

# The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER,  
Editor and Proprietor.

AN INDEPENDENT FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Terms: IN ADVANCE  
\$1 25 Per Year.

Vol. V.

New Bloomfield, Pa., Tuesday, September 19, 1871.

No. 38.

## The Bloomfield Times.

Is Published Weekly,  
At New Bloomfield, Penn'a.  
BY  
FRANK MORTIMER.  
SUBSCRIPTION TERMS.  
\$1.25 PER YEAR!  
75 Cents for 6 Months; 40 Cents  
for 3 Months,  
IN ADVANCE.

### ECHO ANSWERS.

I asked of Echo 'tother day,  
(Whose words are often low and funny)  
What to a novice she would say,  
Of courtship, love, and matrimony?  
Quoth Echo, plainly,—"Matter o' money."  
Whom should I marry? Should it be  
A dashing dandy, gay and pert,  
A pattern of inconstancy,  
Or a selfish, mercenary flirt?  
Quoth Echo, sharply,—"Nary flirt."  
What if a weary of the strife,  
That long has lured the gay deceiver;  
She promised to amend her life,  
And sin no more; can I believe her?  
Quoth Echo, very promptly,—"Leave her."  
But if some maiden with a heart,  
Oh me should venture to bestow it,  
Pray, should I act the wiser part,  
To take the treasure, or forego it?  
Quoth Echo, with decision,—"Go it."  
But, what, if seemingly afraid  
To bind her fate in Hymen's fetter,  
She vows she means to die a maid,  
In answer to my loving letter,  
Quoth Echo, rather softly,—"Let her."  
What, if in spite of her disdain,  
I find my heart inclined about  
With Cupid's dear, delicious chain,  
So closely that I can't get out?  
Quoth Echo, laughingly,—"Get out."  
But if some maid with beauty blest,  
And pure and fair as Heaven's can make her,  
Will share my labor and my rest,  
Till ev'ry death doth o'ertake her?  
Quoth Echo, (very softly) "Take her."

## THE WIFE'S GIFT!

### A Temperance Story.

"NO, NO, JIM; it is no use to persuade me. I am no Teetotaler. Three glasses a day is my rule, and a good one it is too. Just enough to make a fellow feel lively, without upsetting him in the least. I leave signing the pledge to those who fear to trust themselves. No danger of Bill James being seen reeling in the streets."  
"But we have such fearful examples before us, William," urged the friend, who was endeavoring to persuade young James to join the Good Templars, and pledge himself to total abstinence. "There is but one safe course for us to pursue."  
"For you, perhaps, but not for me," was the reply. "Every man is his own best judge. Don't be offended, Jim; your counsel is well meant, and I thank you for it. But you magnify the danger. Here is my little wife; she is not afraid to trust me without my signing the pledge. Say, Lizzie, my darling?"  
Lizzie had been a wife but one short month, and it was hard for her to say anything which might seem to differ from the opinion which her husband had advanced; but she was very truthful, and Jim was an old friend, so that his presence was little restraint, and she answered frankly:  
"No, William, I am not afraid to trust you; and yet I would rather you would join the Templars, and resolve never to taste another drop of liquor, unless the doctor ordered it. Make me a present of the three glasses a day."  
"Indeed, I will not my dear, for I could not get along without an occasional drop of the useful. If you wish for a present, you must think of something else."  
"Nothing else will do," replied Lizzie, smilingly.  
"Only hear that, Jim," said the young husband, in a jesting tone. "Nothing less than three glasses a day will serve my little wife as a present. You had better persuade her to join your society. But never mind, Lizzie, it shall never be said that I treated myself better than I did my wife; and, therefore, I promise to allow you three glasses a day as long as I take them myself. Bear witness, Jim, every evening on my return from work I will hand to my dear little wife the price of three glasses, and she may eat, drink, or wear it, just as she likes."  
"You are a sad fellow, Bill, or you would give her what she asked for," said his friend, as he bade them good-night.  
"And you are unreasonable, or you

would see that I have done so," replied William, laughingly, at the same time tendering thirty cents to Lizzie, which she at first seemed disposed to reject, but on second thought accepted, saying quietly:  
"It will come in use some time."  
"No doubt it will, Lizzie," said the advocate of temperance, looking back as he passed through the gate to the main street. "Take my advice, and keep all you can get. Three glasses a day has brought many a man to want."  
"Jim is a raven, and you must not mind his croaking," remarked the husband, as the two re-entered the cottage.  
The full moon shed a pleasant lustre through the clustering vines that shaded the casement and made the little room with its pretty, though simple furniture look even more attractive than was its wont. It was the honey-moon, besides; therefore no one can wonder that Lizzie should think as she looked around, that it was the very softest and most lovely moonlight she had ever beheld, and that the little cottage, and all it contained, husband included, were among the most choice of God's blessings. And no one can wonder that she slipped her little hand into William's broad palm, and nestled close to his side, as she whispered:  
"It would take more than a raven's croaking to shake my faith in you, dear Will."  
Her husband drew her still closer to his bosom, and pressed a kiss on her forehead but he did not speak, and for awhile they sat together in that pleasant stillness, busy with their own thoughts. At length, Lizzie again broke the silence, by saying in a slightly tremulous voice:  
"And yet I would rather that you meddled with edged tools, my dear husband."  
"Still harping on that subject, my little wife. I thought not that Jim's idle talk would affect you so much."  
"It was not alone what he said, dear William; but his words brought sad remembrances to mind—my own miserable childhood, my poor broken-hearted mother and more to be pitied than all, my wretched, misguided father. And yet my mother has often told me of the first happy years of her married life—a kind husband, and a pleasant home. Intemperance changed her happiness to misery, and harsh treatment from him she loved, brought her to an early grave, and left me the lonely being that I was till I knew you, dear Will. No wonder that I dread the sound of even three glasses a day."  
Deep feelings had given to the once simple village maiden an unusual degree of eloquence. Her blue eyes beamed upon her husband with such earnest and imploring tenderness that his sterner nature could hardly resist the appeal. But false pride came to his aid. He had withstood the arguments of his friends, and he would not yield to the pleadings of his wife. That others had fallen, proved not that he would do the same. As a man he would stand forth and prove to all that the moderate drinker and the drunkard were not to be classed together; that one might stand on the brink of a precipice without danger of plunging into the deep abyss below.  
"And then in his own vain strength he stood. Human strength, this, is but wickedness! The power to resist evil, nay, the very consciousness that evil exists, and the desire to shun it, belongs not to man. In God also we must trust."  
"My wife lies but in humble village life. William James was the blacksmith of the pleasant little village which had been his birth-place, and which was endeared to him by all the tender and endearing associations of infancy, boy-hood and youth. His father had pursued the same occupation, and it was with pride and pleasure that he placed the hammer in the hands of his son, and directed his first attempt at the anvil.  
"It is a respectable and useful trade, Billy," he would often say, "and one which will always insure you an honest living. This is all you want; the lawyers and doctors could desire no more."  
So William grew to manhood, as though a blacksmith as his father; and in due time, as the old man's health declined, the business came altogether into his hands, and the old gentleman was content to smoke his pipe and watch the progress of the work in which he had once taken so active a part.  
"What a blessing it is," he would sometimes say to his wife, "that our Bill is a sober, industrious lad, and works at the forge as well as I could do myself. A good trade is worth all the new-fangled notions that the boys have now-a-days."

It was a joyful day with the old folks when sweet Lizzie was introduced to them as William's future wife. It was at first proposed that they should be made one family; but there were other sons and daughters now nearly men and women, who could well fill the vacancy in the old homestead, and that pretty little cottage, half hid in the clustering vines, was but a stone's throw, and the young people preferred a home of their own.  
So all was made ready, and when the wedding day came, it was, as all wedding days should be, a bright and happy one. The modest, pretty, little bride, and the manly looking bridegroom, plighted their faith in the village church, one lovely Sabbath morning, and as they walked together to their new home after the usual religious services were over, many were the cordial greetings, the kindly smiles, and the heartfelt blessings bestowed upon them. Then followed for the next few days the usual amount of village gossip, concerning the appearance and behavior of groom and bride. This over, and the affair was among the things that were. All went on as usual; the customary busy sounds were heard in the old shop; the young blacksmith had taken new cares upon himself and must not be idle. The father smoked his pipe as vigorously as ever; the mother plied her knitting needles and superintended the household concerns of both families, for the distance was short, and Lizzie loved to come for advice to the kind old lady, and was quite sure that William's favorite dishes could not be properly prepared unless under her special direction. And thus all went quietly and happily for days and months, and even years.  
The little cottage was less lonely now and Lizzie deemed not the time so long when William was absent at his daily work. A smiling babe was in her arms, and a lovely little prattler ran by her side, as she took her usual walk to grandpapa's. A kind welcome always awaited her.  
"Lay by your things, Lizzie," said the youngest sister, "and give me the baby. You are to take tea with us this evening; mother was just sending me with an invitation. Your little maid has a holiday, you know, and it is not fitting for you to attend to household care with a babe on each arm."  
"Not quite so bad as that Jennie, for Willie runs bravely by my side, and little Lizzie can creep around the floor. However, I would gladly accept your invitation did I not think Will would return from work, and wonder at my absence."  
"He will know very well where the birds have flown, and can follow them if he likes. Come, no more excuses; I know what you would say. It is the fourth anniversary of your wedding day, and you wish for a cozy little time at home. No matter, that is selfish, and you must learn to deny yourself."  
"Hush, Jennie, do not go on so," said the old lady, reprovingly. "Stay with us, Lizzie, my child, and you can stop home for William when he returns from work. Father is at the shop to-day, and they will no doubt leave together."  
The hours passed quickly by, and the old gentleman was soon at the gate before they had thought of its being near the hour of tea.  
"Has William gone home, father?" asked Lizzie, as she returned his affectionate greeting.  
"Not yet, dear. He was obliged to go to Clyde on business, and will not return till evening. You can stay with us to tea, and have time to prepare for him after you get home; I promised to tell you of his absence, and now I have done the errand myself."  
"And you will leave that cozy little chair after all, sister Lizzie?" whispered the lively Jennie. "The babies will be asleep, and nothing to disturb you."  
Lizzie smiled cheerfully, and acknowledged that it would be very pleasant, and then turned her attention to the little ones who were already climbing upon grandpapa's knee.  
The abundant country tea was prepared, and soon after it was over a kind good-night was said, and the young mother and children returned to their own pleasant home.  
Fatigued with the pleasures of the afternoon, the babies soon slept, and as Jennie had said, everything lay fast for the quiet evening chat. The husband's supper was ready, the household cares for the day were ended, and seated at her little work-table, Lizzie busily plied her needle, casting ever and anon an expectant glance along the shady walk which led to the cottage, and indulging in the meantime in a very delightful retrospective view of the events of the past four years. No clouds

had as yet obscured the sunshine. The moonlight looked as pleasant now as it did long, long ago, even in the honey-moon itself. William was still the kindest of husbands, and the most loving and indulgent of fathers; and when this was said it mattered little to speak of troubles, for with a good husband, much sorrow may be cheerfully borne. But thus far there had been no sorrow. Worldly riches had increased so that the little place in which they lived was now their own, free from all debts. The business was still thriving, and would become more so, as the village increased in size, and William continued his old habits of industry. Every one pronounced him a rising man, and what everybody said must be true. Even his old friend Jim had ceased to urge the temperance cause so strongly upon him, and had nearly arrived at the conclusion that William James was one of the very few who might with safety indulge in the "three glasses a day."  
Regularly were the three glasses taken at the village saloon, that stood near to the blacksmith shop, and as regularly was a sum equivalent to their cost handed to Lizzie upon his return from daily work. At first, it was done in a joke, but at length became a thing of course—a fixed habit, which would have been difficult to break up. No question was ever asked as to the disposition of the money. "Here are your three glasses," he would say, and a quiet "thank you," was the wife's reply.  
Lizzie's pleasant reflections were interrupted by the sound of footsteps. She listened; it was certainly William. Yes, it was his step; and yet it fell on the wife's ear with a different sound from usual, and it was with an uncertain and almost hesitating feeling that she rose to open the door.  
"Is it you, William?" she asked, before she turned the key.  
"Who else should it be? Open the door quickly, and not keep me standing on the steps all night."  
Never before had William spoken in so abrupt and hasty a manner, and Lizzie looked at him in astonishment as she hastily did as he desired.  
"What is the woman looking at?" he exclaimed, in the same harsh voice. "One would think she never saw a man before. Cannot you give me some supper?"  
"Your supper is ready, William," the wife replied, mildly. She said no more for her heart was very full, and she could with difficulty restrain her tears. A moment's reflection, however, restored her composure. Something very unusual must have occurred to irritate her husband to so uncommon a degree. It was her duty to endeavor to soothe him, to divert his mind and bring him into a better state. With this view, after placing his supper before him, she chatted very cheerfully concerning the little incidents of the afternoon, of the pleasant tea at father's, her disappointment that he could not join her there, and how little Willie had wished that father could only have had a piece of grandpapa's nice cake, and baby Lizzie had seemed to miss him when they returned home, and would be hurried from room to room, as if searching for something of which he was sure he had seen.  
"To all this, and much more, he listened in silence, and made no kindly response. Lizzie was sad but not discouraged; and when he left the table, and threw himself upon the old-fashioned lounge, which was his favorite place of evening rest, she seated herself upon a low stool at his side, and looked affectionately in his face, as she whispered:  
"What is the matter, dear Will? This is the anniversary of our marriage, and you have not spoken one kind word to your poor little wife."  
This appeal, in some degree, restored him to himself, and indeed, the nice cup of tea had done him good, and a good night's rest will make all well. "What is the matter, now, little woman?" he asked, as she sat motionless, and made no response. "I will treat you as well as I have done myself. Here is the price of six glasses."  
The money dropped upon the floor, and with clasped hands, she exclaimed:  
"My dear husband, oh, my husband, will you not give it up, altogether. It would be but a little sacrifice now, and oh, believe me, it is the only safe course. Think of our dear children! Surely you will do it for their sakes?"

"No, no, foolish child, I will not give it up; but I will take care to keep within my allowance in future. Three glasses a day never harmed any one."  
Lizzie would have urged him still further, but a look of impatience checked her, and with a secret prayer that he might never again be led into temptation, she locked her fears in her own bosom. Long after her husband slept, the tears fell fast upon the pillow, as she looked at her little ones, and remembered her own miserable childhood, and her poor mother's unhappy life and early death.  
This was but the beginning of sorrow. For another week all went well; then came another excess. There was still some good excuse, some peculiar circumstance which he said might never occur again. But the path down hill is a slippery one, and of quick descent. Before another year had passed, his instead habits were known and commented upon by those who had once respected him as a thriving, industrious man. Several times he had been seen in the street in a state of absolute intoxication, and his work was often neglected, even at the most busy season of the year. The parents had remonstrated, and his wife pleaded in vain. Opposition seemed to serve as but fuel to the flames.  
"We can but do our duty and trust in God," said Lizzie, sadly, as, after the most trying scene that had yet occurred, she took her children to her grandfather's for an hour or two, thinking that a change would be useful to them, and to herself also.  
"But tell me, my poor child," said the mother to whom the remark was addressed, "is my son very unkind to you and the little ones? Surely, he cannot forget himself so far as to use personal violence."  
"No, mother, he is rather more surly than violent. At such time he dislikes to be spoken to, and is angry if the children make a noise. The poor babes used to spring with delight when they heard his foot steps. Now they shrink from him with fear. Last evening when I bade Willie say his prayer for poor father because he was sick, the little fellow wept and said, 'Willie will say his prayer for poor father, but father don't love Willie any more.' Tears fell fast from Lizzie's eyes as she spoke, and the mother wept also. William was her eldest born, and had ever been her pride and delight. It was, indeed, hard to know that he had thus gone astray.  
"And is there no hope for the future?" she said bitterly. "Will he thus willfully pursue the road to ruin, until it is too late to retrace his steps?"  
"We know not the end," replied Lizzie, "but I fear that things will become worse. May God help us!"  
Lizzie's fears were but too well grounded. The dark cloud about them became more dense. Dissipation led to idleness; work was neglected; debts accumulated; and poverty stared them in the face.  
Deeper grew the shadow on the brow of the old blacksmith, as he watched the gradual decline from virtue of his son. Each hour he would sit in the door of his cottage, apparently in a state of moody abstraction, and then mournfully shaking his head, would say as he ruminated himself:  
"All is silent, now; the blacksmith's hammer is no more heard in the old shop. Oh, my boy, my boy! Would that I could have stood beside thy grave, one I had seen thee thus!"  
Suddenly she seemed to have formed some new resolution. Rising one morning earlier than had been his wont for several years, he took the well-known grass-path to the shop. It was closed, and the sign-timber well-secured. For a moment he paused irresolute, and then walked with quick steps to a small house in the neighborhood.  
"Is Mr. Rich in?" he inquired of the little boy who answered his knock at the door.  
"The man in question, who had been employed by James' employ, immediately stepped forward, and said:  
"The shop is locked, sir; and the old gentleman, 'Have you the key?'  
"I have, was the reply; but Mr. William is so seldom at his work, never that I never open without his orders. I am about seeking a situation in Clyde. Working one day in seven, will not support a family."  
"It will not, indeed, Mr. Rich; but if you will rely upon me, I will see that you are paid as usual. Open the shop at once, and be ready for whatever may offer itself."  
"But I do not feel myself quite competent to take the whole charge, Mr. Rich; I am willing to work under orders."  
"I will be there myself, and we will see