

# The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER,  
Editor and Proprietor.

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## The Bloomfield Times.

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BY

FRANK MORTIMER.

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## Marrying a Fortune.

"Yes, I'll do it, Ralph, even if she is a scraggy, worthless, hairless, dried-up, yellow, vinegar faced old maid.—I'll marry her; or rather her fortune!" and so saying he leaned himself back in his chair, and commenced puffing away as coolly at his cigar as though marrying was the most common place, uninteresting affair ever dreamed of.

"You speak quite confidently, my young man," returned his companion, "perhaps the lady in question won't have you. Don't be too conceited, if you have been called irresistible."

"Fiddlesticks! I guess my uncle's fortune was the most irresistible part in the New York belles, and I am certain now that my 'great expectations' have passed away, there isn't two of them ever remembered associating with me. I tell you, Ralph, love is all moonshine! a mere creature of the fancy—for I have never seen a pretty girl yet that could set my heart palpitating. Money is what a poor briefless lawyer wants, not love; it's a great deal more substantial too."

"Don't doubt it; but I wouldn't be joined to an old vixen for any consideration," responded Ralph, "and in my opinion, Bart, you're a fool if you heave yourself away. There now that advice is free gratis—no fee asked—only do tell me the whole story."

"I can do that in a few words.—About a week ago I saved a fine-looking but gouty old gentleman from being upset out of his carriage on Broadway. He was profuse in his thanks, learned my name, said he knew me by reputation, told me he was wealthy, with but one child, a daughter, and if I would come down to Sea View, where he intended to pass a few weeks, he would make a match between me and her. I modestly suggested that the lady in question might object, but he insisted that she could not; she was devoted to him and heart-whole. There it is *verbatim*. I then made inquiries of a friend what kind of a girl Mr. Lafourn's daughter was, and they told me she was a scraggy old maid, I have her in my mind's eye, but it's no drawback. I'll marry for money, and let her afterwards take to her cats, just the same as she does now. That's all. I am too lazy to work." And he relapsed into a profound silence, wondering secretly at what time on the morrow Mr. Lafourn and daughter would arrive.

"There, pa, you dear old, goose, listen to the description of your Nell," exclaimed pretty little Nellie Lafourn arranging the curtains so that the old gentleman could overhear the conversation on the piazza between the two young gentlemen just mentioned.

"Confound his impudence!" growled the old man, in a rage, bringing his cane down lustily; "I'd like to see him get my darling the heartless wretch, and my money, even if he has got mixed up with your aunt Lucille."

"Slightly mixed up, isn't it, pa?—But after all, how much the picture is like her;" and she burst into a merry laugh, that caused a dozen dimples to play hide and seek around her cheeks and lips.

"He may be blessed! I'll send for him

this moment, and I'll—I'll—I'll cane him!" almost shouted the irate old gentleman.

"No, indeed you won't pa! you let me manage him, won't you, pa?—Let him imagine Lucille is your daughter and heiress, and I your niece, with no expectations. We'll see how he will carry himself."

On the next day Mr. Albertine Gower waited upon Mr. Lafourn, and was formally introduced to Miss Lucille Lafourn. He inquired of the old gent's health very affectionately, and soon became quite engrossed, apparently, in the conversation that was started, but secretly he was eyeing his intended bride, and he confessed to himself that the enthusiastic descriptions he had given his friend Ralph did not belie her, or scarcely do her justice. Just then the door opened, and the graceful young lady with a great abundance of golden curls, and very large eyes, walked in.

"My—my niece, Mr. Gower; Mr. Gower, Miss Lee," observed Mr. Lafourn, and Miss Lee acknowledged it with a slight, but nevertheless a graceful bow.

Mr. Gower was enraptured, and the contrast only made his bride expectant more ridiculous; however, he determined to act his part, and, as a chance presented itself, he whispered in modulated tones to Miss Lucille, that he hoped to become better acquainted with her, though he hated himself for it in three minutes after, when he saw Miss Lee's mischief-loving eyes resting upon him, and realized that she had heard him too.

Day after day he called, and proportionally he fell in love with the laughing Nell, and fell out with Miss Lucille, while she became, in appearance, desperately enamored of him, and wrote him poetry by the sheet, expressing her 'everlasting affection,' which he assured his friend Ralph she meant to mean the oldness of her love, for he was sure she was invented in Noah's ark.

In vain he tried to make love with Nell; she accepted no attentions from her 'cousin's lover,' so she mockingly assured him and left him more despairing than before.

At last he could not endure it any longer, and accordingly sought an interview with Mr. Lafourn.

"So you come to propose for my daughter, Mr. Gower?" queried the old gentleman, when he was ushered in.

"No sir, I have not," he emphatically returned. "I have come to make a confession, to ask your forgiveness, and crave a boon. You know how you came to make me the offer which you did? Well, having been brought up to believe myself independent of the world, and to study a profession more for pleasure than aught else, after finding myself suddenly bereft of all hopes, and poor, I gladly accepted of your proposal. I scorned the idea of love. I vowed I loved my case better than any woman on earth, and though I was informed your daughter was—"

"A scraggy old maid," slyly interposed Mr. Lafourn. Bart blushed at his own remark, but proceeded:

"I determined, provided that she would accept me to marry her for her money. There sir, is the truth, and I know I cannot but be lowered in your estimation. Since I have met your niece, and I've—"

"Fallen in love with her," observed the father, aiding him along.

"Yes sir, exactly so, and I am willing, if she will have me, to give up all ideas of wealth obtained by such mean practice, and go way and work bravely for her. Do you think there is any hope? Will you forgive me?"

"Certainly," he responded, "I should not want my daughter wedded to any man from such mercenary motives. I'll call Nell, and see what she says." And suiting the action to the word, he summoned Nellie.

"This gentleman has withdrawn his claims to your cousin's hand," and he observed, taking Nellie by the hand, "and actually has the audacity to ask for your's. What shall I tell him?"

"And I am poor, Nellie," ejaculated Bart, "but you shall see I am no conceited jacknape. I will go away and commence the practice of my profession if you will only give me hope."

Nellie looked at her father through her blushes.

"But I would be a penniless bride," and all the dearer! If you are not worth working for you are not worth having."

"If, then," she returned, slyly, "you wait a year and not change your mind, if uncle is willing—"

"Which he will be," interrupted the gentleman.

The ruse was still kept up. Mr. Lafourn gave him letters of introduction to several influential friends, he went away and set up work in earnest. For a while he was unsuccessful; but at last his talents began to be appreciated, and he was on a fair way to prosperity. At the end of the year he wrote and told Mr. Lafourn how he had succeeded, and asked if he would have any objections to his wedding taking place then. He returned, and when he arrived he found his Nellie prettier than ever. Mr. Lafourn said nothing, and Bart wondered at his giving such a costly wedding to his niece; but when he, as the bride's father, gave her away he was dumb-founded. As soon as the ceremony was over he rushed to his father-in-law:

"What does it mean?"

"It means you have married my daughter, sir," responded the happy parent, "and we have been deceiving you all the while. Lucille is my maiden sister!"

Bart was paralyzed.

"Your daughter?"

"And my money, as I promised. Nellie and I heard your conversation and determined to test you. We did so, and Nellie still insisted on you being tried, and—"

"You have taken the conceit out of me."

But though rich he did not leave his profession and enter into his idle, careless life again, he steadily pushed his way up, and now is one of the most influential men of the times, which he always avers is more due to Nellie's stratagem than "Marrying a Fortune."

## Watch Springs.

A MAJORITY of people have an impression that overwinding breaks the main-spring. That accident can never occur in such watches as are provided with "stop work," which allows only a definite number of turns to the spring; and it seldom occurs in those not so provided because the main-spring hook, against which the force comes when the spring is fully wound is usually stronger than the teeth of the main wheel, and consequently the strain comes not, on the other parts of the watch.

The cause of breakage is an unexplained mystery; no person yet has been able to give a reason satisfactory for it. A spring that has been in use one year is no more liable (as far as known) to break in ten years than in ten minutes. It is a tolerably well established fact, however, that more springs come into the shop broken during certain known conditions of the atmosphere than when other conditions prevail. Whether the effect be produced by electric, hydrometric, or some unknown atmospheric quality has not been determined, and probably will not be until some extended and minute system of observations be instituted. The complaint used often to be made, when watches with fusee and chain were more in use than now, that the rascal watchmaker had stolen a piece off the chain while in his hands for repair. This opinion was entertained because sometimes the careless watchmaker had left the 'stop-work' so as to lack one turn of allowing the watch being completely wound up, which, of course, caused it to lack about six hours of running its full time. No watchmaker was ever so silly, no matter how dishonest he might be, as to steal a piece of chain; what would he do with

it? It is utterly worthless to him, and worth even less than that to anybody else, and to steal it he must spend at least half an hour of time and labor, all for nothing; most of the modern watches have no chain and consequently the accusation is now very rare.

More injury is done to watches by winding with an unsuitable key than is generally supposed. When not properly fitted, it slips off, giving the whole train of wheel-work a severe jar from recoil; its effect on the watch is similar to that produced on the wearer, when he sits down on a seat which is about four inches lower than he expected. After a few such shocks, in winding, it will be found to slip back occasionally; and unless timely repairs are made, it will some day go down with a crack, that will involve an expense of several dollars to repair it as it should be. A key, all brass, properly fitted, is the best; a key with soft steel pipe is the next best, and a hard steel key worst of all. The soft key will not spoil your watch, for if either gave way it will be the key, leaving the square of the watch perfect. Hardened keys will not yield to wear, consequently the watch must, and if the winding square be spoiled, no poor workman can replace it properly, and a good one only at considerable expense. Experience will prove keys to be cheaper than winding squares.

## Bound to Keep Him.

MISS Henrietta Tupper of Wilmington was a maiden at the age of forty, because up to that time no man among all the multitudes of men upon the face of the earth had proposed to her. The reason why she married Fisher one year later, was that she regarded him as her forlorn hope and, although he weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, was poor, and had a face which would have disgraced an old-fashioned brass door-knocker, she accepted him as her last and only chance. Fisher was a first-rate sort of a fellow, but he had a bad habit of walking in his sleep. Two or three times his wife woke up in the night just in time to seize him as he was crawling out of the bed room window in the third story. In the inmost recesses of her soul Henrietta suspected that instead of being a sleep walker, he was disgusted with her and was trying to commit suicide. So she tried all sorts of plans to get him to discontinue his efforts. She induced him to make a memorandum in his pocket-book and to tie a string around his finger, so as to remember not to climb out of the window in his sleep, and she made him sign pledge after pledge to reform in this respect and yet night after night she woke up just in time to perceive the profligate Fisher jamming his two hundred and fifty pounds through that window-frame! At last Mrs. Fisher one night tied a clothes-line to Fisher's leg and fastened the other end tight around her ankle, so that he would arouse her if he got to prancing about. She was determined to keep this man, if possible after all the trouble she had to get him. The Fishers went to bed that evening and slumbered peacefully on as usual. About one o'clock Mrs. Fisher, while dreaming a delicious dream, might have been observed to shoot out of bed feet foremost with frightful velocity, and to bring up all of a sudden with a jerk against the window-sill. The next morning passers-by were attracted by a very singular spectacle. Mr. Fisher was observed hanging half-way down the front of the house by his right leg, while his trailing garment of the night fluttered to and fro in the cool delicious breeze of the morning. Ladders were brought, and, upon following the rope to the window, Mrs. Fisher was seen lying upon the floor of her room with one foot firmly embedded in the wall and the other pressed against the window-sill. She was dead, and her face wore an expression of surprise. Fisher also was dead. Her obituary in the papers contained some touching lines upon woman's love, with passing reference to the fact that in their death they were not divided.

## Absent-Minded.

THE following story is told of the absent-mindedness of a clergyman of the church of Scotland:

He married rather late in life, and the marriage tour was on the continent. At one of the halting places, Mrs.— retired to the hymenal bower in advance of her lord, who sat for a time cogitating down stairs. Presently he came to himself, and summoning the waiter, requested to be shown to his bedroom. He was, of course, shown to the room to which his wife had already retired. But he had forgotten all about matrimony and what it involved, and recoiling from the doorway in horror, turned upon the waiter with angry upbraiding for showing him to a bed room already occupied by a woman! One Sunday morning he was dressing in his bedroom, on a chair in which lay a tray containing half a dozen shirts, stared with fitting clerical stiffness. He progressed leisurely in his dressing till he came to attempt fastening his waist coat, when he found that operation impossible. After many ineffectual struggles, he called his wife to his aid, who likewise found the waistcoat difficulty insurmountable. She was at a loss to explain the phenomenon, till she happened to cast her eyes on the shirt tray. It was empty. The minister, in his absence of mind, had put on the whole half-dozen shirts, one on top of another, and it is no wonder that his waistcoat would not button. On another occasion he and his wife were under invitation to dine at the mansion of the laird of the parish. The minister had been out for a long day's work, visiting his parishioners, and when he came home, a little late, he found the mistress already dressed and waiting. He at once went up stairs to make his toilet, with strict injunctions from the good lady to be quick. He was so slow, however, that she got impatient, and went to see what was the cause of the delay. Entering the bedroom, she found the worthy man placidly enjoying his first sleep. Having undressed, it seems that, in his absence of mind, he had taken it for granted that the natural sequel was to go to bed, and he lay totally oblivious of the dinner party at the laird's.

## Pulled the Hair out of his Head.

MR. CHARLES Henry Muggins detests children. His detestation of them is so intense, and he takes such eccentric methods of manifesting it, that many of his friends have exercised their ingenuity in endeavoring to ferret out the cause. So have I, and behold the result: Mr. Muggins is an unmarried man, remarkably trim in his habits of dress, precise in his manner of speaking, and I believe, acknowledges to the age of 30. I am sure he would die before he would acknowledge to any more. He has a luxuriant head of hair, which he purchased from a celebrated artiste, and which he fondly imagines passes with the community as the spontaneous production of his own caput. Mr. Muggins had a lady-love, who resided a few miles in the country; and being detained by a furious storm, on one occasion, at her father's house, over night, he was obliged to share the bed of her little brother, a very observing youngster, of six years of age. The next morning at breakfast, Muggins, looking and feeling exceedingly complaisant, little Charlie remarked, with a knowing air, that he would "never sleep with Mr. Muggins again, that he wouldn't!"

"Why not, Charley?" asked his sister, in astonishment. "Because," answered Young America, "when he went to bed he pulled all the hair out of his head." The murder was out. Here was a pretty situation for a sensitive man. Muggins has never seen his charmer since, and his dislike for the rising generation is accounted for.

Never wait for a thing to turn up.—Go and turn it up yourself. It takes less time, and is surer done.