

The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER, }
Editor and Proprietor. }

AN INDEPENDENT FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Terms: IN ADVANCE }
One Dollar per Year. }

Vol. IV.

New Bloomfield, Pa., October 25, 1870.

No. 43.

The Bloomfield Times.

Is Published Weekly.

At New Bloomfield, Penn'a.

BY

FRANK MORTIMER.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS.

ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR!

OR 10 CENTS PER MONTH.

IN ADVANCE.

Fred's Courtship.

CONCLUDED.

"A H, FRED," exclaimed the delighted bachelor, "you are a boy after my own heart! Persevere—and we'll snap our fingers then at fortune!"

After four similar visits at Pendleton House, which occupied as many weeks—Fredrick residing too far from his lady-love, to drive the little black pony to see her oftener than once in seven days—he resolved, with the advice and consent of his uncle, to make an offer of his hand.

"But I feel a kind of bashfulness in introducing the subject," said Frederick, "she is such a dignified lady! Suppose I should write her a letter? She knows I am a fellow more conversant with books than the graces of society; and she will appreciate my delicacy."

"I don't see anything out of the way in that," replied the old gentleman, who little suspected Fred's motives. "An offer is an offer, whether made on paper, or by word of mouth. Draw up the document, and let me see it."

Fred had three reasons for this step.—First, although he had audacity enough to act his part thus far, he felt some diffidence about making a proposal where he was confident of being coolly rejected. In the next place, he thought it might be in keeping with the character he had assumed, to write Laura on the subject. The main reason which induced him to take this step, however, was a desire to convince his uncle that he had made a formal and bona fide proposal for Miss Pendleton's hand, and lay before him positive evidence of his refusal.

Frederick accordingly produced an elaborate document, full of sound sense, nicely turned compliments, and a formal offer of his hand; which, although it contained scarcely *love* enough to meet the old gentleman's ideas of ardent courtship, obtained his general approbation.

This letter was sealed and despatched under Uncle Philip's immediate supervision; and on the very same day, there was received a reply. Frederick opened the letter in presence of his uncle.

"Lucky boy!" cried the latter, in high glee. "I am sure she will have you. Read! read!"

"You are sure?" said Frederick, forcing a smile. "I have my fears about it!"

I need not state what the fears were.—Notwithstanding all his precautions, Fred was a little anxious. What a predicament he would be in, should such a miracle occur, as his uncle confidently expected!

"Respected sir," began Fred.

"Rather cool, that," suggested his uncle.

"Cool, but polite," said Fred, who really appeared well pleased. "I do not dislike the expression. A woman should respect the man she intends to marry."

"Allow me to thank you for the high honor you have conferred upon me by the offer of your hand; and rest assured that, although I cannot accept it, I remain, with sentiments of esteem, your obliged and gratified friend—"

"I do not believe it!" interrupted Uncle Philip, snatching the letter. "She never

would refuse—it is impossible—good looking a fellow as you—"

He glanced his eye over the neatly written billet, and uttering a groan, dropped his hands in mute dismay.

"A previous attachment," sighed Fred. "I declare, that *must* be it!" muttered the old gentleman. "Yes, you labored under a disadvantage, and I pity you."

Fred put his handkerchief to his eyes.

"But don't feel bad about it, my boy," said his uncle, consolingly. "Miss Pendleton is not the last woman. Don't think of her any more!"

Fred left the room. He hastened to Rose. To her great joy he related the success of his stratagem. Only one thing remained to make them happy.

But while Fred was waiting for a favorable opportunity to speak to his uncle about Rose, another storm was brewing for the discomfiture of his hopes. Determined to marry off his nephew, to make him happy, and himself comfortable, the old gentleman had the kindness to select for him another bride—Miss Paulina Clifton, a second cousin of our hero's, who resided at a distance of some fifty miles from him, and of whom he knew comparatively nothing.

Uncle Philip's will was absolute; there was no hope of safely evading obedience; and accordingly Fred, somewhat encouraged by the success of his first stratagem, placed confidence in his ability to invent and prosecute a second; and having taken affectionate leave of the disconsolate Rose, he set out to visit his distant relative.

As Mr. Grandison was careful to see that his excellent nephew was well provided and equipped for his journey, Frederick could not but choose to make his first appearance before Miss Pauline in a certain sort of style; besides, from what he could gather concerning the character of his cousin, he despaired being able to make successful use of the same stratagem which had already served him so well.

Frederick was well dressed, and he drove a handsome horse. He arrived at his destination one fine afternoon, and met with a hearty reception from his friends. Pauline, in particular, expressed great joy at seeing him, and shook his hand with almost masculine heartiness. For she was a "dashing woman"—Miss Pauline! None of your dainty belles, who never speak without simpering and mincing their words; but a frank, bold, merry-hearted girl, who cared not a straw for ceremony, and loved a hearty laugh, and a gay horseback ride, better than anything.

She was a beauty, too, in her way; no black eyes brighter, no brow more noble, no form more stately than hers. Fred could not help admiring her, so full of vigor and the love of life. But he thought of Rose.

The Cliftons were rich; but there was a carelessness in their style of living, strongly in contrast with what Fred had witnessed at Pendleton house.

Our hero was vexing his brain to invent some means of bringing his second *suit* to the same successful issue as the first, when Pauline exclaimed:

"I am so glad you are come, cousin! It has been so dull here lately, that I have almost died with *ennui*. Since Cousin Harry left, three weeks ago, I have suffered the very extremity of homesickness. Ah, you should know Harry! He is the companion for a fox-hunt, or a chase in the woods, or a race anywhere! He isn't afraid to ride over fences! He mounted a colt that had thrown every man before him—broken one shoulder and two arms—but the high-mettled chestnut couldn't play his tricks with Harry. An ape couldn't have stuck closer. Father made him a present of the colt, for taming him; and he deserved it; though I could have rode him as well as he did, if everybody had not opposed me."

"You!" exclaimed Fred.

"I? Why not? I delight in horses! don't you?"

In an instant Frederick's mind was made up for the part he was to act.

"I must say," he replied, shaking his head, "I am no jockey. I never mounted a horse that was not well broke. I—I think—I'm a little afraid of horses!"

Pauline's face was all wonder.

"Well, if you are not just like the rest of them, except Harry. Afraid of horses! A person would not think so from your looks. Really, you are *not* sickly, or timid, or effeminate. I know you are not; and you only require a taste of the pleasures of horsemanship, to become perfectly infatuated. Ha! ha! I'll teach you! Let me be your companion for a week, and you'll fall in love with horses!"

"With you, I rather think," said Fred, gallantly; "for positively, I have no equestrian tastes. I appreciate an easy chair and a pile of old books, with an addition, in winter, of a comfortable fire and a cup of coffee. I appreciate these luxuries too well, to care for horses. By the way, speaking of books, have you a copy of Massinger? I was thinking of a passage in 'The Bondman,' as I was riding, to-day, and for my life, I could not remember the precise language of the poet."

"You may find such stuff in my father's library; I don't know," replied Pauline. "But do try and forget your books for a few days, cousin. Ah, you will! I am sure just the sight of my *Myrrha* will inspire you with something of my tastes!"

Firm in this conviction, Pauline, at day-break, on the following morning, had her favorite steed prepared for use; and while the dew still sparkled on the grass, she was proudly mounted and riding gaily across the fields, regardless of fences, in order to put a proper degree of life into *Myrrha*, before displaying her beauties to Frederick. At last, she dashed up to the door and called to her cousin, who, to her despair, she learned had not yet forsaken his couch!

Pauline took another turn, and once more came up to the house like a thunderbolt. Nobody could lie abed until that time of day, she thought; and being told that Frederick had not yet made his appearance, she wheeled *Myrrha*, with an exclamation of contempt, and riding off again, did not return until the family was half through with breakfast.

"O," she said, sarcastically, addressing Frederick, "you have finally got up! But I am really provoked that you care more for breakfast than for *Myrrha*! You would not get up to see her; I was particular to train her, expressly to draw forth your admiration."

"I have no doubt but I should have admired her," said Frederick, over his coffee. "I like the name—*Myrrha*—it is classical. *Myrrha* was the daughter of a king of Cyprus, named Cynarus, and according to Ovid, in the tenth book of the *Metamorphoses*—"

"I tell you, you must forget your musty books!" interrupted Pauline. "I will give you no peace until you do. Are you prepared to enjoy yourself after breakfast?—What shall we do? Harry's colt is in the stable, and you can ride him if you like." Frederick shuddered.

"Dear me! I should not dare to mount any horse that was not perfectly gentle. If the colt has already broken two arms and a shoulder, I am afraid he would fall into the temptation of adding a grand climax to his former achievements, by breaking my neck! If you have no objections, I think I will look over your father's library; for he tells me he has some books there that have not been opened for twenty years, to his knowledge; and I shall delight to sit down in an easy chair and explore those relics of antiquity."

To be candid with the reader, I must confess that Frederick, notwithstanding his literary tastes, would have keenly enjoyed riding the most spirited horse in Mr. Clifton's stables; he admired Pauline, sympathized with her in her invigorating pursuits; and nothing at the time could have pleased him better than to give himself up wholly to her guidance. But he felt the necessity

of playing the hypocrite; not that he loved Pauline less, but that he loved Rose more. Since he was to offer his hand to the former, he wished to run no risks of being accepted.

Accordingly, during the week he passed with his relatives, he denied himself like a self-constituted martyr, and vexed Pauline almost to desperation.

Whenever she wished him to join in her exercises, she found him absorbed in some book which he seemed to prefer to both her and her darling *Myrrha*! He never made her a promise to accompany her, without stipulating the condition that he should first be permitted to finish a chapter or a page in peace. In the morning, he could not go out, because, as autumn was now approaching, he was afraid of taking cold. Before dinner, he was too hungry to exercise, and after dinner he complained of indigestion!

At the end of a week, Frederick, having only thrown out vague hints touching his matrimonial purposes, wrapped himself up warmly, to Pauline's great disgust—and set out to return to his uncle's house.

A singular correspondence between Frederick and his "intended," ensued, Uncle Philip claiming the right to see all the letters on both sides. The young man told his uncle that he was afraid Pauline was a little too spirited to make him the right kind of a wife; but the old gentleman exclaimed, "not a bit! not a bit!" and insisted on an early proposal.

"I am afraid she won't have me," said Frederick. Her letters are too cold."

"What can you expect?" cried Uncle Philip. "She is not a literary woman, to write eloquent letters. For my part, I hate literary women! Pauline is a Diana, in her way; bold, but true, I warrant. At all events, propose!"

Frederick obeyed; and in a few days received the following reply, which amused him and Rose almost as much as it disconcerted and confounded Uncle Philip:

"DEAR COZ.—Yours rec'd. I must decline your offer; for although I am convinced of the worth of your *amiable disposition*, I fear our tastes are not enough alike to warrant more than a friendly intercourse between us. Excuse haste. *Myrrha* is sick, and I am dying with anxiety for her. Your affectionate cousin,
PAULINE."

"Fred!" exclaimed Uncle Philip, as soon as his extreme mortification and disappointment would permit him to speak, "what is the matter with you? Won't anybody have you?"

"I was doubtful about Pauline," replied Frederick. "She is so very spirited—"

"And you are so very amiable! But by all the laws of love! I'll marry you off, if it costs me a year's labor! I'll find somebody amiable enough for you! Now I think of it, there's Edith Wells; gentle as a lamb; a very picture of mildness; beautiful as a houri! She's just the girl for you! I wonder I did not think of her before!"

Frederick was aghast. But all his remonstrances were in vain. His old uncle, cruel and tyrannical, had spoken, and he, the subject, must obey.

Frederick did not despair, however. He was already acquainted with Edith's character. She was one of the most retiring, affectionate, amiable young ladies in the country, living among flowers, birds and pet lambs, and devoting herself to making everybody and everything around her happy.

Frederick and Edith had been partial to each other in their childhood; but it was now long since they had met, thanks to the superior charms of Rose.

Edith was very well pleased to see her old friend, notwithstanding the odor of cigars which he brought with him, and which to her delicate sense was very disagreeable. She did not know he had not smoked before since he left college; and that he had made himself sick for her especial benefit!

Frederick took tea with the family, and amused himself afterwards by tormenting Edith's beautiful lap-dog, to her infinite

distress. Then he begged the privilege of smoking under the porch, pretending that he was so addicted to cigars, that he should be low-spirited all the evening, if he was deprived of the stimulant. Having obtained the desire, the *dissipated fellow* could not, it seemed, think of anything better to do than to blow smoke into the cages of Edith's canaries—pursuing this amusement with such extreme recklessness, that she—a perfect sensitive plant—almost went into hysterics, and became so nervous, that she did not sleep soundly for three nights thereafter.

Having made all the birds drunk except one, and having broken off the fairest branch of Edith's most beautiful geranium to tinkle that one with, he turned to her with a countenance full of candor, and begged her to excuse him while he walked down the street to the village hotel, to obtain a glass of brandy; being troubled with faintness, he said, whenever he neglected those habits contracted during his college life!

Edith was stupefied with amazement! She looked at Fred, and endeavored to express a proper abhorrence of those 'habits,' but she could not find words to relieve her mind. Fred accordingly went off; but he did not go to the hotel, for he was, in reality, as strict a temperance man as there was in the county.

Fred did not approach near enough to Edith, that evening, to permit her to smell his breath; a delicacy, as she considered the precaution, for which she felt thankful in her heart.

The young man visited the sensitive young lady regularly every Wednesday evening through the months of October and November; for, so anxious was she to obtain an influence over him which would lead to his reform, that she endured him with fortitude, and rather encouraged his attentions. At length matters came to a crisis. Frederick following the counsel of the uncle, made Edith an offer of his hand by word of mouth.

"Mr. Frederick," said she, looking tenderly in his face, "you know I feel an interest in you—"

"Thank you," faltered Fred, trembling.

"And if I knew I could be the means of reforming you, and teaching you kindness to dumb animals. I might accept your generous offer, if for no other reason."

Fred turned pale. "O, I am incorrigible!" he hastened to say. "I could never give up my independence! You should not mention that subject—"

"I will not," replied Edith, smiling sadly, "provided you do not mention the other. I feel only a friendship for you; and as there is no likelihood that I can be an instrument of doing you good, I must decline the honor of becoming Mrs. Grandison."

Frederick parted from Miss Wells with commendable cheerfulness, and went home to his uncle with the news of his refusal.

Uncle Philip became livid with wrath. He declared himself ashamed of a nephew enjoying such small favor among the ladies.

"I've a good notion to turn you out of doors!" he exclaimed. "You disgrace the family! Can't find a woman to have you!"

Frederick bowed his head, receiving the rebuke with as much equanimity as he had received either of the three refusals. But his feelings appeared to be touched when his uncle addressed him with bitter irony.

"Poor fellow! It is too bad! Can't get married! If I was in your place, I'd go and offer myself to poor little Rose over the way, and see if she'd have you! Perhaps she will take pity on you!"

Uncle Philip turned upon his heel and entering another room, raved about the humiliation the family had suffered, until the door opened, and Frederick once more presented himself before him.

CONTINUED ON SECOND PAGE.