

# The Montrose Democrat.

Devoted to Politics, News, Literature, Agriculture, Science, and Morality.

S. B. & E. B. CHASE, PROPRIETORS

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## Port's Corner. Musings and Memories.

BY MRS. FRANCIS D. CHASE.

I am lonely, I am weary,  
Would you know the reason why?  
'Tis not that the day is dreary,  
Not that clouds o'erhang the sky.  
The April sun is beaming  
Warm and genial as 'twere May,  
Earth and air in beauty teeming  
Woo my spirit to the gay.  
This new home is very cheerful,  
Husband, children—all are here;  
Yet my eyes are sometimes tearful,  
Tearful for old memories dear;  
By my window I am sitting,  
Gazing out upon the street;  
Thousands to and fro are fitting,  
No familiar glance I meet.  
Ah! I miss the birds and flowers  
Of the home I've left behind—  
Miss the hill-tops and the bowers,  
Miss the odor-wafting wind.  
This is not the same old carpet  
Upon which we danced at night,  
These are not the time-worn curtains  
Which shut out the summer light.

All is changed, e'en to the table  
Where I scribbled rhymes of old,  
That was cherry, this is marble—  
Ah! 'tis marble, hard and cold.  
This soft seat of yielding cushion,  
This is not my worn old chair  
Where I rocked my babes to slumber.  
With a mother's patient care.  
But I will not sigh in sadness,  
Will not let my heart grow cold,  
Soon 'twill throb again with gladness,  
Soon these new things will be old.  
Kind and genial hearts are hovering  
O'er life's pathway everywhere;  
They will come and render sacred  
Carpet, curtain, table, chair.

Flowers of love will spring in beauty  
To my fancy on the street,  
If the dusty paths are trodden  
Daily by familiar feet.  
If I scatter seeds of kindness,  
Here and there, as best I may,  
Roses, fragrant as the old ones,  
Soon will cheer the lonely way.

Home so loved—old friends so treasured—  
Half my heart I'll give to you;  
Half, I'll keep in good condition,  
Warm and lighted for the new.  
I may drop a tear of sorrow  
For the past—the far away,  
While I'm pining from to-morrow,  
Smiles and sunshines for to-day.

Ohio Cultivator.

I heard an incident connected with the history of the North Church; in your city, the facts of which are not, I think, generally known, and it may prove interesting to your readers. It appears that towards the close of the revolution, the good people of the North Church found it necessary to make some repairs. They sent on to Boston, and purchased some nails, which in due course of time arrived, and upon opening the kegs, lo and behold, one of them was found to contain Spanish dollars. "This was a go!" The Deacons assembled—held a consultation—and the result was, they wrote on to Boston and informed the merchant, who made the sale that there was an error in shipping the goods. "The merchant acting upon the principle of our banks of the present day," wrote back that he could rectify no mistakes—that the nails were bought and sold as they were. He bought them of a privateer, and must let it stand as it was. "The silver was melted up and made into a service of plate for the church and it is in existence and use at the present day. The above was related to me by a gentleman, in whose family is a large goblet, made from the same silver, and you may rest assured that what I have stated is a fact."—*New Haven Register.*

THE INGENUITY OF TRADE.—The Boston Herald gives the confession of a dealer in the "ardent" of that city, who has been sending off varieties of wine east since the Maine law passed. He says he has packed kegs of liquor in molasses casks, headed them in and filled up with molasses; he has packed them in oil casks filled around with water, placing a sponge saturated with oil over the bung and covered with a piece of tin, so that when the cask is rolled over, a little is squeezed out, thus deceiving the most knowing; he has packed them in cheese casks, leaving a hole in the head through which a cheese—white oak—was visible.

I. H. S.—These letters are seen in the Catholic and Episcopal churches, and in the prayer-books of these sects. They are abbreviations of the Latin phrase *Jesus Hominum Salvator*, which signifies, Jesus the Saviour of Men. Some may ask why the letter I is used instead of J? Because formerly there was no letter J in the Roman Alphabet; then "I" was used where J now is. Many of our readers can probably remember having seen the name John, spelled Iohn.

Truth is a rock of strength sufficient to bear the universe; error, a mere bubble, which sinks in proportion to its gravity.

We lack a line here.

## Original Story. The Coward's Corner.

Written for the Montrose Democrat.

BY MRS. M. A. DIXON.

"Welcome to your gory bed,  
Or to victory."

In an old German town there may be seen one of the most ancient and neglected of burial places. Hills covered with the richest verdure, slope towards it from nearly every side—and old trees are thickly matted with wild dark vines that drop their wealth of sombre-nupon here and there a fine antique monument, or a lonely grey slab.

A semi-circle, made by a few, irregularly heaped mounds, and in the farthest corner of this venerable spot, invariably attracts the stranger's attention. There the wall is built of broken stone, now yellow with rust; and made almost illegible by the crumbling moss, one may read this inscription,

"TAX COWARD'S CORNER."

Not many, apparently, have here laid their miserable bones to moulder with unobscured earth; but should one chance to read on a sombre evening the little old sexton, who in his quaint red coat sits sometimes among the tombstones as though he would barter with death for custom (but few are buried in that grave-yard now)—should you win his confidence, by praising his hale and hearty age, he will tell you with a rough but kindly-mannered familiarity, a strange story about the corner—corner—and in this wise will I relate it now.

Madam Wolfsten was a soldier's widow. She was both stately and beautiful, and possessed of ample means. Her pride was unimpaired; her attachment so tender that though young and lovely at the period of her bereavement—never would she listen to wooer again. She was most remarkable for lofty patriotic principle; to her, her country was the best, the noblest in the world. She loved its castles, its rivers, its hoary steeples, its very name was a guarantee of every thing good, great and imperishable.

Her husband had been a brave and honorable man. So much was he admired by his government that on his death a pension was awarded his beautiful consort, in consideration of his exalted position and eminent services.

Madam Wolfsten had been the mother of two noble boys, one of whom it was rumored was never mentioned in the widow's household. The younger, a slight, beautiful child, was called Elstano. "He had dark locks and eyes, like his mother—but not, her calm, equitable temper. He was impulsive as the mountain breeze that 'goeth where it listeth' and the neighbors said that when years came they would bring great honors, or great misfortunes for this thoughtless but high-minded boy.

At the period of which I write, Elstano was the pride and admiration of the community, and the sole earthly solace—nay, the very earthly idol of his mother's heart.

Elstano was but eighteen when a serious battle was in contemplation between Germany and her Austrian foe.

Ardent and eager for glory the young man wanted to fight the enemies of his country; and his brave mother gave her consent with that calmness which makes a mother's sacrifice heroic.

Softly the spath widd lifted the curtains of goosamer in the widow's little parlor. The morning was one of unusual beauty. From every tree-top the birds piped a merry welcome to the sun that tinged the mountains with crimson glory, and left the rivers gleaming in gold; as he shot his beams into their blue depths and drew them forth to lie along the fresh meadows after their daily baptism. The flowers and the birds, the clear heavens and the peaceful hills, they spoke not of war and bloodshed. In the great heart of nature not a pulse beat, the anthem of joy and thanksgiving; and on her altar, slept the lamb and the dove together.

Madam Wolfsten was to bear a great trial that day. Elstano had gone early from home—there was no one to share the yet untasted breakfast—she could not eat. Restless she moved from the little bright kitchen to the adjoining parlor, and from thence to the bedroom beyond. There she threw down the blue curtains to soften the glare of the full day, and standing in the centre, looked at each object long and fondly. It was Elstano's room. His bed so softly shrouded in white muslin—would his dear form press it, perhaps never again? The term is not too strong, for her heart had been rilled of every blossom save that one—and it bowed in adoration, not to its true source of happiness, the great Father—but to her own frail, mortal child.

A picture of her husband charging in battle, hung between the windows, the sight of which nerved her heart to the trial that love might not even avert. His ride with its accoutrements laid out on the table; a half-mothered son burst from her bosom as she surveyed its murderous length.

Before she had time to give way to weakness, the boy stood before her—courage in his dark eyes and a flash upon his handsome cheek.

"Now mother," he said rapidly—"it is nearly time for the signal. Come—your own white hands shall array me as they did my father. Adorable! not a nerve is unsteady my glorious, brave mother! I declare you put me to shame, for this morning I was so unmanly, so to dread this leave-taking."

So! all is ready—now dear mother your blessing; and he dropped on his knees before her—while silently she invoked God's mercy and sustaining strength.

"Now I go mother—give me a word to carry with me—for before the night's sinking sun I shall be fighting for your liberty—and I will bear myself as if my father's eye was upon me—as who knows but it may be?" and he looked reverently upward.

"God be with you Elstano, my boy, my only one," exclaimed the beautiful mother, as her proud glance rested on her son. "Go like your father to the field of battle—like him die bravely, if your country calls for the sacrifice. Surely, freedom is better than many sons, eyes! than life itself without liberty."

"Your mother blesses you, your father's spirit prompts you—quick! one kiss—God be with you—farewell."

Pressing his lips firmly together, that they might not even tremble with the sorrow of parting—the boy strode quickly from the room—out of the house—and hurried down the narrow street.

### CHAPTER II.

"Back wondering calmly  
The shiver virtue strikes."

"What ails the girl?" cried the sour dame, lowering her features with a scowl, almost of deformity.

"Is his lover going to the wars? and will it be married by and by to a great captain, with shiny epaulettes? And won't it earn its salt because its going to be a lady?"

The interrogators were too stout, coarse-faced women, one of whom rested her great red arm on a huge dial of sunds, the other was busily employed shelling beans.

A slight and extremely pretty girl, the object of their satire and malice sat near the leaf shaded window, apparently stitching on something very fine and delicate. But every moment tears chased down her cheeks, and her lips quivered violently.

"I'll have this no longer miss," exclaimed the oldest village, springing up from her work. "Just look at this line—Nancy—just see how the hussy has spilt it! Did you wash your fingers, jada? or are your tears dirty. By my truth! I have a mind to box your ears. Oh! whining! Crying for the widow's boy. Child! go there and learn to boil potatoes. He'll not have you. Wait till you're as old as I am—love at her age is a waste of time."

"God bless you! you have made my heart as cold as iron. Let me go to dressing after husband. Nance! what shall she do? set her to the dishes?"

"No, no; think you I'll put up with her splashing?" shouted the other. "A likely thing to set her washing dishes—or sweeping the house—or getting dinner. She ain't worth her salt—indeed—not she. To be having a lover that's going to the wars, after this fashion! Mercy! when I was young—that is, when I was a child—though never a doll like she—I was housekeeper to my god-uncle (a nice old man too) and kept three servants in order. And as to a lover! I thought more of a loaf of bread. But her! just watch her—last night, this morning it were, how she mixed the saleratus in vinegar! Yes, as I'm standing here—and salted her flour with sugar—and there's the lump of stuff that nobody can eat. I wouldn't give it to my pig—no! as I stand here—I tell the truth. A lazy hussy. Let her go spin; if all she can do. My mind for it, she'll not pay for the trouble of raising."

The young girl sat mute, looking at both through her tear-filled eyes, as hopelessly as though she really believed what they said, and was about to give herself up as a good-for-nothing. She had got heart-sick at their harshness, tired of their reproaches.

Never call a cur "good dog," and you will never get good service. Lena had worn a string of reproaches as long as her life; and though she passed them off as a devout catholic she would his beads, yet they had a daily influence that with her lonely life she could not counteract. She longed to live wholly in the atmosphere of love—since she had left some gentle breezes playing about her desolate heart.

In the affection of the widow Wolfsten's son. "Go to the wheel," exclaimed her angry aunt, bustling out like a shock of thunder from a grey sky—"go to the wheel and there sit till I call you. Pity I had not a servant to wait upon you there."

The girl walked melancholy out into a large well furnished room—for her aunts were wealthy as well as vulgar—and sat listlessly down to her task. Still tears kept crowding to her lashes, and standing in great drops on her cheek. She did not wipe them away, but only shook her head, when they fell glittering upon her hands, or stood like pearls on the dark polished wood of the spinning wheel.

Suddenly a coming step brushed her cheek and fired her eye. The wailing leaves growing thickly over the low door-way were crowded aside, and in bounded lightly through the aperture, the widow's brave soldier boy, Elstano—his lythe figure marvellously set off by the bright colors of his regiment.

"Sorrowful and in tears," he exclaimed, as the timid girl half rose from her employment—"this is a soldier's betrothed! Elstano!" he wound his arm lovingly about her graceful form, and yielding to the impulse, she laid her hand upon his shoulder, to hide her sorrow.

For a moment he was silent—then, said softly—"my mother smiled when we parted—and I am all the child she has left."

"Don't tell any one, Elstano, say nothing to any of the maidens that I wept when you left me. Indeed I have tried, till I thought my heart would burst, to be brave—but—but you are my only friend—the only one who loves me—oh! if you fall—oh! it must not be," she exclaimed almost passionately, with a look of inexorable anguish.

"Let me finish the sentence my dear one," he said, with a tone and manner beautifully tender—"if I fall—and perhaps I shall;—he added, low and solemnly—"you must leave these unkind relatives, you must go, and be the child of my mother; live with heralway, and perform the sweet offices of a daughter; she will ask no other. Do you know she fondly fancies we are alike? And so we are," he added, turning with her to a small mirror that reflected back two pair of brown eyes, two fair heads, covered with clustering curls, two forms of perfect grace and symmetry, only Elstano's was more robust than her pliant, lily-like figure.

"Come Lena, promise me, sacredly as you promised to be my wife, that you will leave this odious home, and bless my mother's heart."

"But you must not die," she said clasping her hands with a desperate, despairing movement—"oh! this war, what a cruel, cruel thing it is! I have thought of it often as a great monster, with red eyes, pouring blood over the fair earth, and turning its smiling beauty to bleak desolation," and a convulsive shudder thrilled her frame.

The face of the young soldier lost its radiant hopefulness. "Then you would have me stay by your side,"—he said softly, watching her white fingers as they spun; telling her romantic stories; whispering love-words to you; jesting till you laugh and weep in the very wantonness of mirth, while my brave companions bleed and die at the call of my country; Lena?"

"No—no Elstano; not for worlds on worlds," she exclaimed, hurriedly. "You would be a coward then—better death than that—oh! how much better," and a smile hung on her lips.

"Noble spoken—keep that smile. Lena—it will be sweet to part in its sunshine. But I have already lingered beyond the time—the promise! Lena; will you give it? Will you fulfill it?"

"Her home shall be mine; if she will take it, my poor love shall be to her as that of a child," she replied in a broken voice.

"God bless you! you have made my heart as cold as iron. Let me go to dressing after husband. Nance! what shall she do? set her to the dishes?"

Lena stood at the low door, gazing vacantly into the bright distance, where field and hills and sky abode, had no charm for her. Suddenly a rough hand grasped her shoulder, and an indignant voice cried out—"dreaming again girl! In to your work and earn your salt."

And so through that whole day the poor creature's heart alternately hoped and sickened, as the dull boom of far-off cannon amoted the air, like the echo of death bells.

### CHAPTER III.

"If my heart held one drop of coward blood  
I'd spill the whole, and so would out the stain."

Before noon the next day the banner of victory hung at the entrance of our little German town. A few soldiers, dusty and haggard, lagged along the highway—the few returned from the gates of death to tell the dark tale of the many, where buoyant hearts no longer beat high at the sound of "father-land."

"Have you seen my son? is he living?" How did he fight? as his father fought?" asked a low soft-toned voice of a soldier, all grimed with powder, who was hurrying past her dwelling.

"Ah! madam Wolfsten!"—said the man, saluting the widow with hat raised from his brow;—"yes—I have seen him," he repeated slowly, and with hesitancy.

The widow's cheek blanched to a fearful pallor. With all her firmness she could not control her strength, but leaned heavily against the door. Her piercing eyes still sought the soldier's blackened face, and at last she slowly repeated—"dead—must I realize this? I did not hear you say that he was dead"—she uttered rapidly and with such yearning hope that the soldier turned away to conceal his emotion.

The widow said not another word—but entered the cottage, and tottered to her couch. There she sat long, silent hours—struggling with her grief, battling for pride—but only through her pale lips issued in harrowing tones, and at short gasping intervals, the one word—"children!" Into that was crowded all the misery that she had ever fancied would make life joyless and a desert.

Suddenly the door burst open, and with an apology for her intrusion, Lena sprang to the widow's feet, shrieking, "have you heard—oh! have you heard terrible news?"

"Yes," said the widow with forced calmness, "Elstano is—dead."

"Not that! not that only," groaned the stricken one, with a fearful shudder—"oh! that there should be hearts so base! so cruel! Oh! that they should say that of Elstano, my brave lover."

"And what do they say my girl?—what could give my bleeding heart a stronger anguish? What is this terrible thing? speak!"

"That Elstano,"—she prevented her speech—"Say on Lena"—and the widow bent forward.

"Was a coward," almost shrieked the girl as she clung quivering to the widow's dress. Not quicker does the lightning leap from its red lair, than the childless mother sprang from the grasp of those trembling hands. Her eyes before moistened with tears, shot living fire

from their depths. Her queenly form to wroth—she stamped the floor fiercely; and with a look that nearly annihilated poor Lena, she exclaimed, hoarsely,

"How dare you couple that base word with the name of my son? Wicked girl!—would you drive me mad? What means your truly coherent speech? Elstano! a braver soul never entered eternity than his! He was the son of a patriot girl! The son of one who fell pierced by a hundred swords. He never spoke the word coward. I taught him to abhor it when he laid in my arms; he drank the hate of it with his milk. A coward! Elstano Wolfsten, a coward—strange news to bring a mother, or girl," she added, almost softening at the woe-begone expression of the wretched Lena.

"Indeed! they do say so," she exclaimed, bursting away into fresh and more violent grief.

"Who say so?"

"Amelia taunted me with it; she told me her brother saw him when he turned to fly the field; and that he lies dead, with a gun-shot wound in his back, between his shoulders."

The widow sank down again frightfully pale. "No, no," she gasped, pressing her hands forth as if she would bludge some fearful presence. The fire faded from her eye; her towering form drooped—and for the first time her lips trembled, and thick coming tears crowded from her burdened heart.

"Turned to fly—the field?"—she murmured in broken sentences, and then she moaned and wrung her hands, never once glancing at Lena, who, mute, terrified into silence, by the anguish of the mother had forgotten to weep. At last she hid her face, no longer able to bear the sight. There was a stately proud defiance even in her woe that she, with her simple unaffected heart-grief, could not comprehend.

"Lena is there a moon to-night?" Looking up hastily, for the girl was startled at her husky tone, when lo! a transformation. The dark eyes blazed again—the form, rigid as marble, sat upright—the lips had lost their parted outline, and seemed chiselled upon stone—never to be opened.

Again that voice out of which misery had pressed all sweetness, came as a living tone from a sepulchre—

"Lena! there is a moon to-night!"

"That is well," said the widow, with a slight tremor in her voice. "Leave me now—I must be alone—but stop, come here, poor child," she added mournfully, holding forth her arms, as Lena fell upon her neck and sobbed away.

"I am selfish—forgive me (Lena—you are young, my poor Lily, and this great agony crushes you down, down to the earth. I have had trials, but God knows, none so bitter, so all bitterness, as this. Still, my heart has had its love crushed out many, many times; its strings are used to the damp and the rust, and the rude touch that snaps them in under—Your heart is bleeding at the threshold of its first great grief. Poor girl, hush! be comforted—there, my darling! You shall not go back to that rude home—stay with me; it was my wish, and much as I despise the coward, I yearn over the memory of my son."

Go in the next room—go and pray. I too need to pray. Leave me alone now. At nine we will seek together that terrible field—I must have proof; these eyes must see it, or I cannot, cannot believe it."

"Must we go alone," asked Lena timidly. "Yes, alone. What need we fear if God protects us? For! I never felt it. But oh! dishonor, dishonor, cowardice! the blood leaves my heart. Must I hear this?"

Lena passed from the apartment. She dared not witness another paroxysm—and the widow, alone with her fearful thoughts, knelt in vain to raise her soul heavenward. She could see nothing but ghastly visions dabbled with blood; and in the midst, her boy, her brave and cherished boy, branded with the mark of cowardice; at once the destroyer of his honor and his life.

Her brow was hot and red with fever, and her eyeballs arched with the pressure that withheld her fears. To and fro she glided with rapid step as if she could outrun thought. It was dark without, but needless of that she opened her door, and passed above the narrow walk, into the street. Like a shadow she went swiftly on, no motive impelling, no object gained—praying for that unconsciousness, which only death can bestow, and after hurrying as aimless as an arrow, winged with reckless hand, she turned and fled back to her cottage, just as evening unfolded her thick clouds, and out of their pavilion sailed slowly the round moon, sending her swift couriers of light to chase the still gloom from the brow of the mountain and the bosom of the waters.

Once more at home, the suffering woman knelt by the low, latticed window, and struggled for composure.

Like marble she knelt there, every nerve strained to endurance. One would have thought her a beautiful image; so still was every fold of her dress; so motionless her symmetrical head, and the full round arm that supported her burning forehead.

Slowly the moon sailed up, on the serene blue of heaven. Broadly its white pennons streamed through the little, latticed window, floating over that rigid figure, transfiguring it into glorious outline, hallowing as with rays of an Almighty love the beautiful form, the temple, within which and the lovely spirit like a dove mourning for its murdered mate.

Three men sat resting at the garden gate, and before moistened with tears, shot living fire

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## God Bless the Aged.

That's right boys; we like that painted old time politeness, thought we as two little boys bowed to an aged colored man; that one act shows that a mother's heart is, and what the fire-side circle may be at home.

There is something in those yellow curls, in the flashing of those blue eyes, that will make more than men of ye, if greater ye are to be—that will make you good; for without good men there is no true honor.

God bless the aged man! There is a world of memories clustering in his bosom that can offer the tear than the smile to his dim eye. He has folded babies to his bosom—he has dreamed over infant beauty that dream that hope weaves in the soul of every parent. He has kissed the white lips, and twined the golden ringlets round his hard finger.

He has felt that glow, of which sometimes tears are born, when the innocent lips first said "Father." He has bent over his little pillow at night, with that true one by his side, and read immortal dreams in dimples. He has woven a path for the unseasoned sleeper, that should be more brilliant than diamonds, softer than buds of roses; for would it not flash with the radiance of his love, would not his love be as a wall of adamant, over which no danger, with glaring eyeballs and fiery breath, could leap to destroy his heart's own darling? And, oh, woe! he has held out his arm to fence back the cold angel, that with its gleaming scythe, has glided over those walls of love, into the path and spoiled the thornless flowers. He has sunk sobbing by the little still couch, all sustained by angels; he has laid his hand on the thornless bosom, and wondered at this way of loneliness—but oh, such a dumb, chilling wonder! He has shut out the sunlight from his home, and shuddered to behold it, glaring full into the dark grave, that long, last, narrow cradle for his babe, and the beautiful boy would never be rocked to wakening, though the very birds sang their most thrilling melodies by its very sides.

God bless the aged man! Sorrow, with folded hands and drooping brow hasten hither abiding place at the very threshold of his heart.

There is a wreath of hyacinth bound about her forehead, and she holds in one hand the other the cup of life, with but a few drops at the bottom.

Under her feet lay dream-eyed angels; the hopes of this world—but they have lost their wings; they are hopelessly subject to sorrow yet like him whose soul they have brightened waiting for the change that will make them immortal. And beyond the vision of that old man, though not beyond the outstretching of his arms, hangs the glittering veil that his last feeble breath shall rend asunder; and beyond that—O, who has ever yet painted the glories of heaven!

God bless the aged! Children bend your head at their approach, lift your hats reverently,