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AUTUMN BLOSSOMS.

How was it that I came to be an old bachelor? Not because of hating women, I am sure, for I liked them very much, and never could have spoken to one rudely or discourteously for my life. As nearly as I know, it was in this wise:

Father died, leaving a family of children, a wife, and an old father and mother, of whom only myself was able to earn a dollar. He had never saved anything.

So, after the first great grief, when we had calmed down and were able to look matters quietly in the face, there was a wretched sort of prospect for us. I was only an accountant, and had a young fellow's habit of wasting my small salary in a thousand different ways. I had been "paying attention" too, to Elsie Hall, who, young and childish as she was, had a way that some girls do have of leading their admirers into extravagance. Of all the trials of that never to be forgotten time, I think the greatest was appearingiggardly to those baby blue eyes. I did not mind wearing plain business suits, discarding kid gloves, and renouncing the opera; but not to lay those bouquets, and books, and ice creams, and dainty bits of jewelry, and multitudinous invitations at Elsie's feet, was a terrible ordeal. I passed it, though; and if ever man had reason to be thankful I had, for the acquisitive little beauty jilted me in a month for Tom Tandem, who was rich and lavish of gifts, and who eloped from her, after a marriage of ten months, with a singer at the opera.

I worked day and night, and managed to keep the pot boiling, and to drive the wolf from the door—the gaunt wolf, poverty, who howled a good deal about the house at first, and seemed inclined to make a meal of us.

Sometimes I used to think how well it was for Elsie that she had not really loved me, for she could have had nothing but a dismal prospect of wearing out her youth in a dreary, hopeless engagement to one too poor to marry. That was until Tom ran off. Then I thought it would have been even better for her to have shared our humble home and poor fare, and the love I could have given her, than to be deserted so. And I pitied her, as if she had not proved herself heartless. But I never went near her, of course, and I never even spoke of her to my mother.

I grew no younger all this while, and every year seemed to add five to my looks. I had never been very handsome or very pretty, and soon I became conscious of a peculiar middle aged look, which settles down on some people very early.

Strangers, too, began to take me for the head of the family; and once, in a new neighborhood, the butcher alluded to "my wife." I found out that he meant my mother, and only wondered that it was not dear old granny.

She was eighty, grandfather ninety, and they died one bright Thanksgiving day, before prosperity came to us—died within an hour of each other—for granny just said:

"I think I'll lie down a bit, now Lemuel don't need me. I'm very tired."

Then she kissed me, and said:

"You've been a good boy to your grandpa, Edward. You'll have that to think of."

And when next we looked at her she was dead, with her cheek upon her hand, like a sleeping child.

So two were gone, and we were sadder than before. And then Jane, my eldest sister, married at sixteen, a clergyman who carried her off to Hindostan in her honeymoon.

And we could none of us feel the wedding a happy thing.

But prosperity did come at last. I had worked hard for it, and anything a man makes his sole object in this life he is very sure to attain.

We were comfortable—easy. Ah, what a word that is after years of struggle. At last we were rich. But by that time I was five and forty—a large, dark, middle aged man, with a face that looked to myself in the glass as though it were perpetually intent on figures. The girls were married. Dick had taken to the sea, and we saw him once a year or so, and Ashton was at home with mother and myself—the only really handsome member of our family, and just two and twenty. And it was on his birth day, I remember, that letter came to me from poor Hunter—that letter which began:

"When these lines reach you, Ned Stanford, I shall have my six feet of earth—all I ever owned, or would if I had lived to be an hundred."

We had been young together, though he was really older than I; and we had been close friends once, but a roving brute had seized him and we had not met for years. I knew he had married a young Southern girl, and knew no more, but now he told me that she was dead and that his death would leave a daughter an orphan.

"She is not quite penniless," he wrote, for her mother had a little income, which, poor as I was, I was never brute enough to meddle with, and it has descended to her. But I have been a rolling stone, gathering no moss all my life, and we have never staid long enough in one place to make friends. Will you be her

guardian? It is a dying man's last request—"

And then he wrote some words, coming from his heart, I knew, which, being of myself, I cannot quote even here—I could not think that I deserved them.

And the result of that letter, and of another from the lawyer who had Annie Hunter's little fortune in charge, was that one soft spring day found me on board of a great steamer which lay at rest after her voyage in the protecting arms of great New York, with two little hands in mine and a pair of great brown eyes lifted to my face, and a sweet voice choked with sobs saying something of "poor papa," and of how much he had spoken of me, and of the lovely voyage, and the green graves left behind, and I, who had gone to meet a child and found a woman, looking at her and feeling toward her as I had never looked upon nor felt to any other.

Not to Elsie Hall. It was not the boyish love dream come again.

Atalizing the emotion, I found only a great longing to protect and comfort her—to guard her from every pain and ill; and I said to myself—this is as a father must feel to a daughter; I can be a parent to Geo. Hunter's child in very truth. And I took her home to the old house and to my old mother. I thought only of those; somehow I never thought of Ashton.

Shall I ever forget how she brightened the sombre rooms? How, as her sadness wore away, she sang to us in the twilight? How strangely a something which made the return home and the long hours of the evening seem so much brighter than they had ever been before, stole into my life. I never went to sleep in church now! I kept awake to look at Olive Hunter—to listen to her pure contralto as she joined the singing. Sometimes I caught her eye, her great unfathomable brown, for she had a habit of looking at me. Was she wondering how a face could be so stern and grim? I used to ask myself.

Ashton used to look at her also. He had been away when she first came to us, and when he returned, she was a grand surprise to him.

"Good Heavens! how lovely she is!" he had said to me.

"She is very pretty," I replied.

Ashton laughed.

"May I never be an old bachelor if it brings me to calling such a girl—very pretty," he said; and I felt conscious that my cheek flushed and I felt angry that he should have spoken to me thus, though I never cared before.

They liked each other very much—those two young things. They were much together a great deal. A pretty picture they made in the Venetian window in the sunset. He was a fair haired, blue eyed, English looking youth; she so exquisitely dark and glowing.

Every one liked her. Even my old clerk, Stephen Hadly used to say her presence in the office more than a dozen lamps, the nearest approach to a poetical speech of which Stephen was ever known to be guilty; and I never knew how much she was to me until one evening, when, coming home earlier than usual I saw in that Venetian window where Ashton and Olive had made so many pleasant pictures for me, one that I never forgot—that I never shall forget as long as I live.

She stood with her back to me. Ashton was kneeling at her feet. The sound of the opening door dissolved the picture, but I had seen it, and I stole away to hide the stab that it had given me.

I sat down in my own room and hid my face in my hands, and would have been glad to hide it beneath my coffin lid. I knew now that I loved Olive Hunter; that I loved her not as an old man might love a child, but as a young man might love the woman who ought to be his wife—better than I had loved Elsie Hall; for it was not boyish passion, but honest, heart felt love.

I in love! I arose, and looked in mirror, and my broad shouldered reflection blushed before my gaze.

The spring time of my life had flown, and my summer had come and gone, and in the autumn I had dreamt of love's bud and blossom.

Yes, I had dreamt of it; I knew it now. And she might have loved me had I had Ashton's soft skin, blue eyes, and graceful figure, and his youth and light heartedness. Oh, the bright possibilities of that might have been!

I knelt beside my bed, and prayed that I might not hate my brother—that I might not envy him. His touch upon my door startled me. He came in with something in his manner not usual to him, and sat down just opposite to me. For a few moments we were silent. Then he said, speaking rapidly and blushing like a girl:

"Ned, old fellow, you—you saw me making a fool of myself just now, I suppose?"

"I saw you on your knees," I said.

"And thought me a silly fellow, eh? But you don't know, Ned. You can't understand, you have been so calm and cool all the days of your life, through, you know. She's driving me mad. Ned, I do believe she likes me, but she won't say yes. I'd give my right arm for her love. I must have it, and I think you can help me, Ned. From something she

said, I believe she thinks you would disapprove; perhaps that you are one to marry for money. Tell her your not, Ned, dear old fellow—tell her you have no objection, and I'll never forget it, indeed I won't!"

"Tell her I have no objection," I repeated mechanically.

"You know you are master here, and as much my father as if you really were one instead of a brother," said Ashton.

"If I did not know how kindly you had always felt to us both, I shouldn't confide in you, for it's a serious thing to be in love, Ned, and you may thank Heaven that you know nothing of it."

"Know nothing of it! ah, if he could have read my heart just then!"

"I'll do what I can, Ashton," I said at last. "I'll try my best."

And he flung his arms about me in his own boyish fashion, and he left me alone—along with my own thoughts.

He had said truly: I had been like a father to him. I was old enough to be hers, and no one should know my silly dream. I would bide it while I lived. As I had said once, "I've only the old folks and the children now," I said then, "I will only think of mother and Ashton. Let my own life be as nothing—I have lived for them; if needs be, I can die for them."

But I would not see or speak to Olive that night, nor until the next day was quite done. Then, in the twilight, I sat beside her and took her hand.

"Olive," I said, "I think you know that Ashton loves you. I am sure he has told you so. And you can—can you not love him?"

She drew her hand from mine, and said not one word.

"I should rejoice in my brother's happiness. I should think him happier in having your love than anything else could make him." I said "I told him I would tell you so."

And then she spoke:

"You wish me to marry Ashton?"

Reproach was in her tone—reproach and sorrow.

"If you can love him, Olive," I said. She arose. She seemed to shrink from me, though in the dark I could not see her face.

"I do not love him," she said. And we were still as death. Then, suddenly, Olive Hunter began to sob.

"You have been very kind to me. I love you all," she said; "but I cannot stay here now. Please to let me go somewhere else. I must—I cannot live here."

"Go from us, Olive?" "Nay, we are no tyrants; and once assured you do not love him, Ashton will—"

"Hush!" she panted—"hush! Please let me go away! Please let me go away!"

The moon was rising. Her new born light fell upon Olive's face. Perhaps its whiteness made her look so pale.

She leaned against the wall with her little hand upon her heart, her unfathomable eyes full of pain. How had I hurt her so? A new thought struck me.

"Perhaps you love some one, Olive?" I said.

And at that she turned her face from me and hid it in her hands.

"Too much—too much. You might have spared me that," she said. Let me go away. I wish you had never brought me here."

And I arose and went to her. I bent over the woman I loved. I touched her with my hand; her soft hair brushed my cheek.

"Olive," I said, "if coming here has brought pain upon you, I wish I had not. I would have died to make you happy."

And my voice trembled, and my hand shook, and she turned her face toward me again and looked into my eyes. What she saw in mine I do not know,—the truth, I think. In hers I read this: that I was not old to her; not too old to be loved.

I stole my arm about her; she did not untwine it. I uttered her name, "Olive," huskily. Afterwards, I told her of my struggle with myself, not then. I said: "Olive, I love you, but it cannot be you care for me. I am old enough to be your father."

And again I saw in her eyes the happy truth, and took her to my heart. And I was not old, or even middle aged, but young again in the bliss of that bright moment, and I think I have been growing younger ever since.

But we kept our secret for a while, for we both loved Ashton, and both knew his wound was not too deep to find a balm; and within a year, when the boy brought home a bride, a pretty creature whom he loved, and who loved him, I claimed Olive.

And she is mine now; and the autumn blossoms of my heart will only fade on earth to bloom again through all eternity.

The "Martyr President" and his Wife's Old Clothes.

The story of Mrs. Lincoln's old clothes, as told by the radical press, does not leave the reputation of the "lamented" Abraham Lincoln any purer than it ought to be. Don Pratt's newspaper, the *Muskeget Press*, extreme Radical, in a late article shows up Mrs. Lincoln's wardrobe, and the doings in the White House in a new light. We commend the following extracts to the attention of the Union League and followers of this county, and ask them if it does not present a beautiful picture to the world, of the corruptions of the White House and its inmates during the last administration. Don Pratt says:

"Well, it is shameful enough, God knows, but in what way it is to attach to the Republican organization we are at a loss to discover. That the advertisement so widely made at this woman's request, exhibits not only her greed, but the corrupt condition of the government in which she took so prominent part, we are prepared to admit, and in this view it is damaging to the late administration. But the cry of ingratitude is too silly for refutation. It was known to the wide circle, that business or social life brought in contact with the Executive mansion, that its interior was as gross, vulgar and corrupt as it was possible for any house to be and retain even a semblance of respectability. The startled public now reads its history in a forty thousand dollar wardrobe, made up of shawls, laces and diamonds, the gift of 'dear friends'—how 'dear,' the poor public is now realizing in the millions that shameless thieves have stolen and are yet stealing. The saddest part of all this is the tarnish it casts upon the sainted memory of the martyr President. How was it possible that these gifts from 'dear friends' were paid for in lucrative offices, given under the signature of Abraham Lincoln, without that shrewd man being aware of the infamous character of the official, and the nature of the bargain that brought him into office? This is a surmise only, but Thurlow Weed seems determined to bring the business home to the late president."

Mr. Weed might have added the fact that this refusal to approve of a bare faced swindle cost Mr. Smith his seat in the cabinet, Mr. Lincoln so far sympathizing with his wife in this extraordinary transaction. Mrs. Lincoln was not only as unprincipled and avaricious as the late sale indicates, but she was and is exceedingly ignorant and stupid, and yet how are we to account for the control she exercised over the domestic life and public affairs of the lamented president. We remember how pained the loyal hearts of the Union were to learn that in the darkest hour of our national pride, when our armies were paralyzed by imbecility, and our treasury was being robbed by dishonest agents, while the artillery of the enemy echoed through the very halls of the capitol, a dancing, drinking entertainment, or ball was given at the White House. This was shocking, but it became horrible when the fact leaked out that, while the noise of revelry shook the time honored mansion, in one of the upper chambers a child of the host and hostess lay dying of a fever, that had set in and alarmed the family physician, when the cards of invitation were being issued. We turn away from the inner life of this White House, that was indeed a whitened sepulchre; in sorrowing disgust, and feel ashamed through all our being that the curtain was ever lifted to let light in on its loathsome contents."

What a picture for our own country and the world to contemplate! A cabinet minister is removed by the President because he refuses to pay a fraudulent bill presented by the President's wife. This makes the late President a party to that swindling transaction. Mr. Lincoln must have been aware that the gifts from 'dear friends' were paid for in lucrative offices given under his own signature. Reader, what think you when you are told by a personal and political friend of President Lincoln, that everything within the White House, during his administration "was as gross, vulgar and corrupt as it was possible for any house to be and retain even a semblance of respectability."

We had rather these things, for the credit of the country, had not been made known, but as they are now divulged by the friends of the late President, we are in favor of having them ventilated to the bottom.

An affectionate but playful wife in Springfield, Mass., sent a note to her husband recently, written in a disguised hand signed with a fictitious name, stated she had often seen and admired him, and if he would inform her of a place of meeting she would go over to the rooms and they would become better acquainted. Husband answered the note at once, appointing time and place of meeting. Both parties met at the appointed time and place, the lady heavily veiled, and proceeded to the rooms, where the veil was moved, and a grand tableau not down on the bills ensued. Assurance made on the part of the husband that it was nothing but a joke, and that he knew it was her all the time. Wife is having a stylish bonnet, new cloak and elegant silk dress made.

Educational.

Proceedings of the Susquehanna County Teachers' Institute.

The Susquehanna County Teachers' Institute met at Montrose Monday, Jan. 6th, 1868. Supt. Watson being constituted Chairman, *ex officio*, called the meeting to order, and after a few preliminary remarks, proceeded to complete the organization and enrollment of Teachers in attendance. Messrs. T. W. Tinker and Elmer Stuart were elected Vice Presidents, and H. N. Tiffany, Sec'y, Supt. Watson being Treasurer, *ex officio*. Messrs. W. J. Tinker, Samuel Wright and O. E. French were appointed Committee on Constitution. Prof. Charles W. Sanders of New York City was now introduced to the Institute as one of its future instructors, and after some very interesting introductory remarks, took up the classification of letters and phonetics, showing not only how—but why—so arranged. The report of the committee on Constitution was presented, accepted, and committee excused. The Constitution presented was adopted. Adjourned to 6:45 p. m.

Evening session.—Miss Helen Hartley read an essay on English Grammar, which elicited a spicy discussion. The Institute spent a short time discussing a few questions, suggested by the audience.

Wm. H. Jessup Esq. then delivered a highly instructive address upon Educational Progress. From the peculiar features of our system of government, he deduced its special relation to the youth as the proper guardian of their interests; showing that as intelligence is the boasted corner stone of American institutions, the strong arm of legislative enactment must not only protect our school system, but ever aid it in its contest with willful ignorance and mis-called conservatism. Mr. Jessup referred to the period when he taught in this county, and remarked the improvement in school buildings and furniture, and the zeal for self-culture infused into the mass of teachers, and their consequent growing enthusiasm in the profession. The latter fact was sufficiently apparent from the drain made upon the number of our most experienced teachers by other counties, who, appreciating their abilities, by enlarged compensation made a successful claim for their services. With prophetic eye the speaker urged attention to the Power and Influence of the Common-School in moulding the past and impressing the future history of our country and commonwealth.

Supt. Watson made some well-timed remarks, commending the teachers for their zealous support and grand rally.—Prof. Sanders closed the evening's work with some very pleasant reminiscences of his school-boy days, and the memorable spelling of *Egypt* (Egypt), and concluded by reading a humorous poem.

Tuesday morning.—Rev. J. G. Miller made a brief and pointed address, and then as chaplain, conducted the devotional exercises, after which the Institute was separated into two divisions, which alternately occupied different rooms, listened to discussions on written Arithmetic by Prof. S. J. Coffin, of Lafayette College, Easton, and W. S. Schofield, of Philadelphia; Elocution, by Prof. Sanders, and an explanation of the principles and practical application of the metric system of weights and measures recently legalized by Congress, by Prof. Coffin. Prof. Sanders then pronounced fifty test words, which were written by the teachers, and which were fully as keen as the contestants' appetites for dinner.

Afternoon session.—Improved methods in arithmetical instruction were thoroughly discussed in the two divisions under the charge of Messrs. Schofield and A. W. Larrabee. The two divisions united and took up the subject of Algebra, as presented by Prof. Coffin; Grammar, by C. W. Deans, and Elocutionary Practice, by Prof. Sanders.

Evening session.—Mr. A. W. Larrabee, Misses Clara Lyon and Stella Morse were appointed a committee on Resolutions.—The Practice of Teaching was the theme of an original poem, read by Miss Clara Lyon. It was witty and practical, and well merited the request made for its publication. "Uniqueness in Teaching," as handled by Prof. Sanders, needs no commendation.

Wednesday morning.—Suggestive remarks proving that rank and position are in our own hands, were offered by Rev. Mr. Miller. Messrs. Schofield, Coffin, Deans and Sanders resumed their previous topics, and the meeting closed with well-timed remarks on the importance of the work of teaching, by Rev. W. C. Tilden, of Forest Lake.

Afternoon session.—The divisions were engaged in Geography, lucidly treated by Misses Gurnsey and Williams and Supt. Watson; in Arithmetic and Grammar by Prof. Coffin and Deans. A report on Penmanship was read by H. N. Tiffany, who urged the necessity of instruction in this branch, claiming that knowledge and facility of execution were requisite to it, whether considered as a science or an art. That we want better teaching, and then we will have better writers.

Evening session.—An able report on

Grammar by A. W. Larrabee, was followed by the recitation of a poem, entitled "The Everlasting Memorial," by Miss Susan Belcher. Responsibilities of parents and teachers in the education of children, and how we teach unwritten volumes by our every word, look and action, were most happily discussed by Prof. Allen. Prof. Sanders entertained the Institute by reading, which he prefaced by a few interesting suggestions upon the importance of looking after the education of children.

Thursday morning.—Theory of the Formation of Rock, by E. W. Rogers, of Providence. Geography, by Prof. Allen, and Reading by Prof. Sanders.

Afternoon session.—Grammar, by Prof. Deans. This was followed by Prof. Coffin, with an animated and interesting "History of Eastern Pennsylvania." Prof. Allen talked to the Institute upon miscellaneous subjects of interest, and Phonetics was taken up by Prof. Sanders.

Evening session.—Concert reading by seven young ladies, and a fine recitation by Miss Hattie Fitch. The importance of cultivating the imagination, was very ably and closely handled and clearly elucidated by Prof. Edward Brooks, Principal of Millersville State Normal School. The evening closed with an amusing problem by Prof. Sanders.

Friday morning.—Miscellaneous exercises by Prof. Brooks and Allen, which were followed by short animated remarks by Prof. Coffin, Wm. H. Jessup, Esq., Rev. Mr. Miller and others. Messrs. A. W. Larrabee, J. S. Gillem, Misses M. J. Carr, B. E., Clara Lyon and Susan Belcher were nominated committee on Teachers' Permanent Certificates. As there was no opposition, the Institute instructed the Secretary to cast the vote, which was done. Report of committee on Resolutions accepted, and committee excused. After a very sharp and spirited discussion whether those who had willfully stayed away from the Institute, or had tried to keep others away, should be censured, the general feeling was to put as lenient a construction upon the matter as possible, reasoning that such had harmed none but themselves in thus failing to appreciate its worth and pleasure. The following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That the teachers of Susquehanna County have under the supervision of Supt. Watson, occupied the past week in drill exercises and in counseling each other regarding the best methods of teaching, aided and encouraged by able instructors and authors from abroad, and feel it a privilege, as well as a duty, to offer the following resolutions expressive of the feeling of this our first County Institute, held under the provisions of the Penna. School Laws, (act of Ap. 9, 1867). Therefore, be it

Resolved, That Supt. Watson not only merits the admiration of every member of this Institute for being the skillful lover which has so successfully moved our resolutions, but deserves the gratitude of the people of Susquehanna county, for the impetus he is giving to the cause of education.

Resolved, That the labors and humorous variety of that sturdy pioneer of Elocution, Prof. Chas. W. Sanders, have been to us a priceless boon.

Resolved, That the gratitude of this Institute be tendered to Prof. Selden J. Coffin for his apt treatment of Mathematics, especially the Metric System of weights and measures, and that we congratulate Lafayette College upon having him among its corps of instructors.

Resolved, That the advice springing from Prof. Allen's long and varied experience shall quicken and encourage us in the discharge of our duties, while in our daily professions we will practice his golden precepts.

Resolved, That the good seed sown by Edward A. Brooks, A. M., which we humbly trust has fallen upon good ground, shall be nurtured with assiduous care that it may bring forth an hundred fold, thus bestowing upon him the teacher's noblest reward,—the fruit of his labors blessing mankind.

Resolved, That while we regret the absence of Prof. C. W. Deans in this the closing session of our Institute, we tender our heartfelt thanks for his ready and earnest instruction in Grammatical Analysis—and may he continue to bless the country.

Resolved, That the School Directors present here from day to day, and those who have so generously assisted and encouraged the teachers to attend the Institute have thereby shown us they comprehend the condition of the cause of education, and they will long be remembered by appreciative teachers.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Association be extended to Messrs. E. W. Rogers and W. S. Schofield for their able and timely instruction; also, to Rev. J. G. Miller for his presence and assistance; also, to Wm. H. Jessup, Esq., for his able lecture; also, to Mary J. Carr, B. E., and her class, for their gymnastic exercises, and to all those who have favored us with music during the sessions.

Resolved, That we return our thanks to the kind people of Montrose and vicinity, for their hospitality and the lively interest manifested in our Institute; and especially to the Board of School Directors for their noble generosity in suspending the school that the Institute might have a