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# AN INDEPENDENT FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

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### THE BACHELOR'S MISTAKE.

THE hero of our sketch we will call Jonas Jenks. A natural feeling of sympathy forbids our using his real name ; and as he is an extremely sensitive old gentleman, he might not care to be made a subject of merriment for our reader.

Jonas Jenks was what all the world would call-a "clever fellow ;" but beyond that, his good qualities were few. He was looked upon with the same feeling that you would regard the stump of an old tree, that neither bore leaves to shade you in the summer, nor fruit to pay for its keeping through the winter. He was styled neither wise, useful, nor agreeable. He was not agreeable, because he did not make himself entertaining to the ladies. He was not useful, for he never looked beyond his immediate personal wants; and he showed great lack of wisdom in living forty years alone, when he might have been blessed with "God's best gift to man-" woman. He did not acquire wealth, because it needed two heads like his to make money and take care of it. He was ever dropping his buttons in the street, and spending money for pins ; he wore his stockings without heels or toes, and ate from his unwashed dishes day by day, all for the want of a little energy to look around for a wife.

Still, Jonas was "a clever fellow ;" and at that age even, his friend Otis Barker thought he would make an excellent husband for his sister, who was yet on the sunny side of thirty, and still looking quite youthful. Calling on the bachelor in his solitary abode, one morning, Otis found him crouching over the stove and looking downcast and sad.

"Jonas," said he, "I think I know what ails you."

"What makes you think anything ails

troduce you to my sister, for one, and she will introduce you to others, and-" "Enough. I will spend the evening with

you this very night." "Thank you. I shall be very glad to see you."

The friends parted, and Jonas's thick head was full of new ideas throughout the day.

At six o'clock he stood before his mirror -a triangular piece of broken lookingglass-adjusting his dress for the anticipated visit. He had already tried ou several dickies, had parted his hair in four different lines, besides having scraped nearly all the enamel from his tobacco-stained teeth, and cutting his nails down to the " quick." The "cut" of his garments was rather old-fashioned, to be sure, but by letting his pants down a little and buttoning his coat in front, to cover the vacancy that was left between them and his very short vest, he fancied himself quite a dandy. By exercising more patience and perseverance than he had ever had occasion for before in his life, he was armed and equipped at half past seven o'clock, and on his way to his friend, Otis Barker.

Fortunately for his diffidence and awkwardness in company, there were none but the members of the family present, and he was introduced to Mrs. and Miss Barker, and enjoyed a very pleasant chat with them during the evening. Every movement of the young lady was watched by the bachelor ; and before the evening was spent, he had made up his mind to seek no farther for a wife, provided the charming Miss B., could by any means be induced to be made the wife of Jonas Jenks.

She was just the model, just the style of beauty that he most admired. She was very pleasing in conversation, free and graceful in her manners, and seemed to be in every way suited to make up for the sad deficiency of those qualifications in himself. That was the woman for him, thought Jonas, as he bade them "good night," at ten, with a hearty promise that he would certainly call again soon.

Had the night not been very dark, it would, no doubt, have been a cause of much querying and wonder to have seen the clumsy old bachelor tripping along upon the toes of his boots, and springing across the gutter with the agility of a "lark ;" but no one saw Jonas return to to his lonesome home. He was blessed with pleasant dreams for the two succeed. ing nights, and on the third evening he again found himself in the society of his admired. At the close of his second visit, he went home even happier than from the

first ; for in addition to his increasing admiration of the lady-Miss Barker-he felt assured by her evident exertions to entertain him pleasantly, that his feelings were reciprocated. Mrs. Barker was no less attentive, and he could not but believe that his motives were anticipated with pleasure to all concerned.

unpleasant, and set his wits at work to frame a proposal to his lady-love. At every previous visit, it had happened that

the family were all present, and no opportunity had presented when he might "free his mind."

This last time, however, he was more fortunate. Mrs. Barker was alone, and informed him that Otis and sister had gone out to make a call, but would soon return. Jonas did not express much sorrow at their absence, but smiled pleasantly as he seated himself very near Mrs. Barker, and remarked that she had no fault to find with his company.

Now was his time, he thought ; but how was it to be done? At first he thought best to open the subject abruptly, and have it over at once; but Mrs. B. kept on talking and chatting, and his embarrassment increased as he momentarialy expected the return of Otis and his sister, which would oblige him to go home again without 'settling the question.

At length he summoned all the courage of an ordinary lover, and commenced with, "My dear madam, forgive me for speaking my mind frankly, when I assure you that the happiest hours of my life have been spent in your society."

"Thank you, sir, for the compliment," said Mrs. B. "It gives me pleasure to see you in society. I am confident that you will enjoy life much better than in the retirement and solitude which you have so long suffered. Otis feels a deep interes in you, and as his friend, I shall try to entertain you to the best of my ability.'

"Ah-hem ! Thank you," blundered out the bachelor. "I am persuaded that a bachelor's life is not the happiest in the world, and if it is not too late, I propose to amend on the system."

"Ah-indeed ! Then you think of taking a wife. I congratulate you on the happiness. May I ask you who is to be the honored lady ?"

"That is more than I now know, my dear madam ; but allow me to say that I have never met with one whose charms inspired me with such esteem, such love, such irresistable fascination as yourself ! All I have, and am, and ever hope to be, I lay at your feet ! May I have the unspeakable felicity of looking upon you as my future wife ?"

"This was Jonas' "maiden speech ;" and he felt relieved of a ponderous load when he "paused for a reply," and wiped the prespiration from his forehead ! Mrs. B. looked confounded for an instant, then springing to her feet she exclaimed :

"Me your wife? Your all at my feet ! Mr. Jenks, explain yourself !" Mr. Barker, who ins inst a

For the Bloomfield Times FLEXIBLE'S SERENADE.

MR. PAUL FLEXIBLE was gentle, generous, amiable, industrious ; possessed, in short, of almost every virtue under heaven, but sadly deficient in energy, self-reliance, and moral courage. He required a strong will to lean upon, a daring spirit to counterbalance the weakness of his own. As in love, so in friendship, men seek their opposites. Likes do not agree together. Brutus and Cassius had a row. You never see two fat men fraternizetheir "monads" are antagonistic. A streak of fat and a streak of lean usually go together. Friendship is like punch-it must contain acid as well as saccharine qualities; all of which goes to account for the fact, that the mild and cautious Mr. Paul Flexible selected for his fidus Achales the headlong and dogmatic Horace Fertile.

They were clerks together in the same store ; they went into business on their own account at the same time, though not in partnership. Horace lent Paul his advice, and Paul endorsed Horace's paper. Flexible prospered in business better than Fertile, for his native caution was a safer guide than the other's rashness.

But Flexible always spoke of Fertile as his "best friend." And it was his "best friend's" advice which led him to marry Miss Melinda Agate, an elderly young lady, with long straw-colored curls, a sharp nose, and an independent property as well as will of her own. Fertile rather regretted his counsel, when the honeymoon being over, Mrs. Paul F. put an end to her husband's smoking, the only "small vice" he had, and interdicted the use of tobacco to all his friends and acquaintances. He attempted dining there once or twice after the "happy event," but cold mutton and colder looks threw him back on his bachelor dinners at Parker's. Still the friendship continued, and in any dilemma Paul always had recourse to his old crony, rather than make a confidant of his wife.

One night, not a great while after the happy event which made Flexible the most miserable dog in existence, he was awakened about twelve o'clock by the crash of military music in the street before<sup>#</sup> his house-nay, under his very windows. "Oft in the stilly night" was played in a very noisy manner by a full band. Then came a song and chorus with many references to "happy pair," "hearts and destinies united," &c.

"They can't mean us !" thought Paul, with a sigh. There was a pause-and then the musicians, taking breath, poured fort another strain. There was no mis-

'you know you serenaded Flexible the other night?'

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No. 44.

"Yes," said the musician, looking very grave.

"And you must have thought it rather queer that he didn't ask you to 'wood up,'&c.?"

"Why," said Mr. Tooter, "I must confess, I thought it rather small of Flexible -and some of our fellows were outrageous about it."

"Certainly, certainly," said Fertile, · quite natural they should be. Now the fact is-step this way-I tell you in confidence-confidence-mind you-that Flexible was drunk that night."

"Mr. Flexible !" exclaimed the leader, 'I never suspected him of----'

"Hush ! O Lord ! yes-so drunk he didn't know himself from a seventeen dollar bill-brought home by the watchman -new-married wife in hysterics-shocking scene-domestic drama-truth stranger than fiction-more things in heaven and earth, Horatio-your philosophy-you understand-keep it to yourself."

Mr. Fertile bowed himself away. The next day, Paul met him.

"Well, Horace, have you seen the leader ?"

"O, yes-I made it all right-I took care of you, my boy-he won't think any the worse of you for what occurred."

"My best friend-a thousand thanks ;" "Nonsense, man-don't be sentimental. Whenever you get into a scrape, call on me, I'll get you out of it. I'm ready to do as much for you any time-"

Mr. Tooter informed the Apollos-in confidence-of the reason why Mr. Flexible didn't ask them in. They told their wives and sweethearts in confidence-and so it soon got to be the town talk. It never reached the ears of Flexible, however; he never knew why Deacon Dickleberry cut him-why Mr. Bluenose, who was president of a temperance society, refused to trade with him any more; and never knew, poor man ! that one of the most benevolent brokers upon State street said of him— "Flexible is a good-natured, well-meaning man—it's a pily he drinks !"

### A Mysterious Crime.

If there is any virtue in circumstantial evidence, the perpetrator of the backwoods murder, in Monroe county, has been found. The finding of the mutilated dead body of the Muffley boy in the cellar of his grandmother's house, in Scott township, of that county, a fortnight since, is still fresh in the public mind. Timothy Heller, a desperate vagabond of that vicinity, was missing after the murder. Officers were at once put upon his track, and he was followed to an isolated spot in Lehigh county, and arrested. He was taken to the scene of the tragedy, and, while denying that he was guilty of the murder, admitted that he was at the house on the day of the murder, and stole the articles that were missing. The clothing, he said, he had hidden in a school house in the woods, and it was found there, besmeared with blood. There was also blood on the prisoner's shirt. He was at once placed in jail at Stroudsburg to await his trial. A mystery which has for a month puzzled the residents of this section of the country has at last been partially cleared up. On the night of the 13th of Sentember Walter Bradley, living on a farm near Dingman's Ferry, left a neighbor's to return home. He was never seen afterward, and, as he was known to be in the habit of carrying large sums of money about him, he was believed to have been murdered. A portion of what was supposed to be human remains being found two weeks subseup, and the keys are where you won't get quently in Dark Swamp, near where he lived, strengthened this belief. One day last week a hunter found Bradley's dead body within a rod of his house, hidden by some bushes. The top of his head was smashed in. All his money, his bank book, and other articles were found in his pockets. A coroner's inquest was held, but nothing elicited to throw any light on the mysterious death.

me ?" gruffly replied the bachelor.

"Because you are not lively and happy, You are lonely, and want society. No one can enjoy life without some friends. In short, you want a wife; and my advice to you is to get married."

"Ab, that is a very good advice, my friend ; but I have got along these forty years without a wife, and I guess I shall have to finish out the rest in the same way."

"Because you have been a fool forty years is no reason why you must be a greater one for the next forty, or as many as you may live, which, I think, is quite as likely to be sixty."

"Hem !-well ; (jesting aside) I do believe if I had taken a wife twenty years ago, I should have been quite as well off for it now; but who would think of marrying an old fashioned man with the wrinkles on his cheeks of forty winters ?"

"O, that is nothing against you. There is many a smart damsel who would jump at the chance to sign herself Mrs. Jenks."

"I don't want an old maid, any how ! If I ever do get a wife, I will go out of the family for her. If I could cage some sprightly lass of eighteen or twenty, I do not know but I might be tempted. But this courting business I know nothing about, you see. I could not think of putting on a dickey every Sunday night and sitting up straight till midnight. No, no. That would be paying too dearly for a thing in advance."

"Well, Jonas, I think on the whole that you are too lazy, to live, if the truth was known," said Otis, as he turned on his heel to go.

"You do, ch? Well, stop a moment. I am up for a bargain. Come, show me one of those nice girls who you seem to think are so plenty."

"Ge and find them for yourself, as other | illiterate, and unskilled in the rules of etmen do. If you are pleased to visit my family, you will have the opportunity of the tongue merely, and considered it unseeing a great many young ladies. We have a great deal of company. I will in- Jonas began to feel that suspense

One unfortunate circumstance, however, -to which all parties were as yet strangers -must be named before going farther with the courtship. Owing partly to Mr. Barker's carelessness in introducing the ladies as his wife and sister, merely; and partly to the bachelor's confusion in confronting two women at a time, he had most unwittingly mistaken one for the other ! As there appeared to be but little difference in their ages, and each seemed alike at home and equally familiar with the husband and brother, it would have been no easy matter for a stranger, at first acquaintance, to distinguish between them. They had the habit, too, of addressing each other by their Christian names, and the titles of Mrs. and Miss were not used for once in his presence.

The truth was, Jonas has been deeply smitten with Mrs. Barker, who was rather the prettiest of the two, and who, not suspecting the bachelor's error, strove with unusual interest to make matters agreeable in behalf of her sister-in-law.

Week after week passed away, during which time Jonas performed penance for his past negligence by "dressing up" overy Sunday night, and endeavoring to make himself agreeable to the ladies ; and when two months had elapsed, he had formed a "never-to-be-got-over" attachment for Mrs. Barker 1

It was a cruel deception, but no one was to blame, for no one knew of it. Mrs. Barker noticed that he often addressed her as Miss B., but knowing him to be rather

iquette, she thought it might be a slip of lady-like to correct him.

door, overheard only the last exclamation of Mrs. B.

"What is the matter ?" said he, rushing into the room, and gazing alternately at his wife (who leaned against the wall, looking like a maniac), and at his friend Jonas, who sat on the edge of his chair, his hands upon his kness, and with his mouth and eyes as wide open as if he had just been shaken out of a visit from a nightmare !

"What does this mean ?" again inquired Mr. Barker, with great earnestness.

"Mean ? Mean, sir ? You know as well as I do," said the astonished bachelor. "Your sister appears to have taken a sudden fright at something-something-I-I don't know what !"

"My sister ? That is my wife !" "That your wife !" screamed Jonas.

Why have you deceived me thus?"

"No one has deceived you. If you have deceived yourself, that is not my fault, surely. That is my wife ! This is my pointing to the lady who had just sister," entered.

"Yes," said Miss B. "You have made a slight mistake, that is all. But no matter now it is explained in season."

Jonas was struck dumb ! He rose, seized his hat, made a low bow, and shortly annihilated the space between the Barkers and his bachelor's hall."

It was not many moments before he set by a blazing fire, built of dickies, scent bags, white gloves, gilt-edged paper, curling tongs, tooth brush, and other superfluous articles for a bachelor's tollet, which lay in his way.

Of what he thought, said, or did, after that time, we can give no account ; for he was the same old bachelor as before-living alone, eating alone, sleeping alone, and keeping all his secrets within his own premises ; but as Mrs. Barker chanced to be his first love, no doubt she was his last !

13 The ordinary cost of procuring a patent in England is about seven hundred dollars.

take about it now-the Apollo band were serenading Mr. and Mrs. Flexible. Flexible was preparing to spring out of bed.

"What are you goin' to do now ?" asked Mrs. Flexible.

"Ask 'em in and give 'em something to eat and drink," replied Flexible.

"Give 'em something to eat and drink !" ejaculated Mrs. F., snappishly. " They'd eat and guzzle you out of the house and home, if you'd let 'em. If you've got any spunk, you'll call the watch and throw a pitcher of water on 'em !"

"Mrs. F.," replied the gentleman, with some faint show of resolution, "I think I know what the rites of hospitality and the usages of society demand. I shall prepare some refreshments for them."

"Go to sleep, and don't make a fool of yourself," retorted his better-half. "Or ask 'em in if you please-they'll get nothing in this house-for everything's locked 'em in a hurry."

With a smothered groan, poor Paul buried his head in the bed-clothes, that he might shut out the dulcet sounds of the wretched musicians. They played and played-louder and louder-till their energies were nearly exhausted, and then the instruments seemed dyingly to supplicate admission and reward. It was all in vain, however-Mrs. F. was inexorable.

The next day Paul narrated the whole occurrence to Fertile, and begged that he would apologize to the leader of the band.

"Don't be afraid, my boy," said Fertile. "I'll get you off-I'll save your reputation -let me alone for taking care of my friends."

"But what can you say to Mr. Tooter P" "That's my lookout. Make yourself perfectly easy. Yours till further notice. By, by, Paul-love to Mrs. F."

In the course of a day or two, Fertile encountered Mr. Tooter, the leader of the Apollos.

"Tooter, my dear friend," said he,

137" A young man named Glassup, living with his parents at Mary Cray, Kent, in England, recently fell into a dry well. He remained there four days, feeding meanwhile on the mice that ran over him as he lay on the damp ground. At the end of the four days a gentleman hunting in the woods was attracted to the well by the shricks of the unfortunate inmate, assistance was obtained, and Glassup was brought to the surface a raving maniac.

IT A Chittenden, Vt., farmer scouts the idea of taking a newspaper at three whole dollars a year, and posts a notice on a school house that 3 hoggs hev strade or bin stoolen from him.