

One City Chronicle

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

VOL. VIII.

NIL DESPERANDUM.

Two Dollars per Annum.

RIDGWAY, ELK COUNTY, PA., THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1878.

NO. 8.

The Empty Schoolroom.
Gray dust upon each window-sill,
A broken chair;
The railing that rattled so long—
One seat of a familiar song—
Such marks of wear,
As hearts with sad remembrance fill.
Tired, tired I gaze on these at last.
Strangely it seems—
The fresh, young faces are all fled—
Some blithe, young hearts among the dead,
Numbered, in dreams
Alone, come visions of the past.
With something twist a sob and sigh
I stand to-day
Within this empty, dreary room,
As silent as the speechless tomb,
And out, away
Beyond these walls brown meadows lie.
Brown meadows, where the wild wind
Sweeps—
Ochil, ah! so chill;
Just through the cobwebbed window-pane
I see the graveyard in the rain,
Still, ah! so still,
Each heart weary, resting, sleeps.
O room deserted evermore!
I love you yet.
And sky, that holdeth only bloom,
Beyond are skies, of summer bloom
Without regret,
To shine upon the golden shore.

A LEGHORN HAT.

Nine o'clock of a cloudless summer morning. The basket phaeton stood at the door in the narrow noisy street below, but Mr. White had already gone to his office, Annie pleaded headache, and the children had their allotted tasks with the German governess to accomplish. I must either remain within doors during the hot hours of the day or go out alone. I decided on the latter course.

"I am too old to require any glance," I said, with a laugh, and chaperoned in the mirror.

There I beheld a not unpleasing image of a little woman attired in gray, with a silver veil over her plain face, in the act of fitting on a pair of quite infinitesimal gray gloves. I kissed my good Annie and the children, as if bound on a long and perilous voyage, and departed in the basket phaeton.

What a new world was that all about me! It was the city of Leghorn, with its tall houses, rendered dingy by sea damp, and wide white squares, the atmosphere redolent of tar, the quays thronged with shipping, the clumsy funnels of Oriental steamships relieved by the lighter tracery of interlacing masts against the sky. I like ships; in their boundless suggestiveness they resemble wishes, hopes, ever coming and going on some far errand.

The phaeton rattled through the main thoroughfare, once Via Grande, and into a republiated, after the manner of all Italian cities, in the name of Victor Emanuel. I noticed with the interest of a stranger groups of bearded sailors; the untidy, leather woman with trailing gown, and flapping handkerchief tied over her frowzy head; the brilliant uniform of an occasional officer strolling languidly to his gate.

Then the sea Gate was reached, and beyond it stretched the narrow road which threads its way beside the Mediterranean to the beautiful suburb of the Ardenza. The sea breeze wafted to me delicious coolness; the hedges of evergreens and oleanders in masses of rose bloom mingled rich odors; the stunted trees drooped their feathery foliage with gray dust. I gazed out over the sea which sparkled like a sapphire, with the light houses so bright at night, now pallid in the morning which no longer had need of them, and the sails glistening with an exquisite silvery whiteness on the horizon. I glanced toward the white road as it curved along the strand, bordered by its feathery trees and oleanders, its gardens, hotels and villas stretching to the Maremma, and the coast I might never explore.

"This is the most beautiful shore in the world, and the most famous knee of Italy," I soliloquized; and just then the phaeton paused.

My destination was the bath. Again the charm of novelty delighted me, for it was my first summer with Annie's household. Bathing at Livorno was made a pastime, a recreation, a serious business. I walked out on a pier which terminated in a round square shielded by a tent from the sun's rays, and thence the smiling old bath woman, in a flapping straw hat, conducted me down a passage, bordered on either side by little tents with green doors, to my destination. Once entered the white room, I soliloquized; and just then the phaeton paused.

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Five years of winter and summer in the old house at home, wandering from room to room in a ghastly fashion, with the portraits of father and mother in the shadow of the best parlor, and Harry's dog following me with dumb intelligence to thrust his nose into my hand; five years of mourning, of silence, that left me a plain little old maid, my hair turned gray. Then Annie, happy wife and mother, school-mate and friend of many years, had written to me a long letter from her home at Leghorn, where her husband was engaged in business, urging me to come abroad. I saw my future clearly enough. In this genial household I should be companion, friend, old-maid aunt to the children. I sighed.

Just then the merchant whose wares were displayed in one corner of the tent—tortoise-shell, coral, and sienna-wood trinkets—began to take a chance in his lottery. I took the box, and turned out the dice on the board, having paid a franc. The merchant counted up the numbers, and found the corresponding one in his stock of prizes represented by a set of coral, resembling sticks of red sealing-wax. Somebody approached and watched the drawing. I recognized the long sandy beard of the intruder of my bath, but gave a little jump when I further discovered that he wore the uniform of an American naval officer. The merchant immediately pronounced on him. Almost unconsciously the stranger of the sandy beard appealed to me in English for explanation, as he did not understand Italian. The next moment he held in his hand a very pretty shell comb for a lady's hair as a prize.

"Madam, do you think this most pleasing a woman?" he enquired scrutinizing it.

"Undoubtedly," I replied, calmly. I had taken him under my protection as one of Harry's friends.

His face flushed, and a quizzical smile lighted up his keen eyes. "I mean a lady—born in America. You are an American?"

"Yes," I said, at my ease; for he was not thinking of me at all. I was even half tempted to ask him if he had known my poor Harry.

"Thank you," he said, with sudden stiffness, and raising his cap, walked away.

Another hour passed swiftly while I gazed out over the sea from the tent; then the heat of the sun warned me to return. *En route* I remembered a trifling commission at the milliner's. Entering the shop, the first object presented to my notice was the tall officer with the sandy beard, beset by two clerks, and surrounded by piles of leghorn hats. The poor man's aspect was most bewildered and helpless in that sea of straw. I executed my commission quietly, and about to leave, when he accosted me.

"Would you have the kindness to give me your advice?" he said. "I wish to make a present of a Leghorn hat to a lady in America, and it must be of the best quality." He pointed to a hat which he had just purchased.

Thus appealed to, I sifted out the finest straw for his inspection. "Leghorn hats are all made in the Florence manufactories, you know," I said.

He made no response; he was staring at my hands with a very peculiar expression. I glanced at the hat, and lo! it was in the crown of the Leghorn hat. They were very small and well shaped; I had trouble with my gloves usually, wearing a child's size. Brother Harry used to admire their tiny proportions, and accuse me of vanity in the possession of what he called the "gritty" hat. I was an officer in a foreign city actually pausing in the midst of buying a gift for an unknown lady—probably his fiancée—to stare at my little hands in evident astonishment. What right had he to gaze at me so fixly, after having claimed my assistance. What would Annie think of my adventure?

I recalled him somewhat primly to a sense of duty, I suppose, for he proceeded to pay for the hat, after I had warned the shop people not to charge him more than the regular price. He thanked me in subdued accents, and even hinted that as the ship was to be in port some weeks, he hoped any residents would come on board. I relented sufficiently to inquire how he proposed sending the Leghorn hat, and learned that it was to be entrusted to the captain of a brig bound for New York.

"Perhaps I had best address the box here," he said, again consulting me with his eyes.

"Yes," I assented, gaining firmness and decision of tone from his very irresolution.

The clerk brought him an immense inkstand with a very rusty and gritty pen attached. My companion dipped the pen into the ink and stirred it thoughtfully, as if it had been soup.

"I hope she will like it," said the extraordinary man, consulting me again, with a most sheepish expression of countenance. "Perhaps she owns 'er as many Leghorn hats already," in sudden alarm.

"No, no," I returned, soothingly. "I pictured to myself this lady whom he was so anxious to please. How proud she would be of the exquisite Etruscan straw which she would wear to church! How envious would be her neighbors!"

"There, will that answer?" he held before me the written address.

I gazed as I read: "Miss Helen Westmore, Berryville, Vermont."

My own name was Helen Westmore, and Berryville had been my home! The Leghorn hat which I had selected with so much care was evidently intended for myself.

"You can not be Dr. Easton, who took care of my poor Harry, and wrote me the letters about him?" I cried, between sobbing and laughter. "I am his sister."

"He told me his sister had the smallest hands in the world," he replied with excitement.

After that there were dinners at Annie's, moonlight drives along the shore, entertainments on the man-of-war, with ample leisure for explanations and confidences. The surgeon who had taken care of Harry had been his intimate friend during long voyages, and had retained the image of the sister at home all these years. In retiring on half pay he had been tempted to seek her out.

Had I not assisted at the purchase of my own hat, he would never have found

me when he returned to America. The little woman in gray was not to be the old-maid aunt in Annie's household, after all, but to return to her own country as a happy wife, even if in a sober, sedate fashion. Verily human destinies hang by a straw!

A box stands on the high shelf in the old home. It contains an untripped Leghorn hat.—*Harper's Weekly.*

Fencing in Japan.
A famous company of professional fencers were performing at Yokohama while I was there, and we went to see them along with several English residents, who had been many years in the country, but had never witnessed a similar exhibition. The gladiators were encased in armor, and were distinguished from each other by the color of their cuirasses. Their appearance was heralded by the blast of a conch shell, and all their proceedings were superintended by a handsome young man, attired and slaven in the most orthodox style. Wielding his fan like a marshal's truncheon, he set the combatants upon each other, and separated them with loud ejaculations. At each corner of the arena sat a judge, with all the dignity of a Roman Senator, motionless and silent, until referred to upon a doubtful point of order. On a table were placed a sword and a dagger, and the combatants rapidly that it is often hard to say who had dealt the successful stroke. The weapons are long bamboo held in both hands like quarter-staffs, and any sort of blow above the waist is prohibited, but the favorite is a good crack on the top of the helmet. Occasionally the combatants get too near together for striking, and the struggle becomes literally hand to hand until they are separated; notwithstanding their savage yells and fierce blows they preserve the perfect good humor characteristic of their race. By way of variety there was a fight between the sword and the "morning star," a sphere fastened by a cord to a spiked handle. Although the latter appeared to be the inferior weapon, its bearer did not come badly off, as he played the part of a reticent with the ball and string, and when at close quarters brought his sharp hook into active operation. Then two girls, elaborately attired in the wide sleeves and trousers of Japanese knights, attended by two attendants, each equipped them, took their places on opposite sides of the lists, and went through the motions of a fight, one having a halberd and the other a couple of swords. Finally, another amazon had a duel with a male antagonist, and completely overthrew him; but this was not a burlesque, as he evidently tumbled over on purpose, and behaved like the clown in a pantomime, whereas an air of stern reality pervaded the other mimic battles.

It is remarkable that the Japanese are able to derive keen enjoyment from performance which involve no personal life or limb, and if their public spectacles differ in this respect from those of the Roman amphitheatre, they may also compare favorably with many which find favor in the eyes of the British people. Leg fencers are popular, including the "Go bang," are popular, but the passion for gambling and cock fighting, so strongly developed in most parts of Eastern Asia, is not conspicuous in Japan, where animals in general may be said to have a good time.—*The Fortnightly Review.*

Vampire Bats.
South America also has its large bats, of one of which everybody has heard—the vampire. Much nonsense has been written about it, but there was some foundation for the stories of its sucking the blood of its victims, and it has killed them. In the interior of South America nearly everybody sleeps in a hammock either out-of-doors or with the windows open, and the weather is so warm that little covering is used. The vampire comes in on silent wings, and finding a toe exposed, he inserts his fangs, with his sharp teeth, and draws the blood until he can swallow no more. The sleeper rarely is awakened, and does not know his loss until morning. He may then feel weak from the flow of blood, but he is not aware that a man was ever known to die from the cause. Horses are very greatly troubled by them also. Mr. Charles Watterson, an enthusiastic naturalist now dead, who spent several years in New Guinea, has told us much about this ugly bat, but would never induce one to taste of his foe, although he was to be paid a very high price to do so. He was never operated upon. For seven months the sleeper alone in the loft of a deserted wood-cutter's hut in the deep forest. There the vampire came and went as they wished. He saw them come in the moonlight on stealthy wings, and pick the ripe bananas; and he saw them and watched them bring almost to his bedside the green wild fruit of the wild guava; floating down the river on other moonlight nights was struck by the falling blossoms of the lawari-nut tree, which the vampire pulled from the branches to get at the tender seed-vessel, or the insects that lurk in the deep corolla. He lay night after night with his bare foot exposed, but could never get them to lance it, although his friends and companions were all bled by this nocturnal surgeon; and except that he could see one fastened to the shoulder of one of his animals, he came away no wiser than when he went of how the vampire does his horrid work.

The vampire measures about twenty-six inches across the wings; frequent old houses and hollow trees, and repose in clusters, head downwards, from the branches of forest trees.

A SHOWER OF PINE BARK.—The Raleigh (N. C.) News of a late issue says: "We are informed by eye-witnesses of the occurrence, that on Tuesday last, in the afternoon, about two o'clock a great quantity of pieces of pine bark fell in and around a yard in this city. The fragments of bark appeared to have been violently torn from the trees. Many of them were of the size of one's hand. The pieces of falling bark might be seen at a great height in the air—as much as 200 or 300 feet. The puzzled viewers of this curious shower could give no explanation of the cause of the occurrence."

Canada is doing an immense business in shipping lobsters to England,

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.
Technical Terms Used by Poultry Breeders.
There are very many persons who are familiar with poultry, their general appearance, and common habits, and yet wholly unacquainted with the recently introduced terms as applied to fowls; words the meaning of which, thus used, is Greek even to those well informed on general subjects. For the benefit of those who may desire to obtain the knowledge, I subjoin a glossary of technical terms, derived from the best authorities:
Beard.—A bunch of feathers under the throat of some breeds of chickens, such as Houdans or Polish. There are many phrases, such as brood, brooding, carriage, etc., that even the least unlearned will understand. We often hear of "litter of chickens," or similar expressions. Litter, as applied to poultry, is inelegant and in bad taste. We hear of a litter of pigs, a litter of kittens, etc., but a litter of chicks is entirely out of keeping. Carnulated—Covered with small fleshy protuberances, as on the head and neck of a key cock. Chick—A newly-hatched fowl. Chicken—The word applies indefinitely to any age under one year old. Clutch—This term is applied both to the batch of eggs set upon by a fowl, and to the brood of chickens hatched therefrom.
Cockerel.—A young cock. A cockerel does not truly become a cock until eighteen months of age, although he is generally thus termed at the age of one year. Not until a year and a half old does he get his final moult, and attain to the full glory of plumage and size. Cockerels have many deficiencies that disappear when they emerge into full-grown, full-plumed cocks. Then they become exhibition birds, with some trimming, and yet poor birds to breed from. It does not always follow that a bird is suitable for breeding purposes until he has been through a year or two. Many imperfections that presented themselves in the chicken generally repeat the discrepancy. Imperfect plumage may grow out or be plucked, and other points be corrected by the hand of the exhibitor. Exhibition birds do not always become so without aid. Nature is often assisted by art in this respect as well as others.
Comb.—The fleshy protuberance growing on the top of the fowl's head. Condition.—The state of the fowl as regards health, vigor, and general appearance. A crown or tuft of feathers on the head; of the same significance as top-knot. Crop.—The receptacle in which the fowl's food is stored before passing into the gizzard for digestion. Oustion.—The mass of feathers over a hen, covering the tail and wings. Crest.—The fleshy protuberance on the head, called a comb, and ear lobes, so as to leave the head smooth and clean. Ear lobes.—The folds of bare skin hanging just below the ears, by many called dead ears. They vary in color, being red, white, blue, and cream colored. Feet.—The fleshy protuberance under the wings used in flying, but tucked under the wings out of sight when at rest. Fluff.—Soft, downy feathers about the thighs, chiefly developed in Asiatics.
Furnished.—When a cockerel has obtained his full tail, comb, hackles, etc., he is said to be furnished. Gills.—This term is often applied to the wattles. Hackles.—The peculiar, narrow, long feathers on the neck of fowls. Henny or Hen.—Resembling a hen, but in the absence of her eggs. Leg fencers.—In and plumage generally. Hook.—The joint between the thigh and shank. Keel.—A word sometimes used to denote the breast bone. Leg.—In a living fowl, this is the scaly part, usually denominated the shank. In a dressed bird, the term refers to the joint above the wing.
Feathers growing on the outer side of the shanks in many of the Asiatics. Mossy.—Confused or indistinct markings in the plumage.
Pea Comb.—A triple comb resembling three small combs, one in the middle being the highest. Pencilling.—Small markings or stripes over a feather. These may run straight across, as in the Hamburgs, or in a crescent form, as in Partridge Cochins. Pout.—A young turkey. Primaries.—The flight feathers of the wings, hidden when the wing is raised, being tucked under the visible wing, which is composed of the "secondary" feathers. Usually the primaries contain the deepest color belonging to the fowl, except the tail, and great importance is attached to their color by breeders. A cockerel or a pullet of some breeds should never show a white Small comb, being hooked under the visible wing, which is composed of the "secondary" feathers. Usually the primaries contain the deepest color belonging to the fowl, except the tail, and great importance is attached to their color by breeders. 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