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For the Bloomfield Times.

DECEITFUL WOMAN.

My heart is filled with sadness
As I sit by my cottage door,
And think o'er those days of gladness
That are gone to return no more.

Oh time, how swiftly then it flew
A day seemed but an hour,
An hour of joy and pleasure too
Within that little bower.

'Twas on a quiet summer's eve,
The moon had hid her light
But the lovely stars on that happy eve,
Seemed to shine with their brightest
light.

And the western breezes softly stole
To kiss the weeping flowers,
And nature wore her sweetest smile
To bless the twilight hours.

'Twas then we sat mid flowers so gay
This queenly lass and I,
And we were very blithe and gay,
As the moments hastened by.

Oh, ask me not what I would give
To live that evening o'er,
To feel that soft cheek pressed to mine
I ne'er would ask for more.

We sat together side by side
Beneath the sky of blue,
She talked so calm and dignified
I thought that she was true.

But soon alas, my brightest hopes
Were doomed to sad despair,
For she whom I had thought was true
Was false as she was fair.

And when I thought my cup of joy
Was full and running o'er,
She threw her snares another way
And noticed me no more.

And thus you'll find where e'er you go
No matter where it be,
That women does deceitful grow
And so she'll ever be.

DELIA'S GOVERNMENT BOND

"WHY do you go to Cherry wood?"
asked everybody three years
ago.

"Because nobody else goes there," we
truthfully and unashamedly replied, and
we never regretted it.

When the railroad journey was ended
and the twelve mile drive in a two-seated
spring wagon was superadded, it must be
confessed that the sight of Widow Blatch-
ford's, where, in the Yankee parlance of
our driver, we were to "put up," was not
unlively. Externally the house was of
bright red, and for a moment its appear-
ance increased our heat and exhaustion;
but once inside, the coolness and shadow
were inexpressibly soothing. The rooms
were deliciously dim to our weary eyes;
through the window came the tinkling
trickle of water over rocks from a spring
behind the house, and though the wall pa-
per was a pattern of chocolate-colored urns
in painfully precise rows, on a ground of
sombre gray, and two mourning pieces,
framed in black wood, were conspicuous
ornaments, the pure white dimity curtains,
and the jar of pale green and delicately
fragrant wood ferns in the fireplace gave
grace and lightness sufficient to redeem
the depressive effects of the first mentioned
features. The windows looked out upon a
grand mountain panorama, crowned with
changing clouds, and the valley stretching
away below. We exclaimed with delight
as we sank into the straight-backed cush-
ioned rockers, and took in the situation.

"I expect you're dreadful fond of moun-
tains," said the good hostess beamingly.
"But hadn't you better take some supper
now? The hills will keep, but maybe the
victuals won't."

They did not long, for we addressed our-
selves to their disposal with marked suc-
cess. What a supper! Crispy fried brook

trout; smaller and sweeter than any other
fish that swims; powdery potatoes of mar-
velous whiteness, heaped-up doughnuts,
ample slices of brown bread and white dit-
to, "slap-jacks" of size and tenderness, and
the inevitable Yankee "soda biscuits," hot
light, and yellow. How good it tasted
only those can know, who, like ourselves,
have traveled far and long, climbing for
hours straight up hill after hill, to reach at
last table-land, where the air is so pure, so
clear, so bracing, that we rise body and
soul on tiptoe. Then we slept the sleep
of the just and the undyspeptic, on husk
mattresses that were neither thin or knob-
by, lulled by the tinkling spring into pleas-
ant dreams.

Cherrywood life for visitors was exhilarat-
ing with fun, fishing, mountain climbing,
and mountain drives, too, for those who
had the temerity to struggle into the high
wagons fearless of the steep up and down
road, and confident in the strength of the
harness. Gradually we came to know and
like many of the people, being taken in
their homes and interests with a free heart-
edness which we fear will cease if Cherry-
wood ever gets a name as a "nice summer
resort," and learns the give-little-and-take-
much system of most places so yelet.

Our hostess, dear motherly woman, was a
stout walking encyclopedia of information
regarding every neighbor, great and small,
spicing each tale or anecdote with shrewd
comments and keen perception of character
and softening all by honest, unpretending
charity.

"Take notice who's in the store, won't
you? I'm particular to know if Reuben
Gilson has got back."

She called thus after us one pleasant after-
noon, as we were going for the papers
left by the mail stage at the store, which
was also the postoffice for Cherrywood, and
we assented, wondering inwardly if Reuben
Gilson went about labeled, that we were
expected to know him at once. A glance
sufficed to tell us that all the occupants of
the store and porch were known to us, but
as we turned from the building a tall,
blithe figure passed us, with a ringing tread
and a courteous gesture of salute that did
not savor of Cherrywood manners, which,
though kindly, were mostly unpolished.
We had a glimpse of dark, keen eyes, and
plain, sensible features, and presently re-
ported our observation to Widow Blatch-
ford, who came to meet us through the
gloom, greeting us a few yards from the
door.

"Certainly, that was Reuben," was her
interested assent, "I declare, I should like
to see Delia Bligh now."

Bligh? Surely we remembered seeing
her. It was our first Sunday in the white
meeting-house, when, with all the congrega-
tion we faced the choir for the singing of
the last hymn. A sweet, apple blossom
face with its delicate tints and baby blue
eyes, redeemed from mere insipid prettiness
by the decided character of the square
little chin and the firm curve of the lips in
repose.

"A wild rose among mullen stalks,"
the doctor had called her, with a man's
eyes to the cheeks and dimples only, win-
ning by his remark a pleased smile from
our hostess.

But what had pretty Delia Bligh to do
with Reuben Gilson's home-coming? As
all women from fourteen to four score are
alive to any hint of a love story, we pro-
ceeded to importune our hostess for infor-
mation, and she, kind soul, soon gratified
us.

Pretty Delia Bligh and Reuben Gilson
had "kept company" from childhood, and
had been engaged; but after Reuben went
into business at Grafton Mills and Delia
taught school at Cranberry Corners, a cool-
ness arose between them, ending in the
breaking of the engagement.

"Reuben is a favorite with me, and so
is Delia, for that matter," said Mrs. Blatch-
ford. "Girls are high strung; mostly they
have more pride than wisdom when they're
young. Delia's no exception, but she is
good material. I don't want to see her
spoiled."

"What began the coolness?" we queried.

"Reuben lives at Mrs. Frye's when he is
here; she is his aunt. I guess that had as
much to do with it as anything," said our
hostess, with a shrewd laugh. "I don't
speak against her. I know no harm of
her, except being Josephine's stepmother,
and that's more her misfortune, poor
thing."

We knew Mrs. Blatchford's opinion of
the thin lipped "Josephine," having heard
it aforetime when we also heard the story
of Dorena Fletcher's brave struggles
against poverty and public opinion.

"Honey on the surface and gall inside,"
our hostess summed her up; adding apolo-
getically, "to be sure I suppose she is
soured by what she has gone through. It
must be wearing to be disappointed always
in what you set your mind on getting, and
it isn't every one has the gift to drink vin-
egar and keep sweet."

"There is such a thing as making the
vinegar ourselves and imbibing it instead
of something sweeter," we suggested.
"The bitter in every cup may be trans-
muted."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Blatchford.—
"But then some has unfortunate disposi-
tions from the cradle, you know."

"Surely, if Reuben Gilson has lived in
the house with her he must know her too
well to be influenced by her, if he really
loved Delia Bligh," we said.

"Hum!" said our hostess skeptically.
"Do you know blinder bats than men are
in some things? I don't. He sees nothing
artful in the way she picks up Delia's ac-
tions and twists to look queer. He thinks
she is fond of Delia, and tries to make the
best of a light-minded flirting creature for
his sake. Bats! you may say."

"Then he is very weak to be deceived
by that mischievous old maid," scornfully
proclaimed little Mabel.

"Bless your heart, child," said Mrs.
Blatchford with her comfortable laugh,
"nothing is so helpless as a single-mind-
ed man in the hands of a calculating wo-
man—for a time;" with significant empha-
sis on the last clause. "Besides, Jose-
phine Frye's isn't the only tongue in the
world, either. It's my opinion nothing but
talk has parted Reuben and Delia; that and
their foolish young pride. Maybe it'll
come right, maybe it won't. Either way
folks' tongues have enough to answer for."

If the coming right meant the reuniting
of the sundered lovers, it certainly did not
seem probable as the days went on. Pretty
Delia sang in the choir on Sundays, and
Reuben Gilson's eyes rested on the apple
blossom face as if it had never been dear to
him, and the sweet voice floating through
the old meeting house had never touched
his heart. And more than once a broad-
shouldered young farmer drove up from
Cranberry Corners and tarried at the cot-
tage of Calvin Bligh.

We became acquainted with both the
young people, and Delia was speedily a
great favorite with the doctor and the
children, though the feminine spirits of
our party could have little patience at her
exchanging a lover like Reuben Gilson for
the Cranberry Corners rustic. We admired
the sterling sense and keen intelligence of
the young man, but there seemed to rest
on him a grave reserve, almost a gloom
that prevented any approach to familiar-
ity.

Presently a rumor was afloat—how it
originated no one knew. Who ever can
tell how "They say" begins? But gather-
ing additions daily, increasing, spreading
in the mysterious ways that only rumor
grows, a whisper that all was not well with
Reuben Gilson's integrity; that his un-
usually long vacation was enforced, not vol-
untary; that he had left his Grafton em-
ployer with a stain upon his name and honor.
Strange tales were hinted of how his
employer's son had suddenly gone no one
knew whither, and how his flight implicat-
ed Reuben Gilson as a comrade in dishon-
esty; there were not wanting declarations
that even now trial and exposure were
threatening the latter. Did people believe
this? Did they accept without question
this blighting of the good name of one they
had known from boyhood, and whose record
had been, hitherto blameless?

Cherrywood was not a whit behind other
towns in swallowing slander, and whoever
does not know the gourd-like growth of
scandal, has had but a limited sphere of ob-
servation. A few clung to their faith in
Reuben Gilson; our hostess was one, but
she showed the trouble and disquiet she
staunchly denied. Singularly enough no
breath of what was on all lips seemed to
reach the victim himself all this time. He
kept on the grave tenor of his way, ab-
stracted, absorbed; and you may be sure
gossip did not fail to comment on this in-
difference and seeming unconsciousness.

What Delia Bligh thought nobody knew,
until one morning she appeared in Widow
Blatchford's kitchen, on the plausible or-
der of obtaining a recipe for "spice
cakes." Some other thought lurked behind
the troubled blue eyes, and the fact was
speedily patent to the dear old woman
whose spectacles were leveled at her favor-
ite.

"Now tell me the rest," said she, pres-
ently. "Are you going to set up a kitch-
en and oven of your own soon?"

"Oh, Aunt Blatchford!" (our hostess
was "aunt" to half the country round),
"no, of course not!" with a quick, pained
voice. Then more softly, "Do you know
what people are saying?"

"About Reuben? Yes, child; it isn't
true though."

"Folks believe it," said Delia, sadly.
"He looks so sober and gloomy; something
is wrong, somehow, I am sure."

"Hum!" sniffed Mrs. Blatchford.—
"Does Calvin Bligh believe it?"

"Father? Well you know how father
is. He isn't sure of his own mind until he
is opposed. Then it's made up quick.—
And I said I didn't believe it, and mother
too, and now he won't believe anything
else. Deacon Quimby went to see Reuben
and he would not hear a word from him;
said he was busy. And oh! aunt, a man
was up from Grafton yesterday, and the
deacon heard him talk as he went away.
He said, 'Well, Reuben, three hundred
will do it, and you may call yourself lucky
to get off with that; and Reuben answered,
'he would see about raising it, but had a
good mind to take his chance.'"

"Aunt Blatchford, I want to trust you
with something. I want your promise to
keep secret always what I say now,"
pleaded the girl, getting close to her old
friend.

"Well," said Mrs. Blatchford, affirm-
atively.

"Aunt, I want you to give him this,"
said Delia, very low, but earnestly. "It's
my government bond—all mine, you know—
five hundred dollars Uncle Silas gave me
in his will. He must never know where
it came from—never. Maybe Reuben has
gone wrong; it don't seem like him, but
young men have temptations, and if just
this money will set him right and give him
a chance to begin again, I want he should
have it. Reuben was good to me when we
were little—and I used to—like him.—
I don't want him to be disgraced and wick-
ed. Oh, aunt! talk to him—he'll listen to
you, I know; tell him to set himself right
with the money, and then get right with
God. Reuben used to be good. I don't
think he went wrong of himself."

"That money was for your setting out,"
said Mrs. Blatchford, still unbending.—
"What will your father say?"

"I shall not be married," said Delia,
yet more softly. "Father will never know
I've parted with the money. I can teach
and earn more. I'd rather work my fin-
gers off than—than not save Reuben!"

"Delia Bligh, you're a good girl," said
Mrs. Blatchford, suddenly losing her grim-
ness and drawing Delia into her ample em-
brace. "I take back any hard thoughts
I've had, and I'll do your will and keep my
counsel. There—there child—I kind of
mistrusted you liked Reuben still; don't
cry—yes, do, it'll help you bear it."

Then the old lady and young girl kissed
and comforted each other in true womanly
fashion, and Calvin Bligh never guessed
what had deepened the flush on his pretty
daughter's cheeks, as she gave him his tea
that evening.

Mrs. Blatchford's opportunity for keep-
ing her promise came speedily. Opportu-
nities do easily come to people in ear-
nest.

When the young man understood the
meaning of her kindly, simple talk at first
he raged "like a wild tiger," as she after-
wards expressed it, and then he threw
back his fine head and laughed so loud and
long the good woman thought his reason
had departed. Then he explained to her
how his employer had indeed failed, and he
himself was undoubtedly out of a situation
at present. But that he and his em-
ployer's son were connected in some inven-
tion which they were struggling to get
patented; that they were contesting the
point with a wealthier man, and had been
like to fail for want of funds.

"But we shall pull through now, and
our fortune is secured," said the young
man. "As for your offer of aid, Aunt
Blatchford—here, give me the bond. It
shall help me out of perplexity, though it
isn't needed to save me from disgrace, and
you shall have it again with compound in-
terest in six weeks. Only I shall always be
in your debt for so much love and kindness
and Christian charity."

Then he kissed her wrinkled hand with
the grace of a knight of old, and went
away.

But when Widow Blatchford and Delia
Bligh next met, was there not a private jubilee?

Cherrywood eyes began to get open, and
the Cherrywood gourd of scandal to droop
in its highest branches, about that time;
and when Reuben Gilson came back from

a month's sudden absence, there were plenty
to welcome him as a "worthy young
man, very smart, and an inventor of real
genius."

Straight to the Widow Blatchford's went
Reuben, and to her with gratitude and love
he rendered up Deliah's government bond,
with marvelous interest.

"The land of man!" cried the dear old
woman, "but I can't take more than it was
to begin with. She'd never forgive me—
there, what a blundering old creature I
am."

"She?" cries Reuben, his dark eyes
aglow.

It is my belief the widow Blatchford's
blunder was not unconscious, but surely the
error or the purpose were alike forgivable.
With laughter and tears she let him win
from her the name of her whose hand had
been ready to pluck him from shame and
dishonesty, and if he went from her pres-
ence to that of Deliah Bligh, who will wish
to look with curious eyes on the interview
that followed?

"And they're to be married at Christ-
mas," said our good hostess in extreme de-
light, as she told us the news next day.—
"They'll live at Grafton. Reuben says his
wife is too good to stay where folks blacken
a man's name for nothing, and think them-
selves smart for doing it. Deliah was near
not forgiving me for telling of her, but
then, an old woman like me is blundering
sometimes."

"So then it is all right," we said, "and
all the talk accomplished no harm. That's
good."

Then and there our good hostess turned
with impressive uplifted finger, directed at
our careless lips, and uttered this homily:

How! Nor harm, do you say? Don't
you call it something that those children
were parted for most two years, just by
talk? That they suffered and had hard
feelings of each other, and lost out of their
lives two years that they might have been
happy in? That Delia's heart was near
broken by thinking him a thief, and Reu-
ben's name was stained among his own
townsfolks? All over, you say. Well,
but the scars are there. The pain needn't
have been endured? Yes, but it was felt.
Life won't look exactly the same to those
children as if they had never lost faith in
each other, and Reuben'll never have the
clarity that was his before he learned how
ready people are to take away a man's
character wantonly.

"Slander turns out a lie, and folks think
no harm done. Words are cheap and folks
are careless of them. But if they knew
what words are, they'd feel their lips
scorched with hot coals whenever they use
the insinuating speech, or the uncharitable
remark, or meanness of all the nasty little
'they say' that carries a blight with it.
'Tis never meaner than when it has a han-
dle of unexplained truth, and takes up ap-
pearances that ain't understood, and twists
them crooked."

"No, child; spoken words don't die;
you can't call them back as you call the
cows home at night. Hearts ache for 'em
and souls go astray by their means. And
it is my belief no more solemn reckoning
is laid up against mortals than for the mis-
chief of their careless tongues." When
any of our readers feels like telling a story
commencing "they say," we hope they
will remember this.

Familiar Words.

The slang expression for death, "kicking
the bucket," had its origin from one Bol-
saver, who, in England, a great while ago,
committed suicide by standing on a bucket
and kicking the bucket from under him.

The word "bumper," meaning a full
drink when friends are drinking, is a cor-
ruption of the toast offered in French to the
Pope when the Catholic religion was in the
ascendant in England.

To dun, to press for money due, comes
from one Joe Dunn, a famous bailiff of Lin-
coln, in England, during the reign of Hen-
ry VII. He was so commonly successful in
collecting money that when a man refused
to pay the creditor was asked why he didn't
Dunn him.

Humbug is a corruption of the Irish word
"nimbog," pronounced oombog, signifying
soft copper, or brass, or worthless money.
At first applied to worthless coin, the word
became the general title for anything false
or counterfeit.

The sign vis signifying to wit, or namely
is an abbreviation of videlicet; but the third
letter was not originally z; it was the mark
used in medicine for a drachm, in writing
much resembles z, and in vis was simply
used as a mark or sign of abbreviation.

The girl who tears out the button
hole of your coat trying to get you to play
croquet is now in season.