

BERNARD AT CEDAR CREEK.

BY HERMAN MELVILLE.

Shoe the steed with silver That bore him to the fray, When he heard the guns at dawn, Miles away:—

House the foam in ermine— For the foam-lake blew, While through the red October He thundered into view.

Wreath the steed and lead him— For the charge he led, Touched and turned the cypress Into amaranths for the head.

Shroud the horse in sable— For the mounds the heap! There is firing in the valley, And yet not a stir they keep;

The First Quarrel. From once a month. "Sakes alive! what a looking room!

"Sakes alive! what a looking room! I declare, George Graham, if you aren't enough to try the patience of Job!

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"But you don't mean to say you're going to turn me out of house and home!

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as that long, earnest talk came back to her.

"And—and, I'll do it any way. If he won't forgive, he won't agree to begin again and try it over, why—Oh, I never, never can get tired of another woman, and see him married to another woman. Oh, I'll never say another word, I won't not, if he has every chair piled to the ceiling with coats and pants, and the floor matted deep with boots and rubbers, I don't care what he may speak so cross to him. I'll get a girl to-morrow; somebody that can cook better than I, and I'll keep out of the kitchen; and whenever he comes in I'll take his things myself and take care of them. What may he have thought of me to hear me say such dreadful things!"

"And filling up the stove with coal, draining the oven door open, she sat up stairs and put on her saque and bonnet, seized her mitt and gloves, and, locking the door after her, went out.

"It was bitter cold, but she did not mind it. The wind was driving the sleet right into her face, but she only drew the thick veil closer over her swollen eyes and hurried on.

"It was slippery as glass; but her gaitered feet ran along as if sharp-shod. She had but one thought in her mind, and that was, how sorry she was, and bring him back to dinner.

"With a shout and a hurrah!" a little fellow came coasting down one of the cross streets, and she only drew the thick veil closer over her swollen eyes and hurried on.

"The next minute he was knocking her little hand under his elbow and grinning at her back, walking slowly, cautiously, and asking at every few steps, 'if she were sure she would not much hurt, and adding, 'he'd end the little rascal to just if she were, 'to all of which she said earnestly, 'Not any hardly; only frightened a little; he was glad to blame for the sleet turning; I'm so weak!"

"And you running away to leave me here alone. Oh, Susie, I should have run after you before morning."

"Yes, indeed; I forgave you ten minutes after I reached the office, though going down stairs, I was still in a world of pain. You were a little slob, instead of such tidy bit of a lady."

"I don't wonder, George. It's enough to make a man's hair stand on end, to see his wife forever scolding about it. But do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to hire a girl to cook, wash, iron and mend, and I'll let her have the same pay that every time you come in, and put away your things for you, so that we'll both be suited. The house'll be in order, and you'll be both as well as I."

"The deuce you will, Susie! Pardon, but I didn't mean to say it. Have the girl, all ways wanted you to; but hang me if I am going to have such a doll of a wife to put away my things, and kiss me, and kiss me, and—why just see how nice I can do it when I'm not so busy as I am now. I'll let her have the same pay that every time you come in, and put away your things for you, so that we'll both be suited. The house'll be in order, and you'll be both as well as I."

"And now put your things away, wifey, and let's have a dinner, for I'm as hungry as a church rat."

"I'm afraid it's all dried up by this time, but I'll hurry and make you a nice cup of coffee."

"You know what the good book says, Susie; better is a dry morsel."

"I know, I know, George," and turning back to her, she laid her right hand and laying it tenderly on her head, said tearfully, "Help me to be good."

"We will help each other, wifey, and Heavenly Father will help us, too. And so ended the first quarrel. God grant it may be the last!"

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