenly thrown open, and framed as it were in the old oaken and quaint window sill, there appeared one of the loveliest pictures Raphael ever painted, and one Raphael had divined centuries before, if the now celebrated type called Raphael Madonnas. In this lovely vision on which the young man gazed, there was the same purity of outline, the same repose, the same heavenly serenity that the Italian painter has given to womanhood made divine. She looked, as such eyes would naturally look, up to Heaven, then her glance fell upon the stranger, a deep blush suffused her cheek, and the window was instantly closed.

About the same time Ambroise Simon's head clerk made his appearance at the door beside his master. With a rapid glance, Ambroise Simon attracted the attention of his clerk to the stranger opposite. Joseph Lemoine, however, did not for an instant take the man for a thief, but with the instincts of youth divined the cause of attraction; going into the middle of the street, he looked up just in time to see the shutters of his master's daughter's room close. Turning sharply round on the inquisitive stranger, he beheld him walking at a rapid pace down the street, and get into a hackney coach that was passing.  
At the moment Mme. Ambroise Simon called her husband and the clerk to breakfast. Ambroise Simon belonged to the old school. His clerks and apprentices were, during their stay, rated as his children. If they were ill, they were tended by Madame Simon. Madame Simon also took care of their linen and of their morals, for the young men, according to the ancient customs still observed in Paris, slept in the house. According to an old established rule, the head clerk, if there was one, usually succeeded his principal in his business, becoming at the same time, in case he had a daughter, his son-in-law.  
Ambroise Simon's head clerk was an orphan without fortune, but Simon loved money too well, and was too good a business man not to appreciate Joseph Lemoine's modesty and ability, and not to value them more than a ready-made fortune in the hands of a spendthrift or a man of the world. Notwithstanding his want of fortune, Joseph Lemoine was destined by Ambroise Simon to become his successor and the husband of his eldest daughter. Joseph Lemoine, however, had discovered, spite of his business capacities, that he had a heart, and that heart he had given not to the eldest daughter, Adele but to Virginia, the youngest, the one who had been the object of the admiration of the silent watcher of the morning.  
Mlle. Adele was the exact counterpart of her mother, excepting that in the daughter, youth still rounded the angles of her form, rouged her sallow complexion with pink, and gave to her long thin features an air of gentleness and goodness her mother's had long since lost; Virginia was the beautiful creature above described.  
These two girls had been educated as becomes the daughters of men in business, as women destined to be the wives of men in business. They knew arithmetic and book-keeping perfectly, a little history, a little geography, and a little grammar. Their mother made them good house-keepers and admirable needle-women. They knew the value of money, the price of everything; economy was natural to them. Music, poetry, the arts, were dead letters to them; works of fiction they had never read a line. They made all their father's shirts, mended the stockings, and darned the table-linen. They were dressed with the utmost simplicity; had never worn a silk dress, and only on Sunday a woolen one. Their family connections were numerous, so that three or four times during the winter they went to balls. They never had, however, been in-

exhibition opened. These two pictures attracted universal attention. They had always a dense crowd around them. Rich men offered their weight in gold for them; engravers offered any terms for permission to engrave them, but in vain. De Hauteville obstinately refused all propositions. All he desired was that Virginia herself should see them; this alone would repay him.  
But Madame Simon scarcely knew what an exhibition of pictures meant. Neither herself or her daughters had ever been inside the Louvre.  
One day, a cousin of Mme. Simon's whose husband had a retail perfumery store in the Rue de la Paix, and who affected fashionable manners becoming the fashionable part of the town in which she lived, burst into the dingy warehouse of the Rue St. Denis.  
"Cousin," said she, "I have seen such a singular thing I could not help coming to tell you. Do you know there's Virginia's portrait at the exhibition; and what is more, cousin Ambroise, there is actually your very house, with the sign of the spinning cat, your dining room, and all of your supper. It's quite wonderful, and there is such a crowd around it."  
As the fine lady cousin went on talking, Madame Simon knit her brows, Ambroise Simon took off his spectacles and looked up from his ledger, while Virginia looked down at her work and blushed scarlet.  
"Won't you come and see it!"  
"Come and see it, madame!" exclaimed Ambroise Simon: "if I did I would put my fist through the canvass. Impudent puppy, whoever he is!"  
"I, indeed! I never go to such fine places. You may take Virginia, however, if you like; she has nothing to do, but we are all too busy."  
Virginia, with a beating heart, followed Madame Rocher, and soon found herself opposite to her own portrait, by the side of which stood Theodore de Hauteville. Virginia looked at him, then blushing deeply, turned away. He advanced a few steps, but by a rapid glance Virginia showed him Madame Rocher, and trembling with fear and emotion, she hurried on and saw him no more.  
That evening the inventory was completed. After every one had retired to bed, Simon bid Lemoine stay behind.  
"Joseph, my boy," said he, "this is a glorious dividend; our house is, indeed, flourishing; a great deal of this prosperity is due to you. Don't thank me; I know well; I am going, from this moment, to give you an interest in the house—Simon & Lemoine, how it sounds. Don't thank me—that isn't all. How do you think you could hide anything from me? Who can tell, to a minute, when a house is going to fall. My boy, I know you're in love, ain't you?"  
"Sir?" murmured Joseph.  
"Never mind, my boy, I approve."  
"Approve!"  
"Yes, and she loves you."  
"She—Virginia?"  
"Adele! I was—"  
"In love with Virginia, was you? That's of no use at all. Virginia is too young for you; besides, Madame Simon and I have settled the matter; it's no use to try and change it."  
"May I ask Virginia if she loves me?" said Joseph, still clinging to his only dream.  
"I don't know; well not directly; and don't tell my wife; but I know Adele loves you."  
The next morning being Sunday morning, Joseph Lemoine, in consideration of his new dignity, was invited to go to mass with the family, and Ambroise Simon, with great tact and management contrived that Virginia should walk with Joseph. Virginia did not understand any of the young man's covert declarations, but calmly took her place beside him when they reached the church.  
The ladies were devoutly attentive, and kept their eyes on their books, at least Adele and her mother, but Virginia had her eyes fixed on the two dark, ardent eyes of Theodore, who, standing, leaning against a pillar, was contemplating his living madonna. Unhappily, in a moment of unusual fervor, Mme. Simon looked up and discovered the direction of her daughter's eyes, and at the same time found out that she was holding her book upside down.  
"Virginia," said her mother, "I forbid you to look up from your book; wait till you get home."  
De Hauteville, who had no motive for not continuing to look towards Virginia, saw her tears stream down her cheeks, and rushed in agony from the church.  
On their return, Virginia was ordered before her father and mother, and there made to confess all. A very little all, but which was a heinous offense in the eyes of the merchant, and especially of his wife.  
Joseph Lemoine was in despair at finding Virginia loved another. Adele deeply wounded when Joseph revealed, in his disappointment, that he loved another. The whole family was in confusion, when all at once Mme. Rocher, all smiles and importance, made her appearance.  
"I'll set all right, cousin. M. de Hauteville has been to see me—he ain't a poor artist—he has three hundred thousand francs in the funds. He loves Virginia desperately; I never heard any but heroes in novels talk as he does; she must marry him. Now listen to what I have to say."  
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Virginia, with a beating heart, followed Madame Rocher, and soon found herself opposite to her own portrait, by the side of which stood Theodore de Hauteville. Virginia looked at him, then blushing deeply, turned away. He advanced a few steps, but by a rapid glance Virginia showed him Madame Rocher, and trembling with fear and emotion, she hurried on and saw him no more.  
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"Sir?" murmured Joseph.  
"Never mind, my boy, I approve."  
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"Yes, and she loves you."  
"She—Virginia?"  
"Adele! I was—"  
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"May I ask Virginia if she loves me?" said Joseph, still clinging to his only dream.  
"I don't know; well not directly; and don't tell my wife; but I know Adele loves you."  
The next morning being Sunday morning, Joseph Lemoine, in consideration of his new dignity, was invited to go to mass with the family, and Ambroise Simon, with great tact and management contrived that Virginia should walk with Joseph. Virginia did not understand any of the young man's covert declarations, but calmly took her place beside him when they reached the church.  
The ladies were devoutly attentive, and kept their eyes on their books, at least Adele and her mother, but Virginia had her eyes fixed on the two dark, ardent eyes of Theodore, who, standing, leaning against a pillar, was contemplating his living madonna. Unhappily, in a moment of unusual fervor, Mme. Simon looked up and discovered the direction of her daughter's eyes, and at the same time found out that she was holding her book upside down.  
"Virginia," said her mother, "I forbid you to look up from your book; wait till you get home."  
De Hauteville, who had no motive for not continuing to look towards Virginia, saw her tears stream down her cheeks, and rushed in agony from the church.  
On their return, Virginia was ordered before her father and mother, and there made to confess all. A very little all, but which was a heinous offense in the eyes of the merchant, and especially of his wife.  
Joseph Lemoine was in despair at finding Virginia loved another. Adele deeply wounded when Joseph revealed, in his disappointment, that he loved another. The whole family was in confusion, when all at once Mme. Rocher, all smiles and importance, made her appearance.  
"I'll set all right, cousin. M. de Hauteville has been to see me—he ain't a poor artist—he has three hundred thousand francs in the funds. He loves Virginia desperately; I never heard any but heroes in novels talk as he does; she must marry him. Now listen to what I have to say."  
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But Madame Simon scarcely knew what an exhibition of pictures meant. Neither herself or her daughters had ever been inside the Louvre.  
One day, a cousin of Mme. Simon's whose husband had a retail perfumery store in the Rue de la Paix, and who affected fashionable manners becoming the fashionable part of the town in which she lived, burst into the dingy warehouse of the Rue St. Denis.  
"Cousin," said she, "I have seen such a singular thing I could not help coming to tell you. Do you know there's Virginia's portrait at the exhibition; and what is more, cousin Ambroise, there is actually your very house, with the sign of the spinning cat, your dining room, and all of your supper. It's quite wonderful, and there is such a crowd around it."  
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