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DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY, AND THE DISSEMINATION OF MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND NEWS.

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THE TRIALS OF THE ITINERANCY.

I have a niece who has been for fifteen years the wife of an itinerant preacher. My wife and I brought her up, and just as we began to congratulate ourselves upon her worth and affection for us, and flattering ourselves that in her care our old age was provided for, she became acquainted with a young minister and very soon felt it her duty to transfer her allegiance from us to him.

At first we grieved considerably, not that she was going to be married though that was affliction enough, but because of the dismal prospect before the simple child herself. We determined, however, that while we did not oppose her choice we would not be remiss in appropriate warnings, and she should at least go into the rect with her eyes open. We drew a picture of the lard work and little pay that awaited her, of the empty cellar and pantry that pertain to a parsonage, and that everybody believes in except traveling agents and stray female lecturers.

I remember that at my wife wept over the piteous destitution of the unborn little itinerants, who, she seemed to expect would be perambulating the thoroughfares of the villages and towns empty portagers in hand, and melting money hearts by their unceasing demands for skimmed milk.

Well, it was all of no use. The call of duty was not to be disregarded, so Mary married the minister, and after providing as good an outfit as we could afford, we dismissed her with our blessing.

She has visited us as often as twice in a year ever since. She is here now with a regiment of native Americans, who persist in calling me grandpapa instead of uncle.

It happened last evening that I was for the third time finishing the journal of "Shady Side, or Life in a Country Parsonage," one of the most affecting books that I ever found. The theme suits me. Even while I swell with righteous indignation, I am tickled by an under current of thought which assures me that my own ideas of ministerial affliction are gammon. The very troubles that I prophesied for our niece, Mary Ann, are so vividly portrayed, that I am often half deluded with the idea that I wrote the work myself.

Well, last evening, as I neared the sad conclusion of the narrative, I could not help stealing an occasional glance of pity at Mary Ann, who sat in the corner of the wide window seat, watching the wild antics of her boys, who were tumbling about in the snow outside. She was singing in a low voice a simple song that I had loved years ago, accompanying herself on an old guitar that I had given her on her fifteenth birthday. The witch! What business had a woman of such trials as hers to sing that happy song.

I began to wonder as I watched her.

The bright hopeful expression of countenance that had charmed us in her childhood, was there still, not dimmed in the least.

"A mystery!" I exclaimed. She looked around in astonishment. "Were you reading aloud, uncle?"

"No. I was thinking. Here is the

parson's family in the "Shady Side" shrouded in darkness and sorrow,—there you sit, all smiles and sunshine."

She laughed gaily, for she knows my hobby.

"Which of the two is preferable, do you think?"

"That is not the question I don't understand it, have you no trials, Molly?"

"None deserving the name. I have many blessings."

"Yes. Very likely. But these Congregationalists pay their pastors higher salaries than your preachers receive, and your pecuniary troubles must be more numerous of course.—Are they not?"

"We have a little perplexity, sometimes; not more, I think, however, than other people. Perplexity is not confined to our calling—it is rather one of the common ills that flesh is heir to."

"But you will admit that there are trials peculiar to pastors and their families?"

"Yes, just as there are to other professions. Your trials are distinct from ours, but they exist as really, as if, being a model farmer, you were a preacher. The merchant around the corner has his trials. The lawyer over the way is tired. The doctor only prospers when other folks are tried.—No doubt the little tailor down the road is tried into scraps."

"A fiddlestick!" said I. "And so you've learned to preach. But I really want to know if any of the provoking things detailed in this book* have ever occurred to you. Have you found no mean people in all your wanderings?"

"It would be strange if I had not. Every community has its mischief maker; its meddler and tattler. There is hardly a neighborhood without its professed plain dealer and speaker, which plain speaking is often but another name for impudence. The millennium has not yet come, I believe. But suppose that occasionally, a person crosses our path, who by his ignorance insults us, or by his coarseness disgusts us, why should we saddle whole societies with his insulating sins? We know that the majority are good and true, and that contents us."

"You are a strange reasoner, Molly."

"But not a singular one. I think you will find very few whole-souled itinerants who stop to croak and grumble by the way. Those who sit down and wax eloquent upon the hardships of their lot, or upon the insufficiency of their salary to support the aristocratic taste and habit that their professional leisure has enabled them to form, must not be taken for samples of our clergy. They are few in number, and were it not for their utter inability to earn their living out of the pastorate, we might hope to be freed from their influence. But believe me, uncle, the majority are cheerfully engaged in the glorious work to which they believe God has called them. They rely upon his promises, and upon the ready aid and warm sympathy of the people to whom they preach. If you could look in upon an Annual Conference you would not think the preachers greatly disheartened by their prospects. A happier looking set of fellows cannot be found."

"You have really learned to preach, Molly."

"I have learned to thank God for his mercies. I have learned that when the sun shines it is not best to search too closely for the shadows. I have learned that an abundant income cannot make a happy home if the element of content be lacking."

This was not exactly the frame of mind that I desired to see her in because I wanted to hear her find fault.

"You have had to work hard, Mary dear," I said.

"More so than the majority of women, do you think uncle? Harder than if I had married a carpenter or

a Blacksmith? Harder than a farmer's wife?"

Just then my wife, who was paring apples at a side table, looked up and smiled.

"When I am tempted to repine," continued Mary, "I cast my eye over a mental list of female parishioners.—There are very few among them whose lot in life is as easy as mine; very few with such opportunities for mental culture. There is no reason why they should toil, and I sit still."

"But the movings, Mary; the frequent, everlasting movings!" I began to be pinched for arguments; but now I thought she had got considerable of a stump in her way.

"Other people move. Five large loads of household goods passed here yesterday. It is the American fashion to move often. But we have an advantage that the generality of people cannot have. If they desire society they have (if strangers,) to wait till they can work their way into notice, while my husband's profession secures for us at once an honorable position. Still it is true that our frequent changes cause a great deal of anxiety, fatigue and expense. But the evils are small in comparison to the great good secured, and patience remedies a great deal. I see no use of fretting," said Mary.

I was trying to bring from some remote corner of my mind a new and different statement of the whole case, when Mary suddenly exclaimed, "You must hear my boys sing, uncle. Here George, Arthur, George, Davig, come and sing for grandpapa!"

What could I do but "shut up," and listen?

*The "Shady Side."

DINNER AT THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

This is said to be a pretty hard old world; and some say this is a pretty hard old winter. Perhaps it's so, but let one under the plea of cousinship, or good looks, or friendship, or very remarkable talkativeness, be bidden to an annual re-union dinner at the Old Farm Homestead; and he will believe there is one bright green spot in it any way. A pleasant, profitable, glorious time is that, when the old folks gather the children, and the children's wives, and the children's husbands, and the children's children, and the children's cousins (we like to have them included) around the old table, in one of those kindly re-unions which come only once a year, and yet last one a long lifetime.

The old test has been perhaps well nigh forsaken, for many a month, or many a year. The vine, the sweet brier, and the rose, have long since clambered up over windows where little heads used to pop out and giggle at the blast. The shrub which little hands planted and watered, and which little hearts wished was "a great tree, high as the house," has outstripped that little wisher's aspirations, and now interlocks its broad arms with other branches protectively high over the place where they were born. The old walls and the old buildings are all as they were then, only like their tenants older and grayer grown. The old well-sweep swings and squeaks; the old gate rattles and slams; the old dog and cat bark and purr no longer, but their successors do; the fire blazes up cheerfully in the same old corner; the parlor walls are just as homelike and cozy, and just as "mum" as when the girls did their "sparkin'"; the kitchen and pantry are just as savory of good things as then; the "old arm chair" is more rickety, but invites you just as hospitably to rock your cares away; the old clock has perhaps "ticked out" and a younger, more ambitious one rattles ahead with a faster click in its place; but the old hearts at home, thank God, still beat on with that same, steady, parental old throb of half a century or more!

But the winter is long and passes heavily. The old folks want to see the children again, at home.—And so the dinner at the old homestead is

prepared. The children, and cousins, and friends come in load after load, undled in big coats and shawls and cloaks and tippets and hoods with many a giggle and red nose, till the old homestead is almost full—it never is quite full. The warm greeting, the merry laugh, the lively jest and kindly smile, pass round and round, till heavy eyes sparkle, and sober lips laugh in gladness. But the dinner is ready. "Come, children, right along, sit down there, and there, and there," till the table is full—how joyous if without a vacant seat. And such a lively time is there; and such a dinner? The turkey and the chickens and the pork and the beef; the potatoes; the onions, the beets, the turnips; and a garden full of other vegetables; the good, new, cherry-red "rye and ingen" bread, and wheat bread and biscuits and cake of all kinds, white and delicious as that at the weddings; the butter and cheese "as is butter and cheese;" the smoking coffee and tea and clear cold water from that "moss covered bucket that hangs in the well;" the preserves, the sauce, the tarts, the jelly, the cream, the pickles, the apples, the peaches and the Lord only knows what else, which crowd one to spiti-fication and forgetfulness—how deliciously tempting they pile up—and how they pile down! Surely, the cooks did justice to that dinner, and the eaters ditto. Surely, big full hearts give it, and big, empty stomachs receive it!

Of all dinners, give us a dinner at the Old Farm Homestead. Of all unions, give us a re-union under the old moss grown roof and around that old time-honored, hospitable board. The old lady watches your every movement and want as kindly and as lovingly as when your hands were helpless in infancy. She is pleased when you are pleased, and sorrowful when you are sad; now as then. She welcomes you as kindly, sympathizes in your sorrows as truly, and drops as bitter tears for those who are sick or dead, as when she first sang your lullaby or taught your infant lips to pray. The old gentleman watches your coming with a kindling eye; he knows what is best for you and provides it, as of old; he listens to your manhood's story and compares it and you with what you were when such and such a thing was done on the farm; he gives you the same good counsel with the same stout, Patriarchal spirit as when he sent you forth to do and dare in life's broad battle.

Forget not the Old Folks, at the Old Farm Homestead, in your eager chase after pleasure, gold and fame. Love them truly, treat them kindly, visit them often, and take the children, for you can do it only a few years longer. Let old age and youth—the Past and the Future mingle together very often, for it stirs up all the good there is in us and makes the heart better. Those gray hairs are way marks to the down hill of life whither we all are tending. What we do for them, we do for ourselves in advance. Have a kindly care, then, for those who sheltered you in infancy and sent you out in life with honor, virtue and a good name. They have done more for you than you can do for them; there fore what little thou doest, do quickly.

Why in creation wasn't that wife of ours cousin to every body!—then we should be! Wish she was! Wouldn't it be so nice?

From the Ohio Columbian.

LETTER TO LITTLE FOLKS.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

MY DEAR LITTLE FOLKS:—I feel a little in the spirit of writing to you today, and I always do feel in this spirit when the thought of a child comes into my head.

I well remember when I was a child myself, and wherever in all the wild world there's a little child, I know that there is just such a little mortal as I used to be, and my heart is drawn right out. When I hear of a child that has a loving, petting father and

mother, and love by the quantity to make it comfortable and happy, I say, that's all right—just exactly as it should be, I'm glad—from my heart I'm glad.

When I hear of a poor little thing that is having a kind of a sad, miserable time in this world—when I hear of any dear little girl or noble little boy that isn't treated right, I feel like taking the sufferer under my wing, and giving it a shelter for life.

Some people think that there is no happiness like being a child—that children never have any trials—that suffering never touches us until we are grown-up.

But I think they are very much mistaken.

The trials of childhood—the griefs of youth are very curious some times. They talk as if a body hadn't any trials unless something sudden and terrible happens. If my friend, whom I love very much, dies, they call that a trial. If my father starts for Europe, and on his way across the ocean is blown up by a bursting boiler, or falls overboard and is drowned, that's a trial, and one of the kind that get into newspapers.

If my mother is burned to death by a fluid lamp, or my brother is killed by a railroad accident, that's called a trial!

If the cholera or the small pox spreads through the country, and friends lose their friends, that's a trial!

And sure enough, these are trials—terrible trials, grievous to be borne.—But there are other trials in life, and they are great trials, too—only they go by the name of little trials.

But, children, it is "the little foxes that spoil the vines," and the little trials that break the heart.

It is the "little droppings that wear away the stones," and the little griefs that bow the spirit.

I know all about it, for though I've laughed, and danced, and sung, and been as happy as anybody ever was in this world, yet the little crosses—the little trials made my heart heavy, and my cheek pale, and my spirit so very sad and still, that I wanted to hide myself away, and be alone with God.

May be some of you will whisper to yourselves, "Why, I've felt just so, but didn't know that grown up people ever did."

Ah, children, they do! A heart is a heart, whether it's in a little frame or a large frame; and when trials touch it, then it quivers—then it feels. And do you ever wonder why trials come? Do you ever wonder why the pure, merry laugh, as it comes bubbling up, and ringing out, is checked suddenly, until it dies away into a sad still heart? Do you ever wonder why it is that little griefs come upon you, and steal your laugh and fun, and send you away, alone, to cry!

I used to wonder, but I don't any more. Children, there is a proud spirit in us, that needs to be humbled—an unbending spirit, that must be taught to bow, before we can be fitted for the skies—an angry spirit, that must be made gentle and quiet—an obstinate spirit, that must be taught submission; and trials, bitter though they may seem, are the sweetest lessons of love.

My little friends, let us learn these lessons well. Let us learn to suffer nobly—to endure patiently, and let us learn to bless our Father in Heaven for everthing—even for the little trials of life.

TRAVELING ON THE NILE.

Mr. Banvard, the ingenious painter of "Banvard's Panorama of the Mississippi," is now traveling in Egypt. The Boston *Traveler* gives the following extract from a letter written by him, descriptive of travelling on the Nile:

"While standing on the banks of the Nile this morning, I observed an Arab ploughing with a camel and a buffalo, yoked to a primitive looking wooden plough; rather an odd yoke, as the camel was nearly twice as tall as the buffalo, but they appeared to

work very well together. The majestic camel, the demure buffalo, and the Arab ploughman, with his long blue robe, and old "tar bosch" upon his head, formed a very interesting and picturesque group.

I have just laid down a book of travels, wherein the author says the country between Cairo and Alexandria is uninteresting. He must have been very unobserving and devoid of feeling, or a heart to appreciate the beauties which nature, with a lavish hand, has spread out on either side of this most interesting river—scenes ever strange and new. It is true the shores of the Nile are low, and to a passing, unobserving person, I grant, uninteresting; but to an inquisitive mind there is a pleasing life always new, always interesting at every turn of the river.

I have sat for hours upon the deck of our vessel, watching the varying scenes as town, village and grove glided softly by, like the mysterious changes of a moving picture. Even now, as I write this, from my cabin window, I see, close at hand, one of those numerous villages which deck the banks of the Nile, with its half clad or naked children, laughing and romping upon the border, beneath the outspreading branches of a fig tree, and calling in childish glee to our passings boat: while further on, two well-formed Arab girls, in their picturesque costume, which half conceals, half discloses their stately figures, stand chatting beneath that lofty palm, perhaps telling of their loves and troubles, each seeking the other's sympathy.

Beyond, a group of "fellahs," in their oriental robes, fluttering in the breeze which urges our bark along, are leading with care a patient camel, who sustains his long neck to give our whitetails a passing look as he meekly kneels to receive his heavy burden. Beneath, descending by a winding path, a stately Arab girl steps down the bank with a well poised jar upon her head, of an antique form, to bear away the waters of the flowing Nile, wherewith to temper her homely meal. Accosted by our boatmen, she returns a witty repartee, which sends our rude crew off into a hearty laugh, making the shore echo with the boisterous merriment. From the white minaret of an adjoining mosque a "muezzin" is calling faithful to their daily prayers, unheeded by a crowd of villagers, chatting upon the bank beneath the waving palm. Scarcely such as these are constantly shifting before our eyes, as we glide rapid; along before a flowing breeze, presenting at every turn something exciting, and to me, always interesting.

On the twelfth, we approached the great desert. I ascended the deck and gazed on the boundless sea of scorching sand, with mingled awe and admiration. How barren and desolate! What heaved billows of scorching sand thrown up from the burning sea by the death riding, overwhelming monsoon, the sand combatting in its onward march the passage of the very Nile itself, precipitating the moving mass into the flood, which still triumphant bears them onward, until they accumulate into an immense bar on the river point below, where they dispute the channel with the passing bark. Long, long I gazed upon the wondrous scene, watching the driving clouds swept from its surface by the eastern wind, and borne aloft until they appeared lost in the deep azure of the heavens above. Far away to the west this boundless sea extended, until the sandy horizon cut the distant ether, nothing interrupting the extended vision save a solitary tomb by the river's bank and the apex of Cheops just visible in the distance through the uncertain atmosphere. The little birds fly from the inhospitable shore, hover among our rigging, or run upon the decks to make a meal, which the straggling desert refuses them, from our fallen crumbs; or catch a straying fly, and so tame and gentle, one can almost take them in their hands."