

TWO VISIONS.

Where close the curving mountains drew
To clasp the stream in their embrace,
With every outline, curve and hue
Reflected in its placid face,

The plowman stopped his team to watch
The train, as swift it thundered by;
Some distant glimpse of life to catch,
He strains his eager, wistful eye.

The morning freshness lies on him,
Just wakened from his balmy dreams;
The travelers begrimed and dim,
Think longingly of mountain streams.

Oh, for the joyous mountain air,
The fresh, delightful autumn day!
Among the hills! The plowman there
Must have perpetual holiday!

And he, as all day long he guides
His steady plow, with patient hand,
Thinks of the flying train that glides
Into some new, enchanted land.

Where, day by day, no plodding round
Wearies the frame and dulls the mind—
Where life thrills keen to sight and sound,
With plows and furrows left behind."

Even so, to each, the untrod ways
Of life are touched by fancy's glow,
That ever sheds its brightest rays
Upon the path we do not know!

—Agnes M. Macar, in the Century.

THE OLD ARM-CHAIR.

"Yes, there they go!" said Miss Pamela, lifting the corner of the window curtain to look down the long perspective of the winding road. "Four of 'em. In two cutters, with two wolf-robins and two sets of sleigh bells. And it's the third time that Ruth and Bessie have been asked out sleigh-riding within the month, and nobody ever thinks of me!"

And it was a little strange, too, when one came to think of it. Miss Pamela Pipely was a plump young woman of three-and-thirty, with rosy cheeks, snapping black eyes, and a figure as trim and straight as a sapling-pine.

She had not Ruth's melting, almond-shaped eyes perhaps, nor the peachy pink of Bessie's radiant complexion, but she was universally acknowledged to be the best hand at pickling and preserving in all the country around.

She couldn't quote Swinburne or Jean Ingelow, but she managed her widowed brother's household with a firm yet gentle hand, and had a chestful of patchwork, bedquilts and crocheted tidies, in the big old garret upstairs.

In fact, Miss Pamela Pipely would have made a first-class wife to any man living—if only the bachelors around Gray George could have been brought to perceive a fact which was so manifestly to their advantage.

So Miss Pipely sat before the fire of blazing logs, all mossed over with silver-gray fringe, and bubbling out their resinous hearts beneath the fiery ordeal of the flames, and knitted away at 'Squire Sam's gray-mixed stockings, as if she were on a wager against old Time and was resolved to conquer at all hazards. And the dragon's head that was carved on the old mahogany chair opposite, and the clawlegs and the queer little brass knobs scattered all over it, seemed to wink soberly at her, in the pleasant light as she worked. It was an heirloom in the family, that old chair, and the Pipelys were proud of it.

Just then there came the merry jingle of sleigh-bells up the road, like a peal of miniature laughter.

"Some one else out for a sleigh-ride," thought Miss Pamela, without turning her head.

But to her infinite amazement the tiny pearls ceased to chime; the sleigh had stopped.

"Good gracious!" said Miss Pamela, taking a hurried observation from behind the netted fringes of the curtains, "It's Mr. Hedger. And he's coming here, too!"

Mr. Hedger came in—a stout, middle-aged man, with light blue eyes shining behind his spectacles, brown hair just sprinkled with gray and a small muffler buttoned up to his very nose.

"Good morning, Miss Pamela!" said he, pleasantly.

"Good morning!" said Miss Pamela. "I've called on business," said Mr. Hedger who was one of those uncanonized social martyrs, a bashful old bachelor.

Miss Pamela, to be sure, was an old maid, but she wasn't in the least degree bashful, so, perhaps, the two were not evenly mated.

"On business?" repeated the lady. "I'll call my brother at once."

"Oh, don't do that, Miss Pamela!" said Mr. Hedger, deprecatingly.

"No?" Miss Pamela raised her jet-black eyes in some surprise.

"Because my business was with you especially," he explained.

"Oh!"

Miss Pamela sat down again, mechanically crimping the borders of her apron with the finger and thumb of her left hand, while a very pretty blush crept over her face.

"I've been thinking it over for some time," said Mr. Hedger, rather abashedly.

"Have you?" said Miss Pamela.

And the crimping operation went on faster than ever.

"Of course I know it is taking a great liberty," said the gentleman, apologetically.

"Oh, don't speak of it," said the lady.

"And then, you know, we are almost strangers," he added.

"Oh, that makes no difference!" said Miss Pamela, hurriedly.

"I can hardly muster courage to ask," said he.

"Don't you be afraid," sweetly smiled the bright-eyed damsel, wondering what Bessie and Ruth would say if they were to come home and find her engaged.

"You will forgive my audacity?" he murmured, moving his chair a trifle nearer.

"Of course!" responded Miss Pamela.

"Well, then," said Mr. Hedger, plunging headlong into the subject, will you sell me that old mahogany dragon's head chair of yours for my collection of antiquities? I am told it has a record for a century and a half, and I have long been anxious to possess it. Expense will be no object to me, as my pleasure lies in collecting these valuable articles of virtue."

Miss Pamela turned red and white—the folds of the apron fell from her hand. Figuratively speaking, she froze over at once.

"I prefer to drive no bargains for any family relics," she said, stiffly.

"But—"

"I am sorry to disappoint you, but it is really quite out of the question," said Pamela.

"Might I continue to hope—"

"You may continue to hope nothing!" severely spoke the lady.

And Mr. Hedger, beginning vaguely to suspect that something was wrong, stumbled vaguely out of the room. While Pamela put her head down in her hands, and began to cry a little.

"I thought he was going to propose," she said. "And I did like him—and I was just going to say yes! And to think he only wanted that horrid old dragon's chair, after all!"

In the wood-yard outside Mr. Hedger encountered Squire Samuel Pipely, who was splitting wood like a good-natured Goliath.

"Oh!" said the squire. "Pears to me you made a very short stay, Hedger?"

"I don't think your sister was much pleased," said Mr. Hedger.

The squire suspended his ax in mid-air.

"Not pleased?" said he. "Why what on earth did you say to her?"

"I only asked if she would be willing to sell me the old claw-legged mahogany chair for my collection of antiquities."

"And she said no?"

"She said no, most emphatically."

The squire struck his ax into a log, scratched his nose and chuckled.

"Ah!" said he. "Well, it ain't her fault; she couldn't say yes."

"Couldn't say yes?" echoed Hedger.

"My Grandfather Pipely was a queer old soul," said Sam. "He left that chair to Pamela, you know."

"So I have understood," said Mr. Hedger.

"She never was to part with it unless married," added the squire.

"Unless she married?" repeated Mr. Hedger, vaguely.

"Not pleased?" said he. "Why what on earth did you say to her?"

"I will read it now without the manuscript," said the author, "but on one condition only. It shall count for a formal reading, and you will at once vote for or against its acceptance."

"Without the manuscript?" asked the puzzled actors.

"I will read it now without the manuscript," said the author, "but on one condition only. It shall count for a formal reading, and you will at once vote for or against its acceptance."

The committee of actors agreed to this, and Alexander Dumas, standing before the fire, began to recite to them "Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle," a comedy in five acts, of which he had not written one word, but which he carried complete in his head, as Jove carried Minerva. As he finished each act there was applause, and after the fifth a double round. The ballot box was passed at once and the unwritten play was accepted unanimously.

At a wedding at Benton, Montana, a few weeks ago, a rejected suitor scattered a pound or so of cayenne pepper among the church pews. The stuff was particularly troublesome around the altar. There was a general weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. When at the critical moment the preacher asked the bride whether she would have the groom, she replied: "Kerchoo, kerchooo!"

A Boston firm propose to receive a limited number of girls from the public schools, who may desire to become saleswomen, and educate them, as boys are educated for business, giving them one hundred dollars the first year and increasing their pay according to their proficiency. They are to be allowed a vacation of two weeks out of the time, and every means will be afforded for their advancement.

At a wedding in New York one day recently the bride's youngest sister, a tiny little girl, and the groom's little niece headed the bridal procession. The bride wore white satin, trimmed with point duchesse lace. Her veil of tulle was long and full and fastened with bridal blossoms. She wore solitaire diamond earrings, the groom's gift. The bridesmaids, including the children, wore short white dresses and white satin poke bonnets.

"Second thoughts are sometimes best thoughts," said the squire, splitting away as for dear life.

"I've always admired her," said Mr. Hedger, "and I believe I'll go back."

"Just as you please," observed the squire.

Miss Pamela Pipely was sitting by the fire, with a little flush on her cheek and a little moisture of her eyelashes, while her knitting lay unheeded in her lap. She started at his entrance.

"Miss Pipely—" said the bachelor.

"Sir!" she cried, brushing away the dew from the lashes, which curved so prettily at their end, and trying to look unconcerned.

"If you won't give me the old chair," said Mr. Hedger, "will you give me yourself?"

"I don't know what you mean," said Miss Pamela.

"Don't you?" said Mr. Hedger.

And then he sat down beside Miss Pamela and explained himself.

"I never heard of such a thing in my life!" cried she, hysterically.

"But don't you think it would be a capital idea?" urged Mr. Hedger.

"No—yes—perhaps!" said the lady.

"You'll think of it?" said he.

"Yes, I'll think of it," said she.

And so they became engaged, and Mr. Hedger added to his social status and his collection of antiques at the same time. And they are just as happy as if it had been a case of love at first sight.

Immense white satin bows are worn at the belt with white evening dresses.

Fifteen percent. of the persons in Boston who pay taxes of \$1,000 a year and upwards are women.

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

Tobacco as a Match-Maker.

All the nervousness, embarrassment and febrile excitement attendant upon "popping the question" in highly civilized countries are avoided by young men of the Tchulian Tartar variety desirous to marry, whose simple and discreet custom it is to ascertain their chances of success or failure in matrimonial enterprise by the following proceeding: The Tchulian Colets in search of a wife, having filled a brand new pipe with fragrant tobacco, stealthily enters the dwelling of the fair one upon whom he has bestowed his affections, deposits the pipe upon a conspicuous article of furniture, and retires on tip-toe to some convenient hiding-place in the neighborhood, local etiquette requiring that he should execute this strategic movement apparently undetected by the damsel of his choice or any member of her family. Presently he returns without further affection of secrecy, and looks into the apartment in a casual sort of way. A single glance at the pipe he left behind him enables him to learn the fate of his proposal. If it had been smoked, he goes forth an accepted and exultant bridegroom, if not the offer of his hand and heart has been irrevocably rejected, as not even worth a puff of tobacco. By this ingenious expedient the pain and humiliation of verbal refusal and fruitless pleadings are spared to luckless wooers, and Tartar maidens are saved from importunities justly regarded as peculiarly trying to female sensibility. The pipe, considered as a matrimonial ambassador, has at least this to recommend it—that it may be relied upon to commit no breach of confidence if its mission prove successful.—London Telegraph.

News and Notes for Women.

Pearl-gray silk stockings, either plain or delicately embroidered in fine pink flowers, will be very fashionably worn with full evening toilets, with the hair arranged a la Josephine.

Real silver and also fine steel buttons are displayed, cut in facets which sparkle like diamonds and look exceedingly rich upon street jackets of embossed velvet.

Scarfs, sashes and revers are made of the new striped and plaid fabrics in silk and wool. In dresses of monochrome color the panel facings, camisole, pelisse and cuffs are frequently made of these bright materials.

Gloves, no matter how long, that button up the arm, are no longer considered in best style. Two or three buttons at the wrist only are allowable. The remainder of the glove is in a solid piece fitting loosely over the arm.

Scars, sashes and revers are made of the new striped and plaid fabrics in silk and wool. In dresses of monochrome color the panel facings, camisole, pelisse and cuffs are frequently made of these bright materials.

Gloves, no matter how long, that button up the arm, are no longer considered in best style. Two or three buttons at the wrist only are allowable. The remainder of the glove is in a solid piece fitting loosely over the arm.

A late French caprice is to wear ear-rings made of real Brazilian beetles. Another style is that of a tiny bird about an inch long made of fine, beautiful feathers dyed crimson and green. The eyes of the bird are formed of diamonds.

How a Play Was Produced.

A New York correspondent tells of the curious manner in which a play by Alexander Dumas the elder was recited before it was written. The correspondent says:

One day the opening scene flashed on him, and in a fortnight the play was planned and complete in his head. He walked into the committee-room of the Theater Francais to ask that the committee be called together that day week to hear a comedy?

So you have written a comedy? asked one of the actors.

"No," said Dumas, "I have completed it—but there's not a line written yet."

"Then you cannot possibly be ready to read it in a week?"

Dumas was a little incensed at their doubting his facility, and he turned sharply and asked:

"The committee meets every Saturday. You are all here to-day. Would you like like me to read you the play now?"

"Without the manuscript?" asked the puzzled actors.

"I will read it now without the manuscript," said the author, "but on one condition only. It shall count for a formal reading, and you will at once vote for or against its acceptance."

The committee of actors agreed to this, and Alexander Dumas, standing before the fire, began to recite to them "Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle," a comedy in five acts, of which he had not written one word, but which he carried complete in his head, as Jove carried Minerva. As he finished each act there was applause, and after the fifth a double round. The ballot box was passed at once and the unwritten play was accepted unanimously.

At a wedding at Benton, Montana, a few weeks ago, a rejected suitor scattered a pound or so of cayenne pepper among the church pews. The stuff was particularly troublesome around the altar. There was a general weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. When at the critical moment the preacher asked the bride whether she would have the groom, she replied: "Kerchoo, kerchooo!"

A gondolier descends generally from a long line of ancestors, who were for centuries boatmen. A gondola costs about \$200. The father lays by week after week a small sum in order to buy his son one, and thus starts him in life. The gondola costs about \$60 per annum in repairs. The owner pays a tax to the municipality, according to the station to which he is allotted, and he is obliged to be there not only every day, but every third night. During the summer months he gains a dollar per diem; in winter almost nothing. When the gondolier goes home he has to cook and engage in other domestic avocations for his family. His wife, dressed in rags, with her hair in disorder, and a pair of old slippers on her feet, sits on her doorstep looking to her husband to find her polenta, and to cook it for her when earned. The food of the family, when they have food, consists of polenta and a handful of small fish, so small, indeed, that nothing remains of them except bones and skin when dried. On feast days, if the gondolier has been fortunate, they eat a little rice. This, however, is an exceptional luxury, for rice is dearer than polenta. And yet these men are able to row without any apparent effort for many hours every day. They are well set, strong, and muscular, and their unkempt wives seem to be in the rudest of health. Physically, intellectually, and morally, they compare advantageously with the descendants of the Doges.

Long cloaks have a tendency to make young women look old.

Natural flowers which do not quickly fade are worn upon hats.

Plush is imported for trimming hats, bonnets, dresses and wraps.

Silver-gray and amber-tinted satin dresses are very fashionable.