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### DR. FRANKLIN'S WIFE.

BY JAMES PARTON.

ON a fine Sunday morning in October, 1728, Deborah Read, a beautiful and blooming lass of eighteen, stood at the door of her father's house in Market street, Philadelphía.

The city was forty-three years of age, and it contained a population of seven thousand. Many trees of the original for-est still stool upon its site; the houses were built at some distance apart, with gardens between them, as yet the streets were unpaved. It is a large tranquil Quaker village, surrounded by the primeval wilderness, with groups of Indians frequently to be seen in the streets, and such game as wolves, bears, wild turkey and deer to be shot within four miles of the

As the young lady stood at the door of her home-it was about church time in the morning-she saw in a crowd of churchgoing people a strange figure that both amused and surprised her. It was a stout lad of seventeen, not ill-looking but dressed in the very extreme of shabbiness. He wore the working-clothes of an ordinary apprentice, and these by exposure to the rain and wear and tear of travel, had become dirty. and dilapidated. The pockets of his coat were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and under each arm he had a large roll while eating a third. She gazed at him as long as she could see him, wondering and laughing at his ridiculous appearance. If she had any thoughts upon the subject, she probably set him down as a runaway apprentice, for such indeed he was, one Benjamin Franklin, who had made his way from Boston by sloop, by barge and on foot, to escape the tyranny of his brother, to whom he had been apprenticed.

A few days passed. Miss Read learned from her father that a young man was coming to board with them, a printer, who worked in one of the two printing houses of the town. What was her surprise when the young man arrived, nicely dressed, with clean linen, and very neat in his person, to recognize the forlorn and shabby youth who had caught her eye on that Sunday morning. His chest had arrived by sea, and thus he was able to present himself at his new abode in a becoming costume. The young man proved highly agreeable to the family. He was full of intelligence, amiability and good humorone of those young fellows who make friends wherever they go, because they are themselves obliging and friendly.

A year glided rapidly by, during which the father of the young lady died, and was buried in Christ Church burying ground, Philadelphia, where his grave stone may be still seen and read. His wife, a vigorous and prudent woman, carried on the house as usual, so that it still furnished a home to the young printer. His fortunes had brightened during the year. The Governor of the province, who had accidentally become acquainted with his talents, proposed to set him up in business as a printer, and was going to send him to Lonwhatever is necessary for the business of a printer. With this prespect before him, the young man was emboldened to speak to Mrs. Read on a momentous subject. He had fallen in love with her beautiful daughter. He told her this mighty secret, and of his intended voyage to London, and of the governor's project of establishing him in business. Finally, he asked her daughter's hand in marriage.

Mrs. Read was far from disapproving the match, but, like a prudent mother as he was, she called the young man's attention to the fact that neither he nor her daughter were yet nineteen, and that it would be most unwise for them to marry just as she was going upon a long voyage, and about to engage in a new business which might not prove profitable. How much better to wait until he was safe home again, and the business was well established. There was no denying this, and he was obliged to submit. Having thus arranged the matter with the mother, he spoke to the daughter who confessed with her tongue what her eyes had often avowed, that she loved him; and she promised to marry him on his re-

He set sail and reached London in due time. There he discovered that the governor had deceived and wronged him most cruelly. Instead of letters of credit he had given him mere letters of introduction, which were absolutely worthless. The consequence was that this young printer of nineteen found himself in London with ten pounds in his pocket and not a friend in Europe who could be of the slightest help to him. To complete his misfortunes one of his Philadelphia friends, who had crossed the Atlantic with him, and had come to London expecting to live by literature, could obtain no employment, and had no resource but Franklin's purse. The printer was not long in getting work at his trade; but as there was two to be supported, the ten pounds rapidly melted away, and Franklin saw no prospect even of his being able to get back to Philadelphia at all still less of appearing there as a master printer.

release him from the engagement. Either he had not the courage to do this, or else, absorbed by the wonders and pleasures of the town, he had become indifferent to her. He merely wrote her a short note aunounceing his safe arrival in London, and telling her he was not likely to return soon. This was one of the great errors of his life, which he said, he could wish to correct if he were to live it over again.

Month after month passed, and Deborah Read, anxious and forlorn, heard no more from her faithless lover. A new suitor presented himself, Rogers by name, who carried on the trade of a potter. He was an excellent hand at the business, and for this reason Mrs. Read favored his suit. Other relations urged her to marry him, and at last she gave her consent, and the marriage was celebrated. Soon the dreadful rumor was noised abroad in Philadelphia that Rogers, the potter, had another wife ! Such strong reasons appeared for crediting this report, that Deborah Read, who had lived unhappy with him, returned to her mother and resumed her maiden name, a sorrowful and hopeless woman. Her most sanguine friends could not have forseen for her a happy and honorable future. Soon after, Rogers, who owed money in all directions fled from his creditors to the West Indies, whence came soon after a report of

Franklin remained in London for about two years, at the end of which he returned as a clerk to a Philadelphia merchant, whom he had met by chance in London. Upon his arrival he renewed his intimacy with Mrs. Read and her daughter, and doubtless explained his inconsistency as best he could. He lamented Deborah Read's unhappy condition; and, however he may have excused his behavior, he felt that she owed the rain of her life to his own "giddiness and inconstancy." The mother, however, insisted that it was she who was most in fault, because she had urged on the unhappy marriage, even against ber daughter's inclination. She still consulted Franklin about her affairs, and they were all excellent friends.

And so passed three or four years, during which Franklin, through his own industry and good conduct, became a master printer and proprietor of a newspaper, with the prospect of founding an extensive business. Needing capital, he tried to increase his store by marriage, and when that scheme failed, he turned his thoughts to his first love, poor Deborah Read. Her runaway potter was probably dead, but he might not be; and she seemed forever cut off from marriage by the fact that her second husband would be responsible for the debts of her first. Such was the law of the

Franklin, pitying her forlorn condition, always reproaching himself as the cause of her woe, and not less fond of her than before, at last proposed that they should risk a marriage. Nor was the match so ununequal as it seemed, for, bachelor as be was, he had a son a few months old upon his bands, which was set of against the chances of Rogers reappearing. In 1730, seven years after Miss Read had seen Frankdon to buy types, a printing press, and lin walking up Market street, eating his roll, they were married. Rogers as it turned out, was really dead; nor did any of his creditors apply to Franklin for payment. The child was taken home and reared as though it had been born to them in wedlock. He was well educated and afterwards became governor of New Jersey.

The marriage was eminently successful in every respect. One of Franklin's maxims in Poor Richard's Almanac was this: "A man must ask his wife to thrive," Nothing more true. In vain shall a young man, without much capital, toil and deny himself, if he has a wife who squanders his gains, and takes no interest in his career. Mrs. Franklin was one of the most industrious eareful and friendly of women. Besides attending her husbands little shop, she bought rags, stitched pamphlets, folded newspapers, tenderly nurtured his child, and kept her husband from being extravigant. He was by no means of an economical disposition. He was generous to a fault, and I am sure was much indebted to his wife for the rapidity with which he made his fortune. In the early years of their married life he could sometimes boast-and he did boast of it-that he was clothed from head to foot in garments which his wife had first woven and then made.

It seems, however, that she was not averse to a reasonable degree of comfort and display. Franklin narrates that for a long time after his marriage he had nothing for breakfast but bread and milk, and he used to eat it out of a two penny earthen bowl with a pewter spoon.

"But," he continued, "mark how luxury will enter families, and make a progress in spite of principles. Being called one morning to breakfast, I found it in a china bowl with a spoon of silver. They had been bought for me without my knowledge by my wife, and had cost her the enormous sum of three and twenty shillings; for which she had no other excuse to make but that she thought her husband deserved a silver spoon and a china bowl as well as any of his neighbors."

We have another pleasing glimpse of

the case, and asked her to wait for him, or lished in Franklin's paper, the "Pennsylvania Gazette." Franklin advertised everything and this is one of his attempts in that way:

> "Taken out of a pew in the church, some months since, a common prayer book, bound in red gilt, and letters D. F. (Deborah Franklin) on each cover .- The person who took it is desired to open it and read the Eighth Commandment, and afterwards return it into the same pew again; upon which no further notice will be taken."

> The first great sorrow of her married life was the death of their first child a most beautiful and intelligent boy, four years of age. So engaging was he, and so rooted in the hearts of his parents, that Franklin declared, thirty-six years after, he could never think of him even without a sigh. When the reader visits the grave of Franklin in Christ Church burying ground in Philadelphia he will observe near it a little stone, not two feet high, which Franklin placed over the grave of this boy He added to the usual inscription these words, "The delight of all who knew him." Their only other child, Sarah, grew to womanhood, inheriting and transmitting her mother's beauty.

> During the last fifteen years of their married life, Franklin spent most of his time in England, as agent for the colonies. Such was his wife's dread of the ocean, that she never could be persuaded to accompany him or visit him. During his absence she took care of all his affairs, better in some respects, than he could have done it him-

> By almost every ship she sent him American nuts, apples, and other products, and he sent her in return all sorts of rare and beautiful things in fabric and household furniture, such as sets of china, articles of silver ware, table cloths, tea trays, blankets, silk for dresses, and any curious household implement which he thought might be useful. On one occasion he sent her a large handsome beer jug.

> "I fell in love with it," he told her, "at first sight, for I thought that it looked like a fat jolly dame, clean and tidy, with a neat blue calico gown on, good natured and lovely, and put me in mind of-somebody."

> To make the jug more welcome, he filled it with pretty little coffee cups, packed

During the Stamp Act troubles of 1765, when the false report reached Philadelphia that her husband had favored the odious measure, the mob threatened to sack his

On this occasion she proved herself worthy to be the wife of Pennsylvania's representative. Governor Franklin entreated her to take refuge in his own house at Burlington, and all her friends urged her

For nine days, she says, people kept persuading her to leave her house. At length she let her daughter go to Burlington; but for herself, she would not budge.

"I am sure," said she, "that my husband has done nothing to burt anybody, nor have I given offence to any person at all, nor will I be made uneasy by anybody. I will not stir, nor show the least uneasiness, But if anybody comes to disturb me, I will show a proper resentment."

And, indeed, she armed and fortified her house, stationing her brother and cousin lying on the counter, where they had been below with guns and amunition, and mount- temporarily placed. He gazed intently at defend her abode. The storm blew over, ded that it was just the picture that suited and very soon the truth respecting her hus- him. band's conduct was known

and Deborah Read were united in mar- lady?"

She lived to see her husband the most honored of Americans on both continents, and she lived also to see her daughter suitably married to a merchant of Philadelphia, Richard Bache. Her last years were greatly cheered by her beautiful grand-

She had the happiness of escaping the anxieties and terrors of the Revolutionary War. She died in December 1774, with only one regret, that she could not live to see her husband once again. Indeed, she had been for ten years longing and pining for his return; but the pressing business of the colonies still detained him, and she died at last when he was making his preparations for his homeward voyage. Her body was borne to the grave by some of Franklin's oldest friends, men who had known them when forty-four years before, they had begun housekeeping, and ate their breakfast of bread and milk,

There were scarcely any women at that period who were what we now call educated, and the letters of Mrs. Franklin show that she was not gifted in the use of the

But she was a faithful and affectionate wife, a friend and help-meet to her husband, who was enabled to devote himself to the public service because he had at home a wife competent and willing to take charge of his affairs in his absence.

A captain, who had a sound sleeping mate, caught an Irish boy in the middle of a watch frying some pork and eggs he had stolen from the ship's stores, to whom the captain called out, "You lubber, you, In these circumstances he should have Mrs. Franklin in the early years of her I'll have none of that." "Faith, captain, written to Miss Read a plain statement of married life, in an advertisement pub- I've none for ye," replied the lad.

A Dutch Composition.

DUTCH BOY being required to A write a piece about some animal, thought he would write about a Jackass, and therefore contributed the following :

#### TE CHACK-ASS.

Tis is won uf to bestest kints of peasdts. Tay ish more licke ash a hores than mosdt awl of te utter annymuls. Te Zepray int Tan Ryces manasherry ish of te same preed, pud him ish a forin relayshin toe thad. - Te Chack-Assish more schmall ash to Hores dus. Id gan oud-pull him plindt, uns tay can lif more ash half te feadins! Him ish galled a peasdt of purden. Tay ish ferry payshindt, and he kicgs awfool fens id wandts too. Him is pooty stuppornt, pud it will go alone ride goot ven those dake some nowshins. Him is ferry pardickler apoud for vat it eads, unt tay liges te gleansed kint of vatter, unt gan ead tem stigger thissels virsdt rade. Tese Chack-Ass ish not ferry goot for butcher meet; him ish doo tuff; (to Mules, widtch ish his sun-inter-law, ish moore gooder too endin.) It ish god in a scantlus loudt woyce, unt ven him hollers id ish vad tay gaul prayin -untid ish a newsens. Him ish a scribtewrait annymuls, but ish offen put int te Piple amune te utter baytreyareks unt broffits, unt id ish to ownly peasdt on reccort who ish effer nowin to speagk oud int plane Ingleesh, ash was to gase mit Paylam, ash you gan reat int te Piple, I haf neffer hurd id atwansed pefour acain; pud I peleef, in gonsiderashin for peine alloud to brivyledge of talckin thad time, tay hat effer sense had a shpell pud upon his woyce, so for thad ven he hollers id ish wurse as to grackt vissel uf a sic shteampote. If you dage nodis, to Chack-Ass is a filosofer. Id peas awl to dimes stuttyink unt thinckink, unt tay nod coes sportink round te mettow lieke tis utter caddles. Him lifs dill a crate aitch, unt tose hites ish goot vor ledder.

On agount of tare mudtch stronck, unt tad him ish hardt to kill, tay preeds him mit to Hores, wad mages tem Mulesh, wad ish not so stuppornt toe worck. Id ish youshall wie mankindts toe say for thad wen one feller ish a fool, thad him ish a Chack-Ass; ynd tese Chack-Ass was god more cents den a goot menny smarôt mens, ownly tese fellers tondt noe id ; tad ish awl te tif-

Now I gan ride more apoud tis tincks. pud id ish dun blenty ennuf.

## A Photograph Romance.

THE days of romance are not altogether passed away, says a New York letter to the Boston Times; if a story that I heard yesterday is true. It was a case of love at first sight, or rather of love before the sight. A gentleman, who has an abundance of that agreeable article known as money. which he has no inclination to spend in a wild life, had made up his mind that he wanted to marry. He was acquainted with no lady to whom he wished to propose, and so he waited for the desired creature to come around, as a great many people tell us she is sure to do some day or other.

Happening one afternoon in a photograph gallery, he saw a package of cartes de visite ing guard up stairs herself, prepared to the uppermost picture pacake, and conclu-

"May I ask," he said to the attendant For forty-four years Benjamin Franklin behind the counter, "the name of that

"It would be against our rules to give her name," was the reply. "But, even it was not so, I could tell you nothing more than the name, as I know nothing about her, not even her residence. She came here last week and ordered a dozen photographs which are promised for to-morrow.

The stranger returned thanks for the information and walked out. But he watched the door of that establishment all the afternoon, and every time a lady approached he eyed her to see if she was the original of the picture. He was at his post next day, and the next, and on the third afternoon he was rewarded by seeing her. He followed her as she went away, and, after a wearisome tramp among dry goods stores and millinery establishments, he tracked her

Then he went to work to ascertain who she was, and found that her parents were entirely reputable people, in moderate circumstances, and that the character of the lady herself was above the slightest reproach. Then he sought the the father, stated his object, gave the most undoubted references and did not call again till the old gentleman had examined them. He was introduced, and you can easily guess the rest. No cards.

Two women in Detroit quarreled, and one of them of an original turn of mind, got a parrot and taught Polly to say, "you thief," whenever her enemy passed by. Not to be outdone, the other fair belligerent also got a Polly, whom she taught to scream "you dye your hair," whenever the enemy came in sight. Finally, the judiciary was appealed to, and both the parrot guns were spiked.