

The Elk County Advocate.

HENRY A. PARSONS, Jr., Editor and Publisher.

NIL DESPERANDUM.

Two Dollars per Annum.

VOL. V.

RIDGWAY, ELK COUNTY, PA., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1875.

NO. 39.

Domestic Bliss.—A Fragment.

I am
A married lady of thirty odd.
Every evening I see in their beds
A "baker's dozen" of curly heads.
Every morning my slumbers greet
The patter patter of twenty-six feet.
Thirteen little hearts are always in a flutter
Till thirteen little mouths are filled with bread
and butter:
Thirteen little tongues are busy all day long,
Twenty-six little hands, with doing something
wrong.
Till I faint am to do,
With an angry, too.
And when my poor husband comes home from
his work,
Tired and hungry, and fierce as a Turk,
What do you think is the picture he sees?
A legion of babies, all in a breeze—
Johnny is crying,
And Lucy a-sighing,
And worn-out mamma, with her hair all
graying:
Strong and angry William beating little Nelly;
Charley in the pantry eating currant jelly;
Richard strutting round in papa's Sunday
coat;
Harry at the glass with a razor at his throat;
Robert gets his fingers crusted when Susy
shuts the door,
And mitigates their aching with a forty-pound
roar:
Baby at the coal-bod hurries to begin,
Throwing in his mite to the universal din.
Alas! my lord and master being rather weak
of nerve, he
Begins to lose his patience in the stunning
topsy-turvy,
And then the frightened little ones all fly to
me for shelter,
And so the drama closes 'mid a general hetero-
skeler.
I'll give you my name, lest you find me a
myth:
Yours, 'Tis, 'Tis, Mrs. John Smith.

THE YOUNG BALLOONIST.

A story of France.
It was a very unfortunate thing. At
the very last moment, when everything
was ready, Killick the balloonist met
with an accident and could not go up
in the balloon.
It would seem the most natural thing
to apologize to the crowd and have the
affair postponed until the balloonist
recovered, but the unfortunate fellow de-
clared that the mob would not submit to
this, and to my surprise proposed that
I should go up in his place.
I had made one or two trips with him
and had learned from him to manage the
valves and ballast, the rudiments of the
art of ballooning. I was young, active,
and had a steady head, and the owner of
the Defiance was quite willing to intrust
her to me, if I would so far oblige him.
A rich landed proprietor of the neigh-
borhood—a vain young man, with a taste
for notoriety—had offered fifteen thou-
sand francs to be taken up as a passenger;
and to disappoint M. Victor de Villeneuve
and lose three hundred francs was also
an unweelcome contingency.
With scarcely a thought of the result
I said I would go. M. de Villeneuve
was not to arrive till the last moment,
when up we would go.
I was now in the rocking, swaying car,
and, stooping down, I ascertained that
the bags of ballast, the coil of spare
rope, the flags, and telescope were at
my feet; then I turned myself to the right,
and there appeared the figure of a stout,
well-dressed man, who elbowed his way
so quickly through the throng that I
had scarcely time to conjecture that this
must be the volunteer companion of my
aerobic voyage. M. Victor de Villeneuve,
before he scrambled into the car, and
was at my side.
"Let go!" he cried, in a sharp, im-
perious tone, to the man who held the
ropes.
A voice raised in accents of command
scarcely fell of its effect, however ques-
tionable may be the right of him who
uplifts it, and the man addressed, in
their astonishment, mechanically obeyed.
The balloon rose a little, nothing
now restraining its upward flight save
the trigger-cord, firmly moored to a
post below, the spring being in my
grasp.
"Off we go!" exclaimed the passen-
ger, with a jovial laugh that had scarcely
the ring of honest mirth in it.
Perhaps M. de Villeneuve, for all his
swaggering deportment, was ill at ease
as to the results of our voyage, and
saw to carry it off gayly; such were
my thoughts as the Catherine wheels be-
gan to revolve in cascades of whirling
fire and the crowd to cheer. It was the
moment for our start, but I hesitated to
pull the trigger, for now a strange bustle
and confusion below attracted my atten-
tion.
A mounted gendarme, his sabre and
carbine clanking, had ridden up at the
full gallop of his rocking horse, followed
at some distance by three others, who
spurred furiously forward. There were
a few hurried questions, then a smothered
outcry, a roar of voices, and a swaying
backward and forward of the excited
populace.
I looked down at the crowd of up-
turned faces.
"Stop! stop! Englishman, stay!"
cried out the brigadier of the foot-
police.
"Let go, fool!" thundered the man
who sat beside me in the car.
"But it is the police that"—I began,
thinking that M. de Villeneuve had sud-
denly taken leave of his senses.
"Come down! stop—haul the rope!"
was the shout from below; but as the
words reached my ear my companion
burst forward. Something flashed in his
hand—a dagger-knife—and the cord
was cut, and the balloon darted up-
wards.
"In the name of the law—ah! you
won't!" cried a gendarme, discharging
his carbine, as he saw me say, "the balls
whistled idly by, while we rose and
rose until the inn and the gardens and
the shouting crowd and the sputtering

fireworks had diminished to pigmy size,
and presently disappeared altogether,
and the balloon rode on, solitary,
through the fields of air.
"A singular salute our friends gave
us, when they bade us bon voyage!"
said M. de Villeneuve, with a chuckle
that was incomprehensible to me.
The moon, half full, had now risen,
and I could see the face of my com-
panion—the swarthy, keen face of a man
forty years of age, with short dark hair,
slightly grizzled, fiery black eyes, and
very white, strong, sharp-pointed teeth,
which gave him, when he smiled, some-
what the expression of a laughing wolf.
He was a man of powerful frame, and
the fingers of the gloved hand which he
now laid upon my arm were as strong
and supple as steel.
"You're a Spaniard?" said this strange passenger,
with a grin that an ogre might have
envied, "I vow that you take me for a
queer specimen of the French provincial
genie? But first, how comes it that
Killick is absent, and one of your age
has the honor to be my pilot?"
"For Spain?" I echoed, in surprise.
Could this self-conceited country gentle-
man really deem that we were bound on
such a journey as that? I could not
help laughing as I said: "Why for
Spain, monsieur?"
"Well, Italy would have served me
as well had the wind been westerly one.
Ha, ha! you are you about that you
finger that rope?"
"I am opening the valve above," I
answered, coldly, because it is time now
to sink to a lower level and descend."
"Descend, eh?" briskly put in my
follow-up.
"We may as well understand each other
at once. The rope of that rope, if you would
keep the roof of your skull," he added, threat-
eningly, as he drew a revolver from with-
in his waistcoat, and deliberately pointed
the barrel at my head. "I'll show you
my's captain up here."
My brain reeled and my blood ran
cold as the light flashed upon me.
That I was, at that fearful height
above the earth, in company with a mad-
man. Nothing surely save insanity
could account for the extraordinary be-
haviour of M. de Villeneuve.
But I suppose I put a tolerably good
face on my company back to Toulon, for my
formidable companion laughed again, but
less ill-naturedly, as he said:
"You face it out well, boy. I like a
younger who shows a heart somewhat
bigger than a chicken's. And I'm not
so bad as I look—never do this!"—he
dramatically spoke edge-ways,
with a meaning gesture, across his throat
—"when I can get my little profits by
quieter means. But you stare at me as if
I were a mountebank selling quack
medicines. Can you guess why those
gendarmes were so peremptory an hour
ago? Because they wanted the pleasure
of my company back to Toulon, that's
all. Did you never hear of Risque-son-
ou?"
And then I remembered to have seen
a paragraph in a local paper announcing
the escape from Toulon of a criminal of
the worst and most dangerous type.
And here was I, Edward Holmes, artist,
voyaging by night in a balloon, in com-
pany with a runaway galley-slave, well
armed with knife and pistol, and more
than a match in strength for me, even
had he been less well provided!
My terrible companion was only too
much disposed to be talkative; and as
we swept upward before the freshening
wind, he was kind enough to favor me
with a few brief anecdotes of his past
career, in which the peace and the hor-
rible seemed to mingle in cynic con-
fusion. He told graphically of the ten
days of hardship and hunger which he
had endured while skulking among the
rocky hills by night, and lying hidden
among thorny brakes by day, until at
last he broke into a roar of triumph in
relating how he had encountered and
robbed the true M. de Villeneuve on his
way to the village fête.
"Twenty shining naps in his purse,
the idiot!" he said, exultingly, and three
thousand francs, besides, in notes.
Well, well! I left him gazing and
bound to a tree, after I had taken the
freedom to change clothes with him;
and there he stands, no doubt; trem-
bling, but fortunate to keep a whole
skin. And I found in his pocket the
letter of M. Killick, promising to take
him as a passenger in the balloon here;
and so."
And so the idea had presented itself
to this daring and ready-witted ruffian
to personate the victim of his recent ro-
bery, and thus to procure the means of
flight in what was certainly an unex-
pected fashion, while I was the luckless
scapegoat of his audacious enterprise.
Meanwhile the wind, as I have said,
was rising, and as we hurried on I
looked downwards, and saw by the shimmer
of the moonlight on the tremulous
waves that the sea was below us. I
could not forbear from an exclamation
of dismay.
The desperado at my side also looked
down.
"Bah! sea or land—what matters it?"
he said, recklessly. "Throw out bal-
last, or you hear me!" and unwillingly
I complied.
The balloon instantly rose, and it soon
became perceptibly colder, so that I
shivered, and had to clasp my hands to-
gether to prevent them from stiffening.
My companion's iron frame showed no
signs of suffering from the abrupt low-
ering of the temperature; but after a
time the Defiance seemed to be nearer
to the sea, for I heard the low roar of
the waves; and then Risque-son-ou im-
patiently flung out another bag of bal-
last, and we rose.
"If we come down in France, my
young friend," said the strident voice of
the escaped convict, as we floated
through masses of misty vapor, the con-
densed moisture of which wetted me to
the skin, "you may bid adieu to what-
ever home ties and British affections
your insular heart may cherish. It's no
fault of yours, you will say, if the wind
carries this flapping gas-bag to Pouton
or the Nivernais. No, but it is Risque-
son-ou to wait while the young English-
man crawls to the nearest brigade of

gendarmes to give notice that his fol-
low traveler was Peter Paul Grincheux?
Thank you. I prefer to keep my own
counsel." So sure as we drop where Na-
poleon is emperor I prove that one can
keep a secret better than two."
"There's something wrong with the
valves," said my companion, roughly,
an hour later; "the gas is coming down,
and we are sinking. It's for you,
aeronaut, to ascend the netting and stop
the escape of gas."
I was very reluctant to obey. To
climb the netting of malloon, when at
a great height above the earth, is never
a very pleasant task; but to do so, leav-
ing behind me a ruffian who might at
any moment pistol or stab me as I de-
scended, thus relieving himself from an
inconvenient witness, was indeed irks-
ome. However, Risque-son-ou, with
such vehement pertinacity that at last I
complied; and having adjusted the valve,
crept back to the car, sick and giddy,
but unhurt.
The moon had faded away. There
were pale crimson streaks in what I took
to be the eastern sky, and below lay
clouds of gloomy masses of black
cloud, through which gleamed at inter-
vals something white and lustrous, like
the marble pinnacles of the cathedral at
Milan.
"We're steering straight. Fatality,
for once, befriends me!" exclaimed the
desperate sharer of my journey, "for
those are the peaks of the Eastern Pyre-
nees. Clunk over ballast, boy, don't
let us ground on them."
We were, in reality, floating among
the serrated summits and snow-clad
mountain-tops of the huge chain of
mountains that form a natural barrier
between Gaul and Spain. Below, the
sullen cloud-banks, mounded elemental
and already low-muttering growls of
thunder reverberated among the ser-
rated ridges beneath us.
"Throw over more ballast," com-
manded my ruffianly companion.
I flung out, with some misgivings,
the remainder of the last bag of sand
and small pebbles, but the Defiance did
not rise with its former buoyancy.
Much gas had been lost. The once
smooth surface of the silk, painted in
gaudy stripes of pink and blue, was
wrinkled now, and fluttered loosely in
the irregular gusts of the wind. The
developments were made that we ap-
proach will prove very interesting to all
consumers of milk. In the first place,
it appears that the employees of the
railroads are in the habit of opening
cans, taking as much milk as they want,
and replacing the stolen fluid with
water. If the cans are locked they are
broken open, for the milk will be had.
Assuming that pure milk is shipped by
the dairymen, what must be its condi-
tion on arrival in New York, even before
it is doctored by the dealers here? But
it appears watering is not the greatest of
the agencies used to adulterate the milk.
In summer baking powder, sulphur, and
other mild and agreeable tonics are ad-
ministered in the milk to preserve its
tone and prevent it souring. In the
course of the trial referred to, it ap-
peared that on one occasion an overdose
of baking powder was given a cow, with
lamentable results. During the night
the powder began to exercise its leaven-
ing functions with such admirable suc-
cess that the lid was blown off the can
and the fluid overflowed the floor. At
other times the smell of sulphur from
the milk was so strong that the dealer
was obliged to stop the cow, and in
consequence of this he refused the
dairyman payment, and the suit that
was begun in consequence was the me-
dium that brought these pleasant facts
to light. Badly-fed cows, water, sul-
phur, and baking powder combined do
not tend to produce pure milk.

Fur Trimmings.
Fur trimmings are the most fashion-
able garniture for sacks, cloaks, and
heavy wraps of all cloths, silks, and
velvet, the *Bazar* tells us. There is an
endless variety of trimming furs, some
of which we have already quoted, but
the caprice of the season is for dark furs
that have been tipped with silver; and so
popular are these fur trimmings, have re-
sorted to sewing gray or white hairs in
the dark furs when nature has not sup-
plied them. Of the latter is a fancy fur
called silver hair, which is a black fur
with silver hairs sewed or even pasted
in. This is of no real value, but is the
fancy of the moment. The motion ex-
posed in its best qualities, is supplied
by nature with these "silver points," or
fine white glossy hairs; this fine fur is
among the choicest trimmings for vel-
vet, seal, and silk cloaks, and costs from
\$6 to \$15 a yard. The plain outer fur
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