

The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER,
Editor and Proprietor.

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SEEDS.

We are sowing, daily sowing,
Countless seeds of good and ill;
Scattered on the level lowland,
Cast upon the windy hill;
Seeds that sink in rich brown furrows,
Soft with heaven's gracious rain;
Seeds that rest upon the surface
Of the dry, unyielding plain.

Seeds that fall amid the stillness
Of the lonely mountain glen,
Seeds cast out in crowded places,
Trodden under foot of men;
Seeds by idle hearts forgotten,
Flung at random on the air;
Seeds by faithful souls remembered,
Sown in tears and love and prayer.

Seeds that lie unchanged, unquicken'd,
Lifeless on the teeming mould;
Seeds that live and grow and flourish
When the sower's hand is cold;
By a whisper we sow blessings,
By a breath we scatter strife;
In our words and looks and actions
Lie the seeds of death and life.

Thou who knowest all our weakness,
Leave us not to sow alone!
Bid Thine angels guard the furrows
Where the precious grain is sown,
Till the fields are crowned with glory,
Filled with mellow ripened ears—
Filled with fruit of life eternal
From the seed we sowed in tears.

Check the froward thoughts and passions,
Stay the hasty, heedless hands,
Lest the germs of sin and sorrow
Mar our faith and pleasant lands.
Father, help each weak endeavor,
Make each faithful effort blest,
Till Thy harvest shall be garnered,
And we enter into rest.

Chigson's Plot.

A MYSTERY IN THE FAMILY.

CONCLUDED.

HER warning had come too late. Hartz, catching at the first thing in his way, as some people will when overtaken by sudden confusion, had got possession of the shot-gun used by Edith in foraging for her collection. According to the invariable practice of loaded guns when handled carelessly, this one went off, lodging its contents in his side. Edith sprang towards him with a sharp cry.

"Serves him right," squeaked Mr. Chigson, with evident satisfaction.

"I caught the empty gun, and might have committed an assault and battery upon Mr. Chigson's person, but Edith's hand resting lightly upon my arm, brought me to my senses. She was supporting the wounded man now upon one side, and Isla upon the other; but Edith quickly gave up her place to me. She had by this time perfectly regained her equanimity.

"Mr. Chigson," she said, with calm decision, "You will help Uncle Lemuel carry Mr. Hartz into the buff-chamber. Isla, have the goodness to send Jerry for Dr. Collops; and ask the housekeeper to have a room prepared for Uncle Lemuel. He will stay here at present, to help take care of his friend."

Everything was done just as she directed. Mr. Hartz was removed to the buff-chamber, and given in charge to me. He was pretty badly hurt, and there seemed to be no heart in the man to stimulate his recovery. Deliver me, henceforth and forever, from again standing in a Florence Nightingale capacity to a man who, on his own part, is nursing a disappointed love. Edith placed everything in the house at my disposal for the patient's benefit, but did not herself come near him. Isla, however, sometimes relieved me at my post, and now and then drew me outside for a brief conference on the vexing subject of Mr. Chigson. She had learned at last the true state of affairs, and was in dire rebellion

against her proposed brother-in-law. Warm words had passed between her and Edith, or rather, I believe, the warmth was all on Isla's part, and an estrangement was growing up between the sisters.

"It is only her money that he wants," said Isla, in one of our many conferences. "I would give him all mine willingly, if he'd take it and not trouble us again. Do you suppose he would, if I made him the offer?"

"Probably not. He wants money, no doubt, but he wants Edith too. I don't so much wonder at that, but the Gordian knot with me is that Edith should want him. Do you think she may have committed some grave indiscretion which is known to him, and gives him a hold upon her?"

"I don't believe that Edith ever committed an indiscretion in her life. She has been the wisest mistress to me—sister, friend and counsellor, all in one. It breaks my heart that I must lose her so; but I can't tolerate that anaconda, even for her."

At last my patient began to mend. I thought it the best thing he could do under the circumstances, and told him so, adding a recommendation from Macbeth—that "if 'twere done, why, then, 'twere best it were done quickly."

"By Jove, I believe you are right!" returned Hartz, smiling feebly. "I have been sadly troublesome, I fear, but I mean to give my mind now to getting well."

"I begin to have hope of you. In a week from to-day I shall have you out to ride," I said, encouragingly.

And I did; choosing the hour of noon, when the air is least charged with miasmatic vapors; when, too, Mr. Chigson was less likely to be about the house. Edith came out into the hall when we had got so far, shook hands with Mr. Hartz, and congratulated him in a few quiet words upon his recovery.

"Yes," he said, "I have concluded that life is better than death, even if one only lives to suffer."

Edith sighed faintly, and leaned against the jamb of the door.

"How long will you be gone, Uncle Lemuel?" she inquired.

"About as long as Puck would be in putting a girdle round the earth, according to his own bragging," I returned, giving Hartz my arm to the carriage.

Isla had been hovering somewhere near, but would not come out until Edith had retreated. Their estrangement had now reached such a point that they avoided each other when they could. So at this time the elder sister's return to the parlor was a signal for the other to come flying down to the carriage.

"Don't let Uncle Lemuel land you among the cherubs, Mr. Hartz," she recommended, laughing. Then she came close to me and uttered in a breathless whisper, "The marriage day is appointed. It is to be Saturday of this week. I overheard them talking of it last night; and I shall go away from here to-morrow."

"Do nothing rashly," I advised, feeling equal myself, however, to almost any rash thing—unless it were nettle-rash, from which I should probably have wished to be excused.

"I don't want to; but I can't stay. Do you know, I think Mr. Chigson is hurrying on the marriage, so that it may be while Hartz is in the house. He wants to parade his triumph."

"Insolent!" I muttered, flourishing the whip I held, which was very naturally taken by the horses as a signal for starting though I had not intended it so.

I think Hartz may have guessed the nature of Isla's whispered communication, for he looked extremely miserable when the horses gave me leisure to observe him; and the only social demonstrations I could get from him were a few imperfectly uttered monosyllables. Finding this not very cheerful, and discovering, moreover, that the air outside was less agreeable than in the sheltered grounds of the villa, I cut short the drive, and at the end of twenty-five minutes was back within the precincts so lately left. But now my patient, with the unreasonableness of a child spoiled by sickness, insisted upon being allowed to leave the carriage and walk the rest of the way to the house, after a season of repose in a little grotto of rockwork and trailing vines, near the outside of the grounds. I urged the insalubrious dampness of the ground generally, and rockwork grottos in particular, at this autumnal season, but Hartz meant to have his way, and did have it. I sent on the carriage by a servant who happened to be passing, and retired to the grotto with my willful comrade. The

place was villainously damp, and inhabited by several colonies of spiders and other creeping things. The entrance, however, was on the sunny side, which made things a little more cheerful. A tangle of leafless vines falling over this formed a sort of screen, but did not exclude the sun.

"If we had the vivid imaginations of misses in their teens, I suppose we might imagine that we were enjoying this immensely," I said.

"Yes, I have seen Edith come here often."

"Now look here, young man. If you have got yourself landed here to indulge in sentimental misery, and invite a relapse—"

"A relapse of what?—gunshot wounds? Don't cry out before you are hurt. I want to study the design of this rockwork. I may have occasion to build myself a den sometime. Now, whatever you do don't talk to me."

"I won't I said, shutting my mouth, and presently my eyes, for I had lost a good deal of sleep lately, on account of my patient. I don't think I went fairly off in a doze, but pretty soon I heard Edith and Isla talking outside the grotto, without any knowledge of how they had come there.

"I am going to make you one last appeal, Edith," said the younger sister. "If I have seemed cross lately it was only because I am so wretched, and not because I love you any the less. Dear, dear sister, there are only you and I. If we are to be separated it will be by your own act. Do not place the hideous wall of Libbocus Chigson between us."

"I do not see, Isla dear, why he should be a wall between us. You can surely en-him if—if you choose."

"I believe you were going to say—"if I can—I know it is endurance for you. You do not love him. He must be revolting to your refined tastes and feelings. Edith, Uncle Lem has asked me if it was possible that you could have committed some grave indiscretion known to Mr. Chigson, and had consented to marry him rather than have it revealed. I disdained the thought at first, but I have been able to think of nothing else. Edith, whatever it is, it cannot be so bad as he is. O, do please take me into your confidence? We used to be all in all to each other. I cannot bear to be so thrust into outer darkness."

"This, too!" cried Edith in a tone of anguish. Hartz clutched my arm, and seemed on the point of rushing out, but I held him firmly in his seat. "Isla, you must not think what you have said; Uncle Lemuel must not think so. Do you not know that in marriage opposites almost always unite?"

A groan from Hartz. I wished him and myself back in the buff-chamber. At this rate, a renewal of his illness was certainly inevitable.

"Those opposite in temperament may and should, perhaps," Isla replied; "but women of cultivation and refinement do not mate with bores. Edith, I love Alston Harleigh. I think there are but few men nobler and truer than he. He is coming home in six weeks, and I count the days as they go by. But if he were as repulsive to you as Libbocus Chigson is to me, I would never consent to see him again."

"It is for you as much as myself. O me! I believe I am losing my senses." She was silent for a moment; when she spoke again it was in the quiet tone now habitual to her. "Isla, we are talking to no purpose. You will understand me better sometime. Until then you may think anything but that I do not love you."

"Now that you have got back that tone I know, indeed, that we are talking to no purpose," said Isla, in a sad spiritless way.

She walked off directly, and Edith began to work among the vines, removing some of the most delicate from the rockwork, and potting them for winter protection. Hartz leaned heavily against me.

"It is wearing work," he whispered, "this groping for light against a blank wall, is it not, Pynstall?"

"Don't grope then."

"You might say to one who had a difficulty in breathing, don't breathe," Hartz retorted, dryly.

"I shall have a chance to say it to you, if you stay much longer in this moist picturesque retreat."

"Don't bother I feel no chill, and I am not rusted enough to go yet. There comes another!"

A dark-robed female figure glided by the mouth of our den, as he spoke, seeing Edith, it appeared.

"My child! my own daughter!" she

cried, her voice creaking like an ungreased cart wheel in its effort to be pathetic.

"Mother," said Edith, in quivering tones, "was it well to come here?"

"I don't know. He, my benefactor, said I must not, but I could not stay away. Bad as I am, I have a mother's heart."

"The deuce you have! I wonder where you got it!" I ejaculated, under my breath.

"I did not mean to chide you, mother.—I was coming to see you again soon. I think about you day and night. Are you quite comfortable in your new rooms? Do you have everything you need?"

"Yes, most everything. I was thinking the other day that some lace curtains would set off the parlor nicely, but it's no matter. I don't deserve lace curtains, I am sure."

"You shall have the curtains. You would like to hear about Isla, I suppose? She is very well, and your brother, too, Uncle Lemuel, though he has been ill quite lately. It seems hard that you cannot see them, but you yourself agree that it is best so."

"I don't though!" roared I, suddenly appearing before the pair. "Edith, who does this woman claim to be?"

"Do you not know her?" gasped my niece.

"I certainly have not that pleasure, though you spoke of me as her brother, and have addressed her as your mother. There is deception at work here. Your mother, child, died years ago in the sunny South."

"It was so reported, Uncle Lemuel, but she did not die. She left my father for—another man. You were in Europe at that time, you know. Papa was too proud to have the truth known."

"Edith, my sister Miriam was as good, and true, and pure as the angels. This woman is a lie a cheat. She knows I speak the truth."

"I expected he would disown me," whined the woman. "I told you so."

And now, Hartz, whom I had abandoned summarily, appeared upon the scene.

"If this woman claims to be Mrs. Francis Cathard, Pynstall is right in calling her a lie," he declared. "Your father, Miss Edith, and mine were friends. It was while visiting at our house that Mrs. Cathard took a malignant fever and died. I was only a boy, but I remember her perfectly; a sweet, saintly, and most lovely woman—as unlike this one as possible. You have been imposed upon by a gross deception, and I think I know what villain planned and hoped to reap profit largely from the lie. There he comes—Libbocus Chigson. Have the goodness to remind him, Miss Edith, that in building of falsehoods, as of chaises,

"There is always somewhere a weakest spot," and at that weakest spot his has, unfortunately for him broken down."

Edith was trembling violently, but she held the blanching Libbocus with a firm eye.

"Is it true, Mr. Chigson," she demanded, with scathing emphasis, "that this woman is an impostor?"

Libbocus pawed the ground with one foot, glanced at the woman, and received from her a most crestfallen nod, then turned away and made an inglorious retreat. While I was congratulating Edith, the woman also slunk away. Hartz followed me in congratulations, contriving to mix a little tender by-play therewith, which I do not intend to put upon record. Isla, who had probably seen from the house that something unusual was going on, came down to investigate. I begged to be allowed to console with her for the loss of a brother-in-law. She looked from me to Edith, clasped her hands and burst into tears.

"How did you do it, you darling Uncle Lem?" she asked, smiling, and crying, and fondling Edith and me all at once.

I told her how it was done.

"Dear Edith, how much must have been suffered!" she said, softly kissing her.

"I bore it, dear, for you. Partly, indeed, to save our house from shame, but chiefly for you. I knew the proud blood of the Harleighs would reject an alliance with a tarished name, and your own, as proud, would equally spurn to humiliate them.—At first I did shrink from sacrificing myself, and sent for Uncle Lemuel in the hope that he might discover some other way.—But when the time allowed me by Mr. Chigson for decision had gone by without bringing Uncle Lem, I thought it had become my duty to bear alone the cross and the shame. God be praised that the long torture is over."

"I hope though, Isla, that your objection to a brother-in-law was specific and not

general, as I think you are still liable to have one," I remarked.

"If Mr. Hartz is to be he," laughed Isla, giving him her hand, "I shall advise Edith to clear her house of firearms before the wedding day."

Without doubt this was done, for there has been no accidental shooting at the villa since Edith became Mrs. Hartz.

As for Chigson, the concluding couplet of an epitaph on Tom Paine, which I have read somewhere, will finish him:

"Where he's gone, and how he fares,
Nobody knows and nobody cares."

The Continental Navy.

The war of the Revolution was begun without a single armed vessel. The first in the service were fitted out by Rhode Island, in 1775, which were two schooners in the defence of the coasting trade.

That State was also the first to recommend to Congress the formation of a naval force, and in December, 1775, Congress commissioned thirteen vessels, as a commencement of the navy.

In the spring of 1776, Massachusetts fitted out several armed vessels, the flag of which was white, with the figure of a pine or liberty tree, with the motto, "We appeal to Heaven."

The first naval battle took place about three weeks after the battle of Lexington, a Captain Wheaton being said to have caused the striking of the first British flag on the ocean.

No Congressional laws had been passed for the creation of the navy, and when Washington undertook to get up and send to sea an expedition of six vessels, he was obliged to address them as "part of the army."

The earliest frigate from Philadelphia, the Alfred, Captain Hopkins, of which Paul Jones was the Lieutenant, displayed a flag of thirteen stripes of red and blue, with a rattlesnake in a running attitude, mouth open and sting projected, with the "Don't tread on me." This same flag was borne by the Alliance frigate, under command of Paul Jones, when, she dashed through a British fleet of twenty-one sail of war vessels in the North Sea, receiving their fire and making her escape. A London paper of July, 1776, commends the device of the rattlesnake, and regards it as peculiarly appropriate to our American position and character.

The officers of the first navy were in many respects different from the present. In their dress there was but little show or grandeur. They wore small cocked hats, without lace; hair powdered and curled; coats with ample skirts and four-anchor buttons; small clothes, hose and shoes. Their dignity and staidness, when they aimed at any, was not before their countrymen, but before the enemy. They had not been bred originally for a drawing room and courtly display, but they had no deficiency in polished circles when called to the exercise of their rules and usages.

Work Done by the Lungs.

Three hundred and fifty to four hundred cubic feet of air pass through the lungs of an adult man who takes little or no exercise, in the course of twenty-four hours, and are charged with carbonic acid, and are deprived of oxygen to the extent of nearly five per cent, which amounts to about eighteen cubic feet of the one gas taken in and of the other given out. If a man be shut up in a close room, having the form of a cube seven feet inside, every particle of the air in the room will in twenty-four hours have passed through his lungs, and one fourth of the oxygen it contains will be replaced by carbonic acid. The amount of carbon eliminated in the twenty-four hours is represented by a piece of pure charcoal weighing eight ounces. The quantity of water given off from the lungs in the same time varies very much, but on the average it may be taken as a little more than half a pint, or about nine ounces. It may fall below this, or increase to double or treble the quantity.—*Home and Health.*

Pigs have some excellent traits of character. If one chances to wallow a little deeper in some mire hole than his fellows, and so carries off and comes in possession of more of the earth than his brethren, he never assumes an extra importance on that account; neither are his brethren stupid enough to worship him for it. Their only question seems to be, Is he still a hog? If he is, they treat him as such. "And when a hog has no merits of his own he never puts on aristocratic airs, nor claims any particular respect on account of his family connection."