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The Somerset Herald

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His eyes would fill with tears.

He was so pitiful and kind
He'd dread to cut his lawn;
But though he'd never shock his friends,
He'd often shock his corn.

A score of carrots oft he'd give
To feed a widow's kine;
Such gems of charity are rare—
Full twenty carats fine,

His wretched horse could hardly creep,
Bill propped him while he grazed;
He said he'd have a better steed
When his celery was raised.

He'd sometimes cauliflower to him
When he had done his work—
He loved it stewed in buttermilk,
Or boiled with greens and pork.

But death at last mow'd William down,
And they planted him in loam,
And gave him for his epitph—
"He found sweet pease at home!"

STRANGELY MET.

'Well, I am really very sorry!' sighed Mrs. Evans, looking ruefully at the small pile of bank notes in her lap, and then at her fair daughters, Bell and Augusta, who were standing near her, examining a wreath of flowers.

"I'm sorry, too, mamma," said Bell.

'To be sure, Elsie ought to be provided for her visit, but you know she is the youngest, and we——'

'Why, we can't go out without decent dresses!' chimed in Miss Augusta.

'I won't for one, I know.'

'Never mind my London visit,' said little Elsie, the plain sister of these petted girls, as she quietly entered the room and overheard the conversation. 'I would as soon go and spend a week with Aunt Laura, and that won't take very much preparation.'

'Would you really?' asked Mrs. Evans, hesitating between a selfish wish to please her beauties, and what was only justice to the young girl beside her.

'I really would, ma. I dare say I would not be at home among those city people. Just let me go to Aunt Laura's, and give Gus and Bell all the finery.'

'Well, that relieves my mind wonderfully!' said Mrs. Evans, with a very long sigh. 'I didn't know how to arrange for you all. Three girls are so expensive. You can have my last winter's cloak, Elsie, for one thing.'

'No, she can have mine, mamma,' eagerly cried Bell. 'It's a little out of style for me, but it will do very well for Elsie, and then I'll get a new one."

"Well, yours, then,' agreed Mrs. Evans, 'and I'll try to save enough out of the girl's shopping, Elsie, to get you a black cashmere.'

'Then I shall be grand!' said easily contented Elsie. 'May I go next week?'

'Yes.'

'Go to work and get ready. Come, girls. If we want to do any shopping to-day, we must go immediately.'

'And I'll get dinner while you are gone,' Elsie consoled them by adding.

So, while the mother, Gus and Bell tossed over the glittering silks on snowy counters, patient Elsie heated herself in the kitchen—where her beautiful sisters would never go if they could help it—to have dinner all ready for them.

It was waiting when they returned, tired, and with good appetites, from their shopping. After it was eaten, Elsie followed them all into the sitting room, to see the new purchases commented on and very nicely displayed.

'Well, where's my black cashmere?' she asked, after the last bundle was unrolled, and not as much as a neck ribbon given her.

'Oh! I am so sorry, but really there wasn't a shilling left after the girls' shopping was done, and so—'

'And so I got none, like Mother Hubbard's dog,' suggested Elsie, trying to laugh, but feeling inclined to cry.

She had very much wished to go to London, and now she had given that up, she did think that she had a right to one new dress.

'Well, it does seem too bad,' confessed Augusta, 'but you can be pretty well dressed out of our things. Let's see, ma. 'She might travel in her black ulster, and have my gray poplin for best.'

'No, I'll travel in the gray poplin, and spoil it as quickly as I can!' flashed Elsie, roused for once.

'Why, Elsie?' mildly reproved Mrs. Evans.

'Well, mamma, you know I look horrid in gray. My waterproof will cover it up when I travel, and my black ulster will do for best, but I wish—' she only finished her sentence with a sigh. She would not say, "I wish you would have got me the cashmere," it would seem too much like blaming her mother.

Mrs. Evans thought it best not to notice the abruptly ended sentence, but proposed to the girls that they let her dress their hair at once.

There was a party on the cards for the evening, and their mother, having a gift in that line, often acted as hair dresser to her lovely maidens. They were ready, in their dainty robes and snowy gloves (four buttons, too,) when their cavaliers arrived, and away they went so gaily, while Elsie, at home, mended her old gloves, and made her simple preparations for her journey. She was asleep long before they came home. But at breakfast the next morning, they went into raptures over 'such a delightful party!' And especially over Mr. Lovell, the brother of their hostess, 'such a splendid fellow! So very handsome, and worth thousands, think of that!'

'Of course he would look handsome then, if he were really hideous,' observed Elsie, coolly.

'He's going away for a few days, but he promised to call when he comes back. You just ought to see him, Elsie,' declared Miss Bell, without noticing Elsie's caustic remark,' he's so handsome!'

'It makes very little difference to me whether he's handsome or homely. 'I'm going to be an old maid,' returned Elsie, buttering a roll.

'Well, I am not, if I can catch Archie Lovell,' averred Miss Bell, sipping her chocolate.

Mr. Lovell was dropped just then, but Elsie, two or three times that day, wondered if he were really so very handsome, or so rich, or if she would ever see him.

Elsie, herself, was a pleasant thing to see, if she was not a beauty, as she stood upon the platform at the station, ready for her journey. Her face was so bright and sweet, and her manner so winsome that no one would fail to to turn for a second look.

The carriages were well filled, and the only vacant seat was very near the hot stove. Here Elsie bestowed herself and her belongings. and began to glance around at her neighbors. A fine looking fellow, and a poorly dressed little girl just in front of her, attracted her most.

The gift of a golden orange from her lunch basket won the little one's favor and Elsie was soon chatting merrily with her, and had learned that she was on her way to live with her grandpa, because her mamma was too poor to keep them all in the city.

After a while the heat grew overpowering, and Elsie tried to raise her window, but it was fast. She tugged hard with her soft fingers—soft and white in spite of her kitchen work—all in vain, until a black sleeved arm was reached over hers, and a pleasant voice said:

"Allow me, please. My hands are stronger than yours."

Elsie looked up, and met the gaze of a fine pair of dark eyes, belonging to her neighbor.

The window was quickly raised, and Elsie thanked him, as the welcome air rushed in. They chatted a little now, politely, as travelers may do, and Elsie decided that he was very pleasant for a passing acquaintance.

Before long the girl in the next seat fell asleep, her little curly head bumping about uneasily. In an instant Elsie had unstrapped her shawl, and, rising, slipped it under the small brown head.

'is she traveling under your care?' asked the stranger.

'Oh, no! I never saw the little girl before.'

'But she is so little to be all alone, and her head did bump so!' said the stranger.

'She can rest easier now.'

The stranger said no more, and as Elsie was busily folding up her shawl straps, she did not see the glance of earnest admiration which he gave her nor knew that the outspoken thought of his heart would have been:

'You good, kind hearted little girl.'

When they stopped for refreshment, the stranger helped Elsie out and escorted her to the room. As they were leaving their seats, he said to her:

'Suppose we take your little friend here, too?'

'Oh, yes!' assented Elsie, flashing him a bright glance of approval.

So they took the little thing, and brought her back warmed and fed, to resume her journey. And it was a pity some good angel could not have whispered to the anxious mother, who, in the distant city, feared for her child's lonely journey, what kind of hands the little one had fallen into.

On rattled the train, until about the middle of the afternoon, there was a heavy jar, a hissing, crashing noise, and the train, a perfect wreck, lay over an embankment, with its living freight.

At first Elsie was so stunned and startled that she was conscious of nothing, heard nothing except moans and cries mingled with the jingle of shattered glass and the sound of escaping steam. Then her senses seemed to return. and she was trying to raise herself to her feet, when strong arms lifted her, and the voice of the stranger friend said:

'Steady, now! I think I can get you out safely. Are you hurt?'

'No; I think not. I don't feel any injury.'

'Are?—oh! you are!' as, looking up, she saw that his forehead was bleeding.

'Oh, that is nothing! A mere scratch with a piece of broken glass,' said the stranger, smiling at her horrified tone.

'I hope it will prove so,' answered little Elsie.

'Oh! our poor little girl! Where is she?'

'I don't know.'

'Thank you for remembering her. We will find her.'

'Put me down, please, I can walk now.'

'Let me help you,' pleaded Miss Elsie.

He obeyed her, and they found the little creature lying upon a broken seat, moaning with pain. The stranger carried her out, and laid her upon a spot of dry grass, and after a slight examination, told Elsie that her arm was broken, and one side bruised.

There chanced to be two or three physicians in the ill-fated train, and they gave their best skill to the wounded, our little girl among the rest. Elsie held her in her lap while the little arm was set and bandaged, and then laid her on the hastily prepared bed in the station, near which the accident had happened, and watched over her, assisted by the strange gentleman, who seemed now like an old acquaintance. When the train which was to carry them on arrived, Elsie said:

'I shall not leave this little thing until she is with her grandfather. She has told me where she was going. It is a little off my route, but I am going with her.'

'So am I,' added the stranger, with his pleasant smile. Humanity allows me to do as much as I can, in spite of conventional rules. 'I appoint myself to take care of both of you, and you need not fear to trust me.'

'I do not; and I thank you,' responded Elsie, with simple dignity.

So they both waited for the train on the other line, and cared tenderly for the little one, until, late at night, they left her in the care of her grandfather, who gave them his warmest thanks and blessings.

'Would you prefer to stop here for the night, there's a hotel, I suppose, or go on?' asked Elsie's friend.

'Oh, go on, if possible. My aunt will be much alarmed because I did not come to-day. Is there a train?'

'Yes.'

'I am told one passes in twenty minutes.'

'It shall be just as you wish.'

'Let us go on, then.'

'Very well. And now I am going to let you know whom you are traveling with.'

''No name,'' is inconvenient, and I am willing you should know mine.'

'I hope you will be as frank with me.'

He gave Elsie a card bearing the name 'Archie Lovell.'

For an instant Elsie was puzzled, then a light broke over her face. She produced her own card, saying, smilingly:

'I have heard the name quite often before. And I think you know mine. At least you know my sister.'

Mr. Lovell glanced at her card.

'Is it possible? Are you a sister of the Misses Evans who visit my sister?'

'Yes. I am the youngest sister.'

'Then, I declare myself well acquainted with you. And I consider this a most lucky meeting, Miss Elsie.'

Elsie's one week at Aunt Laura's proved to be three months. And when she came home, Gus and Bell were still talking about Mr. Lovell.

'He's been away on business,' explained Bell, 'but he returned on Monday, and he is going to-night.'

'Yes, he told me he would,' confessed Elsie, demurely.

'Told you? Why, you never saw him in your life!' cried the girls.

And then the whole story came out, and Elsie had to explain that already, on three month's acquaintance, she had promised Mr. Lovell to marry him, if her mother consented, and he was coming to ask for her that very night.

'Well, I never!' panted Bell. 'I never did!'

'I'm sorry, Bell,' said Elsie, demurely still. 'But you know that you would make me go to Aunt Laura's instead of the city, and so I met him, and—I can't help it now.'

'Well, we shall have him in the family, anyhow, and that's some comfort,' was Miss Bell's sole consolation.

How to Draw a Congregation.

Several years ago we were a resident of Northwestern Louisiana, near the confines of Texas. The people were, as a general thing, not much given to religion. An itinerant preacher happened to go along in the neighborhood during the dearth of religion, and set about repairing the walls of Zion in good earnest. But his success was poor. Not over half a dozen could be got together at his Sunday meetings. Determined, however, to create an interest before leaving the neighborhood, he procured printed hand-bills and had them posted up in every conspicuous place in the district, which read to the following effect:

"Religious Notice. Rev. Mr. Ramey will preach next Sunday in Dempsey's Grove at 10 o'clock a. m., and at 4 p. m., Providence permitting. Between the services the preacher will run his sorrel mare, Julia, against any nag that can be trotted out in this region, for a purse of $500.

This had the desired effect. People flocked from all quarters, and the desire to see the singular preacher was even greater than the excitement following the challenge. He preached an eloquent sermon in the morning, and after dinner he brought out his mare for the race. The purse was made up by five or six of the planters, and an opposing nag produced. The preacher rode his little sorrel and won the day, amid the deafening shouts, screams and yells of the delighted people. The congregation all remained to the afternoon service, and at its close more than two hundred joined the church, some from motives of sincerity, some for the novelty of the thing, and some because the preacher was a good fellow. The finale of the affair was as flourishing a society as could be found in the whole region thereabouts.

Laugh and Grow Fat.

There is not the remotest corner or little inlet of the minute blood vessels of the human body that does not feel some wavelet from the convulsion occasioned by good hearty laughter. The life principle, or the central man, is shaken to the innermost depth, sending new tides of life and strength to the surface, thus materially tending to insure good health to the person who indulges therein. The blood moves more rapidly and conveys a different impression to all the organs of the body, as it visits them on that particular mystic journey when the man is laughing, from what it does at other times. For this reason every good, hearty laugh in which a person indulges prolongs his life, conveying as it does new and distinct stimulus to the vital forces. Doubtless the time will come when physicians, conceding more importance than they now do to the influence of the mind upon the vital forces of the body, will make up their prescriptions more with reference to the mind and less to drugs with them, and will in so doing, find the best and most effective method of producing the required effect upon the patient.

A cluster of pearls has been found in Australia which will make the finder a fortune. It is composed of nine pearls about the size of peas and of fine lustre, which are bedded together in the shell in the form of a perfect cross an inch and a half in length.

A Battle of Birds.

The fact that bluebirds often take possession of boxes reared for the martins, is the cause of much contention between the two species. But the almost universal belief that the bluebird is too much for the martin is, according to my experience, very incorrect. In this latitude bluebirds often remain with us during the winter, and they may always be heard warbling their cheerful lays the first warm days in February. Soon they make and seek places in which to build their nests—a hollow apple tree, a vacated woodpecker's hole, a martin box, or even a gourd with a hole in it and placed a few feet above the ground is good enough for them.

At first they are very timid, but as nothing molests them they become more bold. However, they do not like to have near neighbors, and the males often engage in fearful combats even when their respective places of abode are several rods apart. They begin the attack in the air, and falling to the ground continue the struggle until entirely exhausted. I have often approached within a few feet of them and watched them several minutes. Sometimes they will lie by each other panting for some time, and then renew the engagement. But the martin does not put in an appearance till late in March; first the males, and some days later the females.

At first the martin is very timid, especially the female, and where the bluebirds have possession of a box it is very easy generally to hold the martins at bay, but no bluebird would dare to make himself at home in a box occupied by martins. But sometimes the martins grow very bold. In the spring the bluebirds took possession of the box which stands in front of the door where I am writing. We placed another box about three rods distant from the first box, which was soon occupied by martins; at first there was some sparring between the birds, but finally they settled down and I expected everything to go on nicely, but one evening just before sundown another male martin arrived, and at once made an attack on the bluebirds, which were then incubating. Several times the birds fell to the ground, but the martin is too high minded to wallow in the dirt, so he was immediately on the wing. At nightfall the bluebirds were in peaceful possession of their fort. The next morning I was up early to see if the martins would renew the attack. In a few moments the martin swooped down to the box and were promptly met by the bluebird. They flew forcibly against each other and fell, but the martin was up again and at the box, followed by the bluebird. Several times they came to the ground, but each time the martin sought the box. Soon the bluebird paused a moment on the ground. It was a fatal pause. The martin got into the box, and sat in one of the doors. The bluebird renewed the fight, and got the martin by the foot and drew him out, but like an arrow he was in again. This time he kept his feet out of the way and presented his widespread jaws. Both bluebirds flew at him, but he would catch and hold them until they were glad to get away. All day the fight was kept up, but that evening the bluebirds retreated. In two or three days the martin found a female which took the precaution to throw out the eggs of the bluebirds. Now, all day the bluebirds sat on a peach tree near by, uttering a plaintiff cry, so I made another box and placed it scarcely higher than my head. In an hour the bluebirds were cheerful and soon began to build. The young bluebirds have been out several days, and there are young martins in the other box.

Mr. Talmage sometimes gives out bits of wisdom that are wholly devoid of sensation and touch the right spot. In a recent sermon he gives some sound advice to women. Among other things he said: "It is a poor compliment to your sex that so many men feel obliged in your presence to offer unmeaning compliments Men capable of elegant and elaborate conversation elsewhere sometimes fell called upon at the door of a drawing-room to drop their common sense and to dole out sickening flatteries. They say things about your dress and about your appearance that you know and they know are false. They say you are an angle. You know you are not. Determined to tell the truth in office and store and shop they consider it honorable to lie to a woman. The same thing they told you on this side of the drawing-room three minutes ago they said to some one on the other side of the drawin room. Oh, let no one trample on your self respect. The meanest thing on which a woman can build her happiness is the flatteries of men."

There was no Collusion.

Uncle Ben was confronted with his supposed accomplice in a hen roost robbery.

"Fore de Lawd, Judge, I neber seed dat nigger befo."

"That may be, Uncle Ben, but the evidence goes to show that at first you were in collusion with the prisoner, and—"

"Skuse de interrupshun, but dat's whar I'se got de ebidence on de hip. Hit warn't in Collusion, it war in Harrisville dat I fust met de nigger."

The court explained the meaning of the word collusion.

"I don't 'spute de elucidations ob de word; it am keree," no doubt, but, boss yo' is mistaken agin. Dar was no collusion 'tween us, Hit don't stan' to reason dat dere was, kase dat nigger always wants de hull profits, an' I nebor colludes wid dat sorter a man. I'se a hones' man, Jedge, an' whar dere's no chance for me ter git nuffin, I neber collud.—*Texas Siftings.*

PITTSFORD, Mass., Sept. 18, 1878.

SIRS—I have taken Hop Bitters and recommend them to others, as I found them very beneficial.

Mrs. J. W. Tuller.

Where to go for Wild Ducks.

A young man from Louisville got wild on the question of ducks at Oconowoc, Wis., the other day. He had been out riding with a big girl from Michigan, and when he reached the hotel at night, he said:

"The woods are full of ducks."

Old heads smiled incredulously, and young men laughed derisively.

"It ain't time for ducks," someone said.

"It ain't, eh? Well, I saw more'n a million of them to-day up in the marshes."

The conversation was continued for some time, the upshot being that the youth who had seen the ducks finally converted a Chicago man, and the two made preparations to go after them in the morning.

Long before daylight the pair were up, and just as the gray began to appear in the east, they rolled out of town in a spring wagon.

Arriving at the swamp they took a boat and paddled about for some time, leaving their driver, a product of this stony soil, to look out for the horses and the lunch. The driver, a gentleman who knows ducks when he sees them, tells the rest of the story:

"The boys got separated after awhile," he says, "the Louisville chap keeping the boat, and swearing that he would uncover the birds, and the Chicago man wading around with rubber boots on, cussin' his luck, and saying he knew there wa'n't no ducks all the time. Pretty soon we heard a dreadful fusilade over where Louisville was supposed to be. It sounded like the roll of musketry in battle, and you would have been willing to bet that no one man with a single breech-loader could make such a racket. Well, we crept along as carefully as we could until we came to a little opening where we could see Mr. Louisville. He was standing in the water and mud waist deep, and was laying about him right and left with his gun. The slaughter was terrific. When he spied us he looked kinder wild-eyed, and made a motion to us to keep down, as if we would skeer the game. He had the boat half sunk with dead game, and birds were lying around in the water everywhere. We saw right away that the fellow was having too much fun and I called to him to let up until we could get there. As we approached he says, 'Come e-e-easy, boys, or you'll skeer the ducks.' 'Ducks!' I says; 'you condemned lunatic, them ain't ducks, them's mud hens!' Well, his jaw fell a couple of inches right away, but he has a kind of an idea to this day that they were ducks, after all. There's this about it—that fellow had the best hunting for an hour or two anybody will get in Wisconsin this fall. He had killed more'n sixty mud hens, and if we'd let him alone he'd have sunk the boat."—*Correspondence Chicago Times.*

How Much Wheat Seed Per Acre.

Where wheat is not at all crowded in a rich, mellow soil, and the tillering is not impeded, the average number of stems for each plant is about sixteen. Each one produces a head or ear, containing on an average, under reasonably favorably conditions fifty grains. Thus one grain yields eight hundred grains. At this rate the man who sows two bushels to the acre, would harvest sixteen hundred buhels per acre or else much of the seed it lost. The average yield of the country, however is less than fifteen bushels per acre. A bushel of wheat contains, ordinarily, 750,000 grains; two bushels, one million five hundred thousand grains. An acre of land contains slightly above six million square inches. So that each plant has four square inches from which to derive sustenance. Measure that on the ground and see how small it is. Can you expect the plant to make a vigorous growth on four square inches? Can you expect it to tiller and produce sixteen stems Can you expect it to mature sixteen full heads? The result of this crowding is plain. The plants cannot gain nutriment when growing so densely. Some must die that the others may live. The strong triumph and the weak succomb. This struggle for life begins as soon as the plants appear above ground. As the plants grow larger they require more room and others must give way, and very few, if any, attain a full growth. All are cramped and starved. Tillering is impeded; many plants do not tiller at all, and those that do, tiller imperfectly. The same is true of earing. Full ears can not be expected. An acre of wheat contains about eight hundred thousand heads. It is safe to say that on account of tillering, these are produced by three hundred thousand plants. Consequently only one fifth of the grain sown produces mature plants; these plants produce less than one-fifth of the proper number of stems by tilling, and these produce imperfect heads. This is almost entirely caused by crowding.