The Post.

VOL. 10. MIDDLEBURG SNYDER CO. PA., APRIL 18, 1872. NO. 5

THE POST

Published every Thursday Evening by

JEREMIAH CROUSE, Proprietor.

Terms of Subscription.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM, Payable within six months, or $2.50 if not paid within the year. No paper discontinued until all arrearages are paid unless at the option of the publisher.

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Select Poetry.

SPRING.

Spring is coming, almost here
Driving off the Winter's cold;
Snowdrops everywhere appear
With crocus,' like the purest gold.

See the budding lilac trees!
Soon they'll give an ample share
Of perfume to the balmy breeze
From their tow'ring blossoms fair.

Then the snowball comes to wake
Slumbering thoughts, of bygone cold;
Whitening, with each passing shake,
All the newly upturned mould.

See the grass, in yonder nook,
Where 'tis sheltered from the blast!
'Neath the willows by the brook,
It is almost green at last.

Soon the violets will bloom
Sweetly from the mossy sod;
And the arbute will find room
To dispense its sweets abroad.

Apple trees will soon be white
With their blossoms, spotless, pure,
Emblems of our lives, so bright,
Which so little can endure.

Soon the invalid may dare—
By the Doctor's kind decrees—
Catch a breath of Southern air,
Floating through the rustling trees.

Soon the poor, in cellars low,
Breathing damp and mildew cold,
May allow the breeze to blow
Through the windows crazed and old,

Where through Winter they must stuff
Rags—they hardly well could spare—
Of their clothing torn and rough,
To keep out the chilling air.

Yes, the Spring will soon be here,
Bringing joy to rich and poor;
Brighter days will soon appear;
Brighter days are coming sure.

Then we'll bid good bye to you,
Winter cold and Winter drear.
Ice and snow must melt, 'Tis true—
Spring's sweet flowers will soon be here.

SARAH L. HAMILL.

MORNING.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,
And the thin white moon lay withering there
To tower, and cavern, and rift, and tree,
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.
Day had kindled the dewy woods,
And the rocks above and the streams below,
And the vapors in their multitudes,
And the appenine's shround of summer snow,
And clothed with light of airy gold
The mists in the eastern eaves unroll'd,

Day had awakened all things that be—
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free;
And the milkmaid's song and the mower's scythe,
And the matin bell and the mountain bee.
Fire-flies were quenched on the dewy corn,
Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim;
The beetle forgot to wind his horn:
The crickets were still in the meadow and hill.

The Mysterious Portrait.

BY R. G FRANKS

In a small but handsomely furnished sitting-room in a London hotel, a young lady was sitting, in an easy chair, before a blazing fire, one dreary November afternoon. Her hat and cloak lay upon the table beside her, and from the eager, impatient glances she turned toward the door at every sound of a footstep on the staircase outside, it was evident that she expected a visitor.

At last the door opened, and a tall, aristocratic looking young man entered the room.

"Oh, Harry, what a long time you have been!" she exclaimed, springing up from her seat. "What does your father say about our—our marriage?" hesitating with the shyness of a bride at the last words.

"Read for yourself, Helen," replied her husband, handing her an open letter, and standing opposite her, leaning against the marble mantelpiece, watching intently the expression of her fair young face as she read:

"In marrying as you have done, you have acted in direct deliberate opposition to my wishes. From this day you are no longer my son, and I wish my hands of you forever!"

"Oh, Harry, why did you not tell me of this before?" exclaimed Helen, as she read the hard, cruel words looking up through her tears into her husband's face.

"My darling, what was there to tell? How could I know that my father would act in this hard-hearted manner? I knew that he wished me to marry the daughter of a nobleman living near Marston Hall, and so unite the two estates, but I had no idea that he would cast me off for disobeying his wishes. And even if I had known it," he added fondly clasping his young bride to his heart, and kissing away the tears from her eyes, "I should not have acted differently. My Helen is worth fifty dfty estates, and as long as she loves me, I shall never regret the loss of Marston Hall and its fair acres. But, my love," he continued, more seriously, "there is an end of your promised shopping expedition in Regent Street. You will have to do without diamonds, now that your husband is a penniless outcast, instead of the heir to fifteen thousand a year."

"Hush, Harry! please don't talk like that," she said, hurt at his bitter tone; "you know it was not of the diamonds that I was thinking. But what are you going to do, Harry?" she continued, laying her hand upon his arm, and looking up sadly into his pale set face. "You cannot work for a living."

"And why not work for a living," he exclaimed, in a determined voice, "because I happened to be the son of a nobleman, brought up and educated without any knowledge or ideas of business? But I *will* work for a living, and show my wife that I am not unworthy of the trust and confidence she reposed in me, when she placed this little hand in mine, he added, stooping to kiss the small white hand which rested upon his arm.

It was while pursuing his favorite study of oil painting, among the famous galleries of Rome, that Harry Harston wooed and won Helen Tracy, a governess in an English family residing in Italy, and the orphan daughter of an officer in the English army. Before he had known her a month, Harry, who had been in love—or fancied himself so—with at least half a dozen different young ladies in as many months, felt that he had at last met his fate.

Delighted at the idea of being loved for himself alone, he had not told her of his real position, and it was not till after the marriage ceremony—which took place at the British consulate—was over that Helen discovered she had married the eldest son of a baronet, and the heir to fifteen thousand a year.

It was not without some inward misgivings that Harry wrote to his father, telling him of his marriage, which were more than realized by the result, as we have seen by the letter from Sir Philip Marston, which awaited him at his club on his return to England with his bride.

But, full of confidence in his ability to maintain himself and his young wife by his own exertions, Harry troubled himself very little about his lost inheritance; and though their new home—consisting of three small, poorly-furnished rooms, in a back street—was very different from the grand old mansion to which he had hoped to take his bride, he sat to work cheerfully at his favorite art, and tried hard to earn a living by painting pictures and portraits.

But he soon found that it was not so easy as he thought.

It was all very well when he was heir to Marston Hall, and studied painting merely from love of art, but picture dealers, who, in those days, had been all flattery and obsequiousness toward the young heir, now that he really wanted to sell his pictures and sketches, shook their heads, and politely, but firmly declined to purchase.

At last, one dreary afternoon, when Harry was sitting in the little room he called his studio, trying to devise some new scheme to replenish his slender purse, the servant opened the door and ushered a white-haired old gentleman into the room.

Placing a chair by the fire for his visitor, Harry inquired his business.

"You are a portrait painter, I believe sir?" said the old gentleman, looking at him through his gold spectacles.

"That is my profession, sir," replied Harry, delighted at the thought of having found a commission at last.

"Well, sir, I want you to paint the portrait of my daughter."

"With pleasure, sir," said Harry, eagerly, "When can the lady give me the first sitting?"

"Alas, sir! she is dead—dead to me these twenty years—and I killed her! I broke her heart with my harshness and cruelty!" exclaimed the old man, in an excited voice.

A strange chill came over Harry, as the idea that his mysterious visitor must be an escaped lunatic crossed his mind; but mastering with an effort his emotion, the stranger continued:

"Pardon me, young sir. This is of no interest to you. My daughter is dead, and I want you to paint her portrait from my description, as I remember her twenty years ago."

"I will do my best, sir, but it will be no easy task, and you must be prepared for many disappointments," said Harry, when, having given him a long description of the form and features of his long-lost daughter, the old gentleman rose to depart; and for weeks he worked incessantly upon the mysterious portrait of the dead girl, making sketch after sketch, each of which was rejected by the remorse-stricken father, until the work began to exercise a strange kind of fascination over him, and he painted and sketched face after face, as if under the influence of a spell.

At last, one evening, wearied, with a day of fruitless exertion, he was sitting over the fire, watching his wife, who sat opposite, busy upon some needlework, when an idea suddenly flashed upon him.

"Tall, fair, with golden hair and dark blue eyes! Why, Helen, it is the very picture of yourself!" he exclaimed, starting from his seat, taking his wife's fair face between his two hands, and gazing intently into her eyes.

Without loosing a moment, he sat down and commenced to sketch Helen's face, and when his strange patron called, the next morning, Harry was so busily engaged in putting the finishing touches upon his portrait that he did not hear him enter the room, and worked on for some moments, unconscious of his presence, until, with the cry of "Helen! my daughter!" the old man pushed him aside, and stood entranced before the portrait.

After gazing for some minutes in silence, broken only by his own half-suppressed sobs of remorse, the old man turned slowly around to Harry and asked him, in an eager voice, where he had obtained the original of the picture.

"It is the portrait of my wife," replied he.

"Your wife, sir! Who was she? Where did you marry her?" said the old man, excitedly. "Pardon me for asking these questions," he added, "but I have heard lately that my poor Helen left an orphan daughter and for the last six months I have been vainly trying to find the child of my lost daughter, so that, by kindness and devotion to my grandchild, I might, in a part at least, atone for my harshness toward her mother."

Harry was convincing to tell him the story of his meeting with Helen in Rome, and their subsequent marriage, when the door opened, and his wife entered the room.

Perceiving that her husband was engaged, she was about to retreat, when the old gentleman stopped her, and after looking her full in the face for a few moments, exclaimed:

"Pardon me, madam—can you tell me your mother's maiden name?"

"Helen Treherne," replied Helen, wonderingly.

"I knew it! I knew it!" exclaimed the old man, in an excited voice. "Thank God, I have found at last the child of my poor lost daughter."

In a few words Mr. Treherne explained how he had cast off his only child, on account of her marriage with a poor officer, and refused to open her letters when she wrote, asking for forgiveness.

"But, thank Heaven! said he, when he had finished his sad story, "I can atone in some measure for my harshness toward my Helen by taking her Helen to my heart and making her my daughter."

It is needless to add that, when Sir Philip Marston heard that his son had married the heiress of one of the finest and oldest estates in the country, he at once wrote a letter of reconciliation to Harry, and, after all, Helen eventually became mistress of Marston Hall, in whose grand old picture gallery, full of old masters, no painting is more valued or treasured than "The Mysterious Portrait."

FOLLY'S FLIGHT.

BY CLIO STANLEY.

"Dolly Dolly!
A name for Folly!"

Something like that Mark Bradbury quoted to himself, as he tried to overtake pretty Dolly Fairbanks.

But the walks were icy and treacherous, and Dolly was half a square in advance of him. Such a chase as she led him that wild winter day; up one street and down another until he lost all patience, and relieved himself by the above quotation.

Dolly rather liked the fun of the thing. The unusual excitement had tinged her cheeks with a brilliant red—the color of a carnation rose, and her eyes shone like two stars under triumphal arches of jet, but her fun came to an end suddenly. Her foot slipped on the ice, she lost her balance and would have fallen, if at that moment Ned Ralston had not been passing, and came to the rescue.

And then he offered her his arm of course, and insisted upon seeing her safely home, and Dolly, after one swift, shy glance behind her, that showed Mark turning hastily down another street, took the proffered arm, and walked very carefully homewards.

Ned Ralston had been her devoted lover for more than six months—ready at any moment when she would allow him to lay name and fortune at her feet; but up to this time she had kept him at such a safe distance, that he had been unable to decide whether he had sufficient ground for hope, or whether he must make up his mind to suffer defeat.

For Dolly Fairbanks had a host of admirers, and more than one among them waited only for a word of encouragement to be at her feet also!

If there was one in the train she would be willing to see in that position, she kept it bravely to herself, and went on her way, merry and gay, sweet Dolly Fairbanks still!

Her cousin Dora was at the window when she came home, and watched with inward curiosity the air of devotion with which Ned Ralston bade her good-by.

"Is it all settled, Dolly?" she asked, as Dolly knelt before the fire to warm her fingers.

"Is what settled?" And Dolly turned impatiently round to face her cousin.

"The matter of a lover," said Dora, laughing. "Mrs. Brodie said you would never have Ned, but I have thought, all the time——"

"Do hush, Dora. You will drive me crazy. You know, as well as I do that Ned Ralston can never be my lover."

"It looks like it, at any rate," Dora continued. "And you might at least have the grace to feel sorry for all these poor fellows who want you and can't have you."

Dolly dropped her eyes, and let her blushing face say very plainly, "Can I help it?"

"There comes Mark Bradbury up the street," said Dora, settling herself comfortably before the window, "and he looks as if he had been fed on sour grapes for a fortnight. I wonder what can be the matter with him?"

Dolly didn't wonder at all, but she stole on tip toe up behind her cousin, and looked over her shoulder at the man who loved her better, she believed, than all the lovers she could count on her pretty fingers.

"He is round-shouldered, and he has a dreadfully homely nose," said Dora, solemnly.

Dolly's lips quivered ominously, but she would not say a word.

"Blonde hair and blue eyes," Dora continued saucily. "It's no wonder you can't endure him, Dolly. He has quite a charming mouth, though. What a pity his——"

"Dora Dalton, you haven't a grain of sense!" No eyes in the world are half as beautiful as blue eyes, and as to blonde hair, it is my admiration."

"Oh!" said Dora, comprehensively.

The word was a little one, but the smile that went with it meant volumes.

Mark Bradbury had been walking very fast, but as he came opposite that particular window, he looked up suddenly, and caught sight of Dolly's blushing face.

There was something in her face that made him think he had punished himself unnecessarily that afternoon, and stealing another look at the rosy cheeks and smiling mouth, he ran up the steps and rang the bell.

Dora sprang up, dropping an armful of gay-colored wools over the carpet, and went to the door.

"Is Dolly—Miss Fairbanks in?"

"Mrs. Fairbanks is in the nursery, as Master Bobby has the croup. *Dolly* is in there," she added, nodding her head to the half open door. "Go right in, and I will go and see if Mrs. Fairbanks can come down." And she vanished, laughing, up the stairway.

He opened the door softly, and went in. Dolly was down on the floor gathering up the scattered skeins of wool.

"Can I help you, Dolly?" he asked kneeling down beside her.

"No, indeed," she said, quickly "It is Dora's work, and she dropped it when she ran to the door."

"You make a beautiful picture, Dolly, with those soft, bright things clinging to your gray dress. I wish I could paint you, and keep you always as you look now."

"Don't flatter me," she said, carelessly; but there was a bright sparkle in her eyes.

He was silent a moment, and she looked up suddenly. What did he read in her eyes?

"I don't think I should care for the picture, after all, Dolly, he said soberly." "Give me *yourself*, instead, darling!"

"But I am only a silly girl, Mark, and I ran away from you this afternoon."

"Let us call that "Folly's Flight," darling, and promise you will never do it again."

I don't know what she said, for her head was on his shoulder, and her lips against his cheek; but Dora says, dolefully:

"Ah! but my tangled wools could tell a story!"—*Saturday Evening Post.*

An Heroic Act.

The Pennsylvania Railroad near Huston's station, was the scene of an accident of a rather peculiar nature on last Friday. What in railroad parlance is termed "an oil wreck," occurred near the point named by which an entire oil train was more or less damaged. Mr. Robert Liggett, the conductor of the train, fearing that the oil which was leaking upon the track might be set on fire by some passing train, wrighted nine cars on the rails and proceeded with them in the direction of Ice Mountain siding. He had gone but a short distance when he discovered that the third car from the engine was on fire. At great personal risk Mr. Liggett, made his way almost through the burning oil to the coupling and there took out the pin and leaving the other seven cars on the track, made quick time with the burning cars as far as the siding, three miles distant, where he left them, thus saving the main track from catching fire. The run to this point is spoken of by railroad men as something in the heroic line not often attempted. The flames from the burning car, we are informed, rolled up far above the tree-tops, and when an oil barrel would explode, the burning contents shot in all directions, the cab of the engine not being allowed to escape the dangerous element. When the siding was reached and an attempt was made to back the cars upon it, the engine had to be run over the burning oil which was on the track. The siding was down a steep grade, in the direction of the large lumber manufactory of Mr. R H. Brown. Mr. Leggett knowing what a terrible loss would ensue was the burning car allowed to descend the grade with the brakes off, bravely determined to board the burning car and use his best endeavors to check it. This he did, and amid the smoke and flame he stood at the brake, until the great heat caused the brake rod to snap asunder. Fortunately, Mr Liggett, anticipated such an event, had dispatched one of the train men a few yards ahead of the burning car, with instructions to place a heavy log upon the track. This was accomplished just in time to save a great loss of property. Mr. Liggett is deserving of all credit for his heroism on the occasion, which certainly was of an unusual order of merit.—*Pittsburg Commercial 8th inst.*

From Father to Son.

One day a young man entered a merchant's office in Boston, and with a pale and careworn face, said:

"Sir, I am in need of help. I have been unable to meet certain payments, because certain parties have not done as they agreed by me, and would like to have $10,000. I came to you because you were a friend to my father, and might be a friend to me."

"Come in," said the old merchant, "come in and have a glass of wine."

"No," said the young man, "I don't drink."

"Have a cigar, then?"

"No, I never smoke."

"Well," said the old gentleman, "I would like to accommodate you, but I don't think I can."

"Very well," said the young man, as he was about to leave the room. "I thought perhaps you might. Good day, sir."

"Hold on," said the merchant, "you don't drink?"

"No."

"Nor smoke?"

"No."

"Nor gamble, nor anything of that kind."

"No, sir, I am superintendent of the—— Sunday School."

"Well," said the merchant, "you shall have it, and three times the same if you wish. Your father let me have $5,000 once, and asked me the same questions. He trusted me, and I will trust you. No thanks—I owe it to you for your father's trust."