

FATHER ABRAHAM



"With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nations wounds; to

care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."—A. L.

"FATHER ABRAHAM"

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PECULIARITIES OF THE YEAR.—The following statements show the peculiarities of the year 1868: February had five Saturdays; something that will not occur again until 1896. The following months also have five Sundays: March, May, August and November. There will also be only twelve moons; the usual number being thirteen.

Poetry.

The Suicidal Cat.

AN AFFECTING TALE.

There was a man named Ferguson, He lived on Market street, He had a speckled Thomas cat That couldn't well be beat; He'd catch more rats and mice, and sich, Than forty cats could eat.

This cat would come into the room And climb upon a cheer, And there he'd sit and lick himself And purr so awful queer That Ferguson would yell at him— But still he'd purr severe.

And then he'd climb the moon-lit fence, And loaf around and yowl, And spit and claw another cat Alongside of the Jowl; And then they both would shake their tails, And jump around and howl.

Oh, this here cat of Ferguson's Was fearful then to see; He'd yell precisely like he was In awful agony; You'd think a first-class stomach-ache Had struck some small baby.

And all the mothers in the street, Waked by the horrid din, Would rise right up and search their babes, To find some worrying pin; And still this vigorous cat would keep A hollerin' like sin.

And as for Mr. Ferguson, 'Twas more than he could bear, And so he hurled his boot-jack out, Right through the midnight air, But this voracious Thomas cat, Not one cent did he care.

For still he yowled and kept his fur A standing on an end, And his old spine a doublet up As far as it would bend, As if his hopes of happiness Did on his lungs depend.

But while 'a curvin' on his spine, And waitin' to attack A cat upon the other fence, There came an awful crack; And this here speckled Thomas cat Was busted in the back.

When Ferguson came down next day, There lay his old feline, And not a life was left in him, Although he had full nine, "All this here comes," said Ferguson, "Of curvin' of his spine."

Now all you men whose tender hearts This painful tale does rack, Just take this moral to yourselves, All of you, white and black; Don't ever go, like this here cat, To gettin' up your back.

How a Belle Lost a Husband.

Miss Ella Bond came home from her walk one afternoon with a look of vexation on her pretty face. She shut the outer door with a little bang, and opened the inner one with a decided jerk.

"Isn't it too bad, mamma?" Then she paused abruptly as she saw that her mother was not alone, and Mrs. Bond said, hastily: "My dear, here is Mr. Alton."

Ella's face cleared, and she came forward with a smile to welcome the handsome and wealthy Mr. Tom Alton, who had of late been her most devoted admirer. He met her with a cordial greeting, looking down at the bright brown eyes very kindly, as he asked:

"And what is it that is 'too bad,' Miss Ella?"

"Nothing very much—at least nothing that you would care to hear about."

"I care about anything that interests you," he said, gallantly. "May I not hear what it was?"

"It's only my vexatious dressmaker."

"And what has the provoking creature done?" asked Mr. Alton, with an amused smile.

"You may laugh," pouted Ella, "but it really is very annoying when she disappoints me, as she says she must now."

"Yes, poor Bella has been very much tried by her," said Mrs. Bond, coming to the rescue; "but what is it now, my love?"

"She says she can't possibly have my dress done for Mrs. Hoyt's ball."

"Not have it done?" cried Mrs. Bond, looking as much dismayed as Ella, "why, that is outrageous!"

"What is the trouble about it, Miss Ella?" asked Mr. Alton. "Can't I help you in any way? I don't like to have you disappointed."

Ella's face flushed with pleasure. Her manner was so pointedly interested, she had never been so much flattered before. She looked up at him with a grateful smile, and she answered: "I don't see how you can help me, as you can't make quillings."

"Pink and white? You would be very fascinating in that. Perhaps it is as well for the peace of mind of your friends that the dress should not be done."

"I want it to wear, though," said Ella.

"Then you certainly ought to have it," Mr. Alton answered, as though he were speaking to a spoiled child.

"But you see, Mr. Alton, it is a very deal of work, and just at this season the dressmakers are all so busy."

"Can't they hire extra laborers?" suggested Mr. Alton.

"Not that are skilled in the business," said Mrs. Bond. "Now this trimming on Ella's dress can only be done as we wish it by one of Dutille's girls."

"That's just it," said Ella. "Madame told me to-day that Miss Johnson was ill."

"Ill! That is vexatious."

"I dare say she has been working very hard," said Mr. Alton.

"Yes; Dutille said she had been up half the night for the last week, working at the skirt, and now, when it is almost done, she must go and fall ill! I think she might have waited another week before she had her inconvenient illness."

Mr. Alton looked sharply at the pretty face of the speaker, but the words were spoken in earnest. There was no shadow of softness on the rosy lips and the bright brown eyes were hard and glittering.

"You would rather have had her keep on at all risks?" asked Mr. Alton.

"Yes. If she had finished the dress I should not have cared what happened afterwards."

"It is really very trying. No wonder that dear Ella is a little vexed," Mrs. Bond hurried to say, for she caught a look on Mr. Alton's face that frightened her. Ella also took warning.

"I dare say, after all, the girl is only shaming," she said. "It is holiday times now, and these girls often play ill to get a vacation."

"But, if that is so, it's a shame you should be disappointed about your dress. Why don't you find out if this sewing girl is really ill or not?"

Ella opened her eyes. "How can I?"

"Why go to her home, wherever it may be."

"Go to her home! Why, Mr. Alton, it is probably in some wretched tenement house."

"Are you afraid to go there?"

"Of course I am."

"Then I'll tell you what, I have found something I can do for you. I will go and find out about this delinquent, if you will get me the address."

"Oh, how kind you are! Besides, if she is really not worth while; besides, if she is ill, it might be of some horrid fever."

"I am not afraid of that," he smilingly replied, "and I should like to be able to do this for you. But if the girl is ill, I suppose nothing can be done?"

"Oh, no, of course not, unless I can coax Dutille to do the rest of the quilling herself. But it is really too much trouble to ask of you."

However, Mr. Alton insisted upon going, and after some further talk, it was agreed Miss Bond should get the address, and then he would hunt up the seamstress.

"I suppose he intends to offer her something handsome to induce her to do it," said Mrs. Bond, after he was gone.

"I think, Ella, you have him surely now. It was almost like an accepted lover to do this."

And the mother and daughter congratulated themselves on their success; for about those days, things were almost at the last gasp with the Bonds. Mr. Bond was trembling on the verge of bankruptcy, and the whole family were looking forward to the hope of this wealthy marriage for Ella as a means of rescue from otherwise hopeless embarrassments.

Meantime, Mr. Alton walked away from the house, thinking a good deal of the young lady he had left. He admired her on many accounts. Since his return from Europe, he had been more attracted by her than by any woman he had met. There was a brightness about her, a sparkle in her manner, that pleased him, and, wearied by long roving, he had very nearly decided to propose to her, and so settle for life; but something in her manner had jarred upon him. There was a hardness in her tone when she talked of the poor sewing girl that shocked him. Even when he spoke of the real illness of the forlorn tailoress, he had made no impression upon her. There had been no kindly suggestion of charity and good-will from her. She had looked at him with indifference, as though he had been a stranger.

But Mr. Alton's thoughts wandered back, as they often did, to the one love of his early life—the gentle, blue-eyed girl he had known in his boyish home. How kind she was in illness—what a ministering angel she had been to the sick and poor in the neighborhood; but she had doubtless forgotten him long ago. He had heard of her marriage when he was in Europe; the promise she had given him when they parted she had broken, but although he was free to marry now, he felt, even when he was with Ella, that he should take the step rather from a sense of duty than from any such hope of happiness as he had dreamed of when he

stood under the chestnuts in the moonlight with that fair girl by his side.

"May," he had whispered then, "if you will not be engaged to me, will you, at least promise not to marry until I return?"

And May had given him the pledge so solemnly that he never doubted she would keep it. However, that was all past now, and it was folly for him to think of it. Still, Ella Bond was a very pretty girl, and would grace his handsome home. So he went back to see her again, and was very devoted in his manner, lingering long with her after he got the address he came for, yet parting with her, after all, without the decisive word.

"It does not come from the heart," he thought. "Is this surface tenderness all I have to give, even to such a fascinating creature as that?"

Then he drove away to find the sewing girl, as he had promised. It was not very far, after all, from Ella's own home—only across an avenue or so. Mr. Alton made his way through one of a row of tenement houses, up all the dingy staircases to the top floor and back room, where he had been directed; but he knocked twice at the door before a feeble voice reached him that seemed to authorize his entrance.

He bowed his tall head to go under the low door way, and then found himself in a small room neatly furnished, although cheerless, because without a fire. The sun was shining, however, and through the one small window, which was opened to admit the warmth and brightness, the beams fell in a shower of glory on the young girl who lay on the low bed. She turned in startled surprise at the sound of the stranger's entrance; then her blue eyes dilated with a look of intense happiness, and she held out her thin arms with a glad cry: "Tom! Tom! have you come at last!"

Mr. Alton sprang to her side. "May!" he said—"May!" Then drew back suddenly, and added: "I had no thought of finding you here, Mrs. Clinton."

The light faded suddenly out of the fair face, and the sweet lips trembled as she faltered her answer: "Forgive me, Mr. Alton. I had forgotten for a moment how long it was since we met; but I am not Mrs. Clinton."

"You are May Johnson, yet!" he exclaimed.

"Surely."

"But I heard you were married so long ago."

"No; that was my cousin, Mary Johnson, who married Mr. Fred. Clinton."

"And you have been true all this time? Oh, May! May!—my love—my own!—found at last!" And the pale face was gathered so close to his own that a faint color came back to the thin cheeks in response to the ardent caress.

For a time, there was not much connected conversation between these two, re-united so strangely; but, at last, May told her story. It was one that has often happened in this country. Mr. Johnson had died, leaving his only child heir to nothing but some encumbered property. After a settlement had been made of his seemingly prosperous business, May had found herself utterly without income. Then began the weary struggle to earn her own living. She would not accept a home of dependence offered her by some distant relative, but came to the great city, where she had found employment, after many failures, in the dressmaking establishment of Madame Dutille. There she had toiled early and late, until the unwonted exertion had broken her down, and within the last few days she had been really ill. Mr. Alton almost hated Ella Bond, as he noticed on the table a pile of pink and white tarleton, and knew that it was the work on that which had been the last cause of May's illness.

Before he left her that day, however, May was much better. It was solitude and unhappiness almost as much as poor food and hard work that made her ill; and the sudden change in her whole life that had come to her, the unlooked for joy, gave her renewed vigor, enabling her to rally against the fever that had threatened. She showed her gratitude for the kind care Mr. Alton lavished on her by a speedy recovery. In a few days she was well enough to leave her humble home for more suitable rooms, and in a fortnight she was so well that one bright morning she drove to a quiet up-town church with Mr. Alton, where they were married in the presence of a few of his best friends.

Miss Ella Bond did not have her dress as worn to Mrs. Hoyt's ball; but she never imagined when she was shocked almost into a fainting fit by receiving cards announcing Mr. Alton's marriage, that "Miss May Johnson," now his happy bride, had anything to do with her disappointment.

JEFFERSON DAVIS' trial has been again postponed until October. As during that month the country will be in the very heat of the Presidential canvass, it is hardly to be expected that either judges will be found to hear or counsel to argue this case, delayed already until it has lost all interest. Mr. Davis will, in all probability, be transferred as a legacy to the incoming Administration.

A Baby's Soliloquy.

I am here. And, if this is what they call the world, I don't think much of it. It's a very dannelly world, and smells of paregoric awfully. It's a dreadfully light world, too, and makes me blink, I tell you. And I don't know what to do with my hands; I think I'll dig my fists in my eyes. No, I won't. I'll scabble at the corner of my blanket and chew it up, and then I'll holler; whatever happens, I'll holler. And the more paregoric they give me the louder I'll yell. That old nurse puts the spoon in the corner of my mouth in a very uneasy way, and keeps tasting my milk herself all the while. She spilled snuff in it last night, and when I hollered, she trotted me. That comes from being a two days' old baby. Never mind, when I'm a man, I'll pay her back good. There's a pin sticking in me now, and if I say a word about it I'll be trotted or fed, and I would rather have catnip tea. I'll tell you who I am. I found out to-day. I heard folks say, "Hush, don't wake up Emmeline's baby." That's me. I'm "Emmeline's baby," and I suppose that pretty, white faced woman over on the pillow is Emmeline.

No, I was mistaken, for a chap was in here, just now and wanted to see Bob's baby, and looked at me and said I "was a funny little toad, and looked just like Bob." He smelt of cigars, and I'm not used to them. I wonder who else I belong to. Yes, there's another one—that's "Ganna." Emmeline told me, and then she took me up and held me against her soft cheek and said, "It was Ganna's baby, so it was." I declare I do not know who I belong to; but I'll holler, and, may be, I'll find out.

There comes Snuffy with catnip tea. The idea of giving babies catnip tea when they are crying for information! I'm going to sleep. I wonder if I don't look pretty red in the face? I wonder why my hands won't go where I want them to.

Grant as a Cadet.

A story is told of Grant during his cadet life which is worth repeating, as it is characteristic of the man. The persecutions of his seniors were very annoying to him, and Grant, believing them no longer tolerable, had made up his mind to fight. One day when the company was on mock parade, the Captain put some insult upon him, when Grant stepped suddenly out of the ranks, pulled off his jacket, and said:

"Now, Captain, if you are as good a man as I am, pull off your coat and fight me."

The Captain doffed his jacket and at it they went; Grant was the smallest of the two, but he got the Captain down and pummeled him until he cried enough.

"Now," said Grant, going up to the lieutenant, "you have been imposing on me, too, and I want a settlement with you."

Such a challenge was not to be declined, and the lieutenant pitched into him, but Grant knocked him down and thrashed him soundly, and then turning to the company, said: "Who comes next? I want peace and I am going to have it if I have got to lick the whole company."

At this his comrades set up a shout, and the Captain coming up to him said: "You'll do; I guess they won't bother you any more, Grant."

For a long time after this occurrence Grant was known at the Point as "Company Grant." The plucky little fellow had rid himself of his tormentors, the boys never afterward attempting to put any of their jokes on him.

THE economy plank in the Republican platform finds a fit representative in Grant. During the brief time he was in charge of the War Department, he reduced the expenses of the department twelve millions of dollars. When elected to the Presidency his system of retrenchment will of itself greatly lessen taxes.

Grant.

The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute, Whole in himself, a common good; Our greatest, yet with least pretence, Great in council and great in war, Foremost captain of the time, Right in giving reasons, And, as the greatest, are, In his simplicity sublime."

Grant.

Coffax!—well chosen to preside O'er Freeman's Congress, and to guide, As one who holds the reigns of fate, The current of its great debate; Prompted by one too wise and good, And fair, withal, to be withstood Here, from our Northern river banks, For all the patience which was borne The weary toot of Bunkum's horn, The hissing of the Copperhead, And folly dropping words of lead! Still wisely ready when the scale Hangs poised to make the right prevail, Still foremost, though Secession's head Be crushed, with scornful heel to tread The life out from its writhing tail! As wise, firm, faithful to the end God keep thee, prays thy sincere friend.

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