## A Sailor's Wooing.

CAPTAIN SETH TILLER, returning from his weekly fishing voyage in the good bark Tickler, was surprised to find his domicile shut up and apparently neglected.

Still more surprised was he upon being informed by a sympathizing neighbor, who delivered to him the door-key, that his sister Nancy, who had been since his mother's death his sole housekeeper, had formed a sudden attachment for a traveling tinman of a neighboring town, and had on the previous day walked off, or rather ridden off, with the same in his wagon. Nancy had left her love and a good piece of roast beef ready for her brother, together with a message to the effect that she "hoped he would think better of it and come to see her and Joseph, which nothing would please them more."

"Durned if I do," said Captain Seth Tiller, wrathfully. "Let her be satisfied with her Joseph, since she was fool enough to leave a comfortable home for the sake of gettin' married. Jest like women the whole world over. A man's only got to say, "Will yer?" and they jump at it like a dog at a bone that's flung to him. "Well let her go, I don't keer. A woman ain't worth much anyhow, and I guess I can get along without 'er."

And then, to show his independence of women, Captain Seth straightway set about preparing his evening meal, but being more of a sallor than steward, he failed, and then went out and got an expensive, unsatisfactory and badly cooked supper, at the only public house in the little scafaring town wherein he resided. He came home cold and miserable; and unable to find the matches, groped his way to bed in darkness. The morning brought him no comfort. There were things to be "set to rights," "chores" to do, pots and pans to be scoured, his clothes to be mended and washed; and Captain Seth looked around with a sort of despair. For the first time in his life there dawned upon his mind a perception of the usefulness of women.

For a day or two the Captain led this miserable mode of existence, and as the time approached for embarking on his next voyage, he looked upon that and his prospective return with a species of forlorn horror.

Somebody'll break into the house and rob it, thought he, "or the things'll get musty and mouldy with being shut up without any fire; and-look at them dud's 'o mine."

He frowned wrathfully at a heap of sailor's clothes lying in the corner of the room, all of which wanted washing, and some of which stood in great need of repairing; and Nancy had always kept them so neat and whole.

"Look 'ere," said Captain Tiller, rising, and with his back to the stove, his legs astride, and his hands in his pocket, apostrophising the furniture in general .-"Look 'ere, this state o' things won't do no longer; I've had enough of it. A man can't be expected to live a wild Injun. I'll get married."

Captain Tiller was a man of his word, and who having, made up his mind to a thing, was sure to act promptly upon it. He sat down, now, on a three-legged stool before the fire, and leaning his elbows on for prompt action.

"Let's see," said Captain Tiller, thoughtfully ; "It'll be better to take a widder, I guess; widders are more steady than t'others and more used to things, and won't expect any courting, and that sort o' nonsense. Not a young widder though .-They're apt to be flighty."

Then he mused again, and mused within himself that the only one he knew answering to his requisition, was the widow Tyron. Yes: he'd marry the widow Tyron. And, with a slap on the knee, as of one who had arrived at a final and satisfactory conclusion, clapped his sou' wester upon his head, buttoned up his pea jacket and betook himself to the lady's abode.

" Good mornin', widder!" said Captain Seth; as in answer to his knock at the door Mrs. Tyron appeared in a tidy cap and apron and with her bare arms dusted with flour, while an appetizing odor of cookies issued from the comfortable kitchen.

At that smell the visitor's heart enlarged and his nostrils expanded as those of a war-horse who hears from afar the din of the battle.

"Why, lawks a mercy ! is it you, Cap'n Tiller? Hope nothin's happened-leastwise sence Nancy's run away and got married."

"That's jest it, widder," responded the Captain, gloomily shaking his head. Nancy in' but fresh herrin's can squirm and sparkcame to make such a fool of herself, when le!" she'd a good home, and clothes, and viotuals and the whole house to herself when I'm away---"

" Now, that's what I call onreasonable of you, Cap'in Seth," interrupted Mrs. Tyron, seriously taking up the cause of take my herrin's likewise." her sex, as she wiped the flour from her hands, and out of respect to her visitor sat down to her knitting. A woman's a woman, and musn't be expected to deny herself everything for the sake o' clothes and victuals. She must hey somebody to keer for her more than a brother's likely to do.

It's only nature after all. What'd become o' the world if everybody took to leadin' single lives, I'd like to know."

"Well, I guess there's some sense in that, widder," quoth the Captain, scratching his head under his son' westor, " and I'm rather rejiced to hear you express them sentiments, seein' as it'll likely help us to an agreement on a p'int I've come to propose."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Tyron, putting back the border of her cap and pricking up her

"You see," resumed he in a business like manner, "a man can't do to hum without a woman to look around and see arter things. It's their business, you know. We can't go rubbin' and scrubbin' round in the kitchens and bed-rooms Now, I've heerd from Nancy that you're a notable manager and housekeeper."

"Oh, you want me to keep house for you, mebbe."

"About that," replied the Captain star-

ing into the fire. " What celery?"

"Why, I wasn't jest calculatin' upon a salary. I thought we might go into partnership together, if its agreeable. I'm a plain business man, as you know widder; and all I've got to say is, that if you'll be Mrs. Captain Seth Tiller-

"Stay a minute, if you please, Cap'in!" exclaimed the lady, hastily jumping up. "I do believe those cookies is burning !"

He waited patiently while she busied herself about the oven. Then she came back, wiping her heated face on her clean apron, and placidly resumed her seat and

"Well, widder, what about the agreement?" inquired her suitor then.

"Why, you see, Cap'in Tiller," she answered, slowly and thoughtfully, "I've been consider in' of it while tendin' them cookies, and I about made up my mind that I needn't be in a burry to marry again. 'I've had my share of a wife's trouble, and I feel like takin' a little rest to myself now, as I go downward into the valley of the shadder, where we'll all find our ever-lastin'

"I might, perhaps, help you on the way, you know," said the Captain argumenta-

"I'm obliged to you," she responded, with a sigh, "but I'm pretty strong yet, thanks be to goodness! and can get along well enough without help-leastwise, for a

spell longer." "Well," said Captain Tiller, slowly rising, "if that's your resolution, I needn't waste no more o' your or my valuable time about it, I calculate. Good mornin', widder !"

"Stay a minute, Captain! won't you have some cookies and a cup o' tea afore you go ?"

"No, thank you, marm. I'm obleeged

to you the same. Good mornin'." And the Captain walked home, and sat down on the three-legged stool, and gazed into the fire as before.

The result of this wooing had been to him altogether unexpected. Here was a woman who had actually received and rejected a proposal without giving it more than a moment's thought !"

"I guess she's too old and worn out as she says," he cogitated, "and I must look out for a younger widder, who'd likely not be inclined to think so hard of the matter. his knees, meditated. In three days he There's Miss Fuller-she as was Melissy would sail, wherefore there was a necessity Brown, if I remember rightly. She's bout thirty. Rather too young for my ideas; but I s'pose I must put up with it."

No sooner thought of than acted upon. Miss Fuller was in her garden planting hollyhock roots. She wore a floured calico dress, and a girlish, white apron, elaborately ruffled, and looked, as the Captain thought, like a taut-rigged schooner under full sail. For an instant his heart misgave him, though he felt reassured by the gracious smile with which he was received, as the young widow furtively adjusted her front hair beneath her sun-bonnet, and gave the latter itself a coquettish tilt on

"Well, Miss Fuller, you're preparin' for spring betimes, I see. Fancy garden truck -oh 2"

"To be sure, Captain! I like flowers and other pretty things. Don't you?" answered she with a sidelong glance of her black

"Well, I scarcely know," replied the Captain, doubtfully. "To my mind, there's nothin' prettier than-"

"Than what ?" urged Miss Fuller, pre-

tending to look unconscious. "Than a not full o' fine herrin's. You ought to 'a seen my last load, all alive an' kicking, and squirming and sparkling like-The Captain was not remarkable for a lively fancy, so he added, "like noth-

The widow stooped down grubbed at a

marigold root.

"I hate herrings," said she. "Yes? Well, now, that's rather unfortunate. The woman that takes me must

"Who's goin' to take you ?"

" Why, I hope she ain't so very fur off," said the Captain, significantly; leastwise, not outside this 'ere garden."

"You don't mean me?"

"Well, p'raps I do mean you."

of her sun-bonnet and a short laugh. "Well, I must say this is a queer way to come a-courtin' !"

said the suitor, a little crest-"Oh," fallen. "I don't set up to be much in the courtin' line, like the young sparks hereabouts. You and me ain't neither one of us chickens, you knew, Miss Fuller; so we can arrange sensible-like without any nonsense of that kind."

"Arrange what?" inquired the lady, flashing her black eyes rather ominously upon the Captain.

"Why, about our marriage, you know." forth, angrily. "A man that walks in my garden suddenly in his work-day clothes, and without even sittin' down or sayin' a word o' courtin', for decency's sake, tell me I'm no chicken, and asks me downright to arrange for marrying him, jest as he'd ask to buy a green goose or a suckin pig for his Sunday's dinner!"

And without another word the Widow Fuller flounced into the house, while the disappointed suitor walked rather b ankly out at the gate.

"They're a hard set, them widders," he meditated. "I'll give 'em up, I guess, and take a single woman. But I won't hev a young, skittish one, to be rampaging about while I'm out o' the way. There's Miss Charity Hobson. She's a good manager, and I guess she'll do 'bout as well as

He had turned in the direction of Miss Charity's house, when he remembered Mrs. Fuller's hint about his clothes. So he went home, put on a gorgeous flowered vest-kept for State occasions-rubbed a handful of hog's lard into his hair, anointed his boots with the same, and set forth with renewed vigor on his wife-hunting ex-

Miss Charity looked up grimly as he entered her neat kitchen, and placing a chair for him, herself took another at the opposite side of the room.

"You're lookin' uncommon well, Miss Hobson," said the Captain, planting his hands on his knees, and gazing at her with what he meant to be a most amiable smile -mindful, from his late experience, that it be necessary to do a little in the courting line before popping the question.

"I'm pretty well, I thank you," responded the lady dryly.

"And monstrous snug and comfortable lookin'," resumed the suitor glaucing round. "But ain't you a little lonesome at times ?"

"Not I! I've got a dog and two catsthem as you see there; and mean to hev a mockin' bird as soon's Jabez Long can git one for me. So I've got no reason to be lonesome."

"But cats and dogs ain't human critters Miss Hobson," said Captain Tiller insinua-

"I reckon I don't need to be told that Captain. They ain't human creeters, but somethin' better, if anything."

"Not equal to a husband, maybe, Miss Hobson-or baby-"

"A what?" shricked Miss Charity, fiercely, glaring over her spectacles.

"Oh, nothin' particular. Only I'd think it would be a melancholy thing for a woman to be all alone with a lot o' cats and dogs, as she's gettin' on into the downhill o' life and"-he remembered Mrs. Tyron's expression-"and the valley o' the shadder. Cats and dogs can't lick away the wrinkles from her face, nor bring down her gray hairs with-pleasure to the grave."

"Capt'n Tiller," said Miss Hobson, laying down on her lap the stocking she was knitting and looking at him, with a flush on her sallow cheek-"Capt'n Tiller, I'd like to know once for all, what do you mean ?"

He saw at once that she was angry. He didn't know why-but he felt it incumbent on him to soothe and please her. So he drew his chair across the floor, and sat down close beside her.

"Come, how, let's you and me have a friendly understandin' together," said he, looking coaxingly in her face. "I'm sure I've got none but the softest kind o' feelings to'ard you, and I don't see why you shouldn't reciprocate." And, to add point and Miss Hester Bittings were made one. to his words, he put his left arm across the back of her chair, and with his right forefinger touched her delicately and playfully

Miss Charity Hobson bounced from her seat as if a bomb shell had exploded beneath it.

"Git out o' this house," she shricked-"I'll let you know how to come round, sassing a lone woman, and in her own house, too! Here, Blinker! at him! Ketch him !" and with Blinker at his heels, and Miss Hobson following wrathfully in his wake, the innocent minded Captain Tiller note, and betaking himself anew to his made his exit from the house which he had oysters. entered with such amiable intentions.

Very dejectedly he walked home. It wasn't such an easy thing, after all, to get | heralded a harsh voice, which inquired : a wife; and he felt for the present completely discouraged from any further attempt in that line. Moodily he sat down | maiden, promptly. on the bottom of a tub-he rarely took a

"Please, sir, missis have sent you some supper," whined a very small voice behind "Humph!" said the widow with a toss him; and the Captain, turning, he beheld

Miss Hester Bittings' small servant, bearing in her arms a very large tea-tray, laden with good things. There was a pitcher of steaming coffee, a plate of hot, buttered cakes, a nice steak, with onions, and other good things all dore to the point of perfection. Poor Captain Tiller's heart warmed at the sight even in the midst of his astonishment.

"You don't mean to say," he remarked to the very small servant-"you don't mean to say that she-that Miss Hester Bittings sent me these 'ere fixin's ?"

"Yes, sir, she did, sir," responded the "As if I would have you?" she burst diminutive handmaiden, eagerly. "She said she couldn't abide to see even a dog livin' in such a way and eating such victuals."

> The Captain wasn't offended. He felt too much subdued for that now; and, besides, the sight of that supper tray would have overcome any feeling of rising wrath in his bosom. He was even sensible of a glow of gratitude, and, under the influence of this emotion he took down from the mantle-shelf a stuffed green parrot, glued to a sea-shell, and thrust it into the hands of the small maiden.

"There, my little gal," he said, "there's something for your trouble; and say to your misses, 'I'm highly obleeged for her

He emptied the contents of the plates and dishes into crockery of his own, and, without thinking of washing the former, sent them back to their owner, together with the small model of a fishing smack, wrought by himself in his hours of leisure while on shore. Miss Hesterlaughed when she beheld these things.

"Poor man," she said, "he hasn't got a bad heart, after all; and it would be a pity to let him starve."

So next day, she sent him a daintily cook-

"Miss Hester," said Captain Tiller that afternoon, rather shyly addressing her as she sat at her window sewing, "wouldn't you like to hev your fence-palins fixed up a bit? I see they're broken through."

"Why, it would be a convenience to have them palings mended," she admitted. Whereupon Captain Seth went to work, and with hammer and nails, manfully repaired the fence.

"Jest call on me whenever you're in need of sich jobs," he remarked, amiably, when it was completed.

"And I'll do your cooking for you while you're ashore, Captain, responded the gratified Miss Bittings.

A sudden light flashed upon the mind of Captain Seth. Why had he never before thought of this? "Miss Hester," be said, "you don't

mean to say that you'll forgive Pickle for worrying your Pink ?"

"Why, he is a worriting dog," the lady replied, dubiously.

"I'll send him away !" said the Captain, magnanimously. "La! what an idea, Captain! Oh, no!

let the critters alone. I dare say they'll be friends after awhile. It's all our duties to be friendly to one another, you know." "To be sure :" acquiesced the Captain,

heartily. "Wherefore, it follers that you and me ought to be friends, as well as Pickle and Pink." "I'm sure I've no wish to be otherwise

with any budy," said Miss Hester, looking down at her knitting. "Then," said the Captain slowly and

somewhat diffidently, "maybe you would not object to-"

"To what, Captain?"

"To enter into a kinder partnership, you see-you and me together-to be a help to one another ?"

"I'm willin' to do what help I can for you and my other fellow creeters, I hope and believe," responded Miss Bittings, piously. "It's my duty, when I see a forlorn body in need of help, to do what I can to make 'em comfortable."

After this, very few words were necessary; and an hour subsequent, Captain Seth Tiller was seen with a beaming countenance entering the gate of Parson Dempester's yard. And on the following day the twain-that is, Captain Seth Tiller

That evening, as he sat at a luxurious supper with his wife, to the great admiration of the small handmaiden, and the apparent bewilderment of Pickle and Pink, the following note was left for him:

"Captain Tiller, I've been considerin' of what you said, and, as second thoughts wisest, her come to the conclusion that is it will be a comfort to her a hand to help me down into the valley o' the shadder. Yours truly, WIDDER TYRON,"

"Durn the valley o' the shadder?" exclaimed Captain Tiller, throwing aside the

The tempting bivalves were scarcely disposed of, when a hard knock at the door "Capt'n Tiller to hum?"

"Yes'm," responded the small hand-

"Then gave him this," said the hard chair unless compelled-and he mused upon voice; and a bit of paper, folded trianguhis adverse fate. He felt humble and larly, was thrust into the girl's hand, while hasty steps were heard retreating.

"The paper contained these mysterious words, in pencil. "If Captain Tiller he will step round at

Miss C. Hobson's—and hopes he will excuse Blinker, which she knows and believes his intentions was not to be rude to her, and a mistake on C. H.'s part—I will be pleased to see him.

C. H." "Durned if I go," muttered Captain

Tiller, lighting his pipe. "Why, what's it all about ?" inquired his bride glancing somewhat suspiciously

at the two notes. So the Captain told her.

"Humph!" said Mrs. Soth Tiller; and sat thinking, rather moodily.

"You see," suggested her spouse depreciatingly, "I hadn't an idea then that you'd have me." Mrs. Tiller was a sensible woman, and

she accepted the explanation without more

"Please, sir," said the small maid, with very big eyes, here's a boy come and brought another letter."

"Let's see," said Mrs. Seth, exercising

her matrimonial privilege. And she read aloud the following, written on pink-tinted paper, sealed in an embossed envelope : "DEAR CAPTAIN TILLER.—Been expect-

'DEAR CAPTAIN THERE.—Been expecting you round to-day. Hope no offense; as you know when a woman's took by surprise she's obliged to say what she don't always mean. I'm to home this evening from 7 to 10. Truly yours,

"Melissa Fuller." "Well," said the Captain, running his

fingers through his bair, "if this don't beat all ! Rum critters, them women !" "And bold enough, some of 'em," joined in Mrs. Tiller. "To be making propo-

sals to a married man !" "Why, you see, they don't know yet that I am married.'

"Then, best let 'em know it at once. Suppose you accept all their invitations right away, and take me along by way of

explanation, you know." The Captain chuckled with an inward appreciation of his wife's cleverness and wit. He took her advice, and the pair made their round of bridal calls much to their own satisfaction, if not to that of the recipients thereof.

Mrs. Tyron sighed. Widow Fuller laughed-somewhat hysterically, it must be confessed-and Miss Hobson talked of a suit for breach of promise. Not one of the three ever forgave him.

Chartered March 11, 1870.

U. B.

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