

The Forest Republican.

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TEAS, COFFEES, SYRUPS, FRUITS, SPICES, HAMS, LARD, AND PROVISIONS OF ALL KINDS, at the lowest cash prices. Goods warranted to be of the best quality. Call and examine, and we believe we can suit you. GEO. W. BOVARD & CO. Jan. 6, '72.

CONFECTIONARIES.

L. AGNEW, at the Post Office, has opened out a choice lot of GROCERIES, CONFECTIONARIES, CANNED FRUITS, TOBACCOES, CIGARS, AND NOTIONS OF ALL KINDS. A portion of the patronage of the public is respectfully solicited. L. AGNEW.

A MIDDLE-AGED LOVE-STORY.

They had come, a little group of friendly faces, to watch me off, with waving handkerchiefs and kindly good-byes; and I stood on the stern nodding and waving back, till the steamer swept down the river out of their sight.

I knew I should have their prayers that the great sea might be gentle with me; I knew they would watch the weather, and look for the telegram of the arrival of our ship; yet I knew I was taking nothing from their lives, and that they each would go home hardly missing me; so it was with no great wrench of heart that I saw the pilot put off from us, and took the last look at my native shores.

During most of the passage I was just comfortably seasick, so I sat all the day long in a reclining-chair on deck, watching the white caps on the purple and green and blue waves that mounted and fell, down and up, up and down, away out to the fair horizon. I saw the shining nautilus float by, and now and then a whale, or a shoal of porpoises, or a sail, speering white full across the water.

I saw also a good many other things nearer by; for I didn't put my eyes in my pocket along with my short-sighted glasses; and nobody was much likely to mind a middle-aged woman in hood and waterproof.

The first thing I saw was a young girl with dark eyes, and brown hair that rippled itself into a tangle of rough curls whenever she took off her net. She was not so very pretty, nor so very brilliant; but there was a piquant charm about her that attracted half the passengers before the first day was over.

By the end of the second day, everybody, from the captain to the ship's surgeon, and from the surgeon to the cabin-boy, was eager to show her attention; and everybody was met by the same genial smile and lively retort. She won her way at once into my heart by the kindly thought that led her to bring little relishes from the table to tempt my sickly appetite, and to soothe my forehead with bay-water and gentle touches of her shapely brown hands, where a great emerald glittered, encircled by diamonds.

Very soon she got into the habit of drawing her rug beside my chair, and sitting on the deck leaning against me, so that I might "pet her," as she said.

This was how it happened that my quiet, out-of-the-way corner came to be the centre of the life and gaiety and romance of the whole ship-board.

It seemed this young girl, Rosa Ar-nour, was an only child, and an orphan, going to an uncle in Germany, her nearest of kin. "Dear heart! I hope her uncle will be wise as well as loving," said I to myself very often; for she seemed too fragile a bubble of humanity to drift on through life alone.

The tips of her brown curls were lighter than the rest; and there and there were little bright touches all over her hair, as though the sun was shining in spots on it. One morning I sat colling those gleams of sunshine around my fingers, and watching a flock of Mother Carey's chickens skim restlessly over the restless water, thinking these thoughts about Rosa, and having her soft presence alone to myself for a few moments. Not many, however; soon, up came a New Zealander; of course there was a New Zealander, or an Australian, on our boat.

"You are very lowly, Miss Armour," said he. "Let me bring you a chair."

"Thank you; I prefer to sit here on my rug, and have Miss Wells pet me," replied Rosa (turning up her eyes languidly). "The deck is my favorite seat, if I can only have an excuse to sit on it."

"But you need something over you," persisted the New Zealander, going away, and coming back directly with his own heavy gray wrap. Then he seated himself on a low camp-stool beside her, folding the wrap over the two. "I never saw so rough a sea as this all the way from Honolulu to San Francisco," said he, looking out upon the gentle swell of the lazily-mounting waves.

"Rough!" cried Miss Armour. "I am sure the ocean is as smooth as a mill-pond!" "Oh! but not as compared to the Pacific-beechnut; it was rightly named. We have never such gales on that as sweep the Atlantic, but only the gentlest westerly breezes." The New Zealander shivered as he spoke, and drew his wrap closer over his knees. "We have the most charming climate in New Zealand," he went on; "we are never too hot, and never too cold. In fact, we never think of the winter. And the soil is the most fertile in the world."

"Pity it is such an out-of-the-way part of the earth that nobody can live there," said Miss Armour.

"Beg your pardon, miss; there are several English towns of thirty-thousand inhabitants each; and we never think of ourselves as being out-of-the-way, but rather feel sorry for those who live so far off," returned the other, bending his tall figure earnestly forward.

Rosa leaned her pretty head towards him in a confiding attitude of interest, and laughed: "Oh, so you are the people, and wisdom is going to die with you!" said she. "But what do you do out there in the heart of the universe?"

"We dig gold for one thing, and raise sheep for another—millions and millions of them; from thirty to forty vessels are constantly plying to England with the tallow and pressed wool."

"What do you do with all that mutton?" asked Rosa, looking idly at the light in her ring, and then as idly at the light in the speaker's eyes.

"We use what we can," was the reply; "and sometimes, I am sorry to say, we bury the flesh—not usually; but sometimes an order will come to one farmer for a thousand sheep, if you please; and all he can do is to clip off the wool, get out the fat, and bury the carcasses."

"What a pity the meat can't be sent to the hungry poor at home! Why don't somebody condense it as they do the beef in Texas?" I said in my practical way.

"In good time I dare say somebody will; but we can't do everything at once," replied the New Zealander, looking with sudden interest at the game of shuffle-board being played beside us.

Just then along came the ship's surgeon, a blonde youth in uniform with his hair parted in the middle. "Miss Armour," said he, "the gun is to be fired at the bow; will you come and see it done?"

Miss Armour started up at once, turning the same half-confiding glance and ready smile upon him she had been giving us.

"I am going to leave my rug with you; I shall come back," said she, beaming over her shoulder upon me as she took the surgeon's arm and went away.

The New Zealander looked after her, tried to console himself by drawing his wrap in another fold across his knees, did not succeed, and finally got up and went away. Of course it was not worth his while to make himself agreeable to a middle-aged woman in hood and waterproof. So I sat, and looked at the likeness of a lake among the sunset clouds, and tried to decide whether I had better take oatmeal gruel or biscuit-tea for my supper; wondering the while, half unconsciously, about the old chord in my memory that was always being struck by a certain musical ring in the New Zealander's voice.

After an hour or so the gun was fired; and presently Miss Armour came back, with the disorder of the strong sea-wind in her, and its freshness in her pretty pink cheeks.

"I've come as I said," she murmured, dropping at my feet again, and smiling up, as though she had got where she best loved to be—just such a smile as she would have given to the stokers down in the engine-room, or to the ship's cat. But it was lovely to look upon while it lasted; and we middle-aged people have learned to warm ourselves in any chance ray of sunlight, without stopping to consider whether it is likely to be perpetual.

This time the bit of sunshine did not stay long; for there came up an artist with his sketch-book; and when Miss Armour had sufficiently admired his graphic pencillings of the captain and the quarter-master, and the sea-sick occupant of an upper berth, it was time to throw the log; and so he bore her off, to find out by her own eyes whether we were actually going at the rate of thirteen knots or only twelve and a half.

That was how the days went. The passengers read and paced the deck, played games and guessed riddles, and were always hungry; the pilot stood steady and firm at the wheel; the sailors ran up and down about the rigging like overgrown spiders, and were forever scouring and scrubbing, tying and untying, drawing up and letting down. Thus at last we had come safely almost to our desired haven. With fair sailing, we were only one day out from port; and, fond as we had grown to be of each other, we were getting impatient to part.

Miss Armour, during all the voyage, had kept on as she began, beguiling every one with her trick of lip and eye. They ran after her like boys at the string of a kite. Well, they had nothing better to do just then; and when she had faded out, as a rainbow fades, I made no doubt she would be

as easily forgotten, or only remembered as a midsummer's day-dream, by all, unless it might be a solitary, warm-hearted man like the New Zealander. To tell the truth, I was a little sorry for him. Evidently life had not brought him all it might, and he was hungry for the love and confidence that had never been his. So I was afraid he would miss this little sparkle of girlhood and warm youth, and find the void deeper when it had gone out.

To the very last day, Rosa kept her place by my chair; and to the very last the New Zealander kept his place by her, when no one younger stepped in to carry her off, which was pretty often, to be sure. Then he always quietly went away himself, with a kind of grave regret in his face. On this last morning, Miss Armour had just left us along with a young lawyer, to drop oranges and lemons among the storage passengers, when I noticed the New Zealander looking after her with a sadder regret than usual—almost a pain—in his eyes. He had such handsome dark eyes! I could see that without my glasses.

"Now," said I to myself, "I hope he isn't going to get soft—a sensible, gentlemanly, agreeable man like him, and quite old enough to be her father!" And so I looked at him to see if he was, when suddenly he turned upon me.

"At least you might have written, Agatha Wells!" said he, sharply. I started, as you may think, to hear my own name spoken so familiarly by a stranger; when, looking again, behold! I saw beneath the bronze, and under the wrinkles and behind the beard, a face that twenty years before was the dearest in the world to me—the face of Duncan Ashley! We parted one day, expecting to meet on the next; but that evening he was called away, and wrote instead of coming. In the letter he said what he had said before with his eyes—yes, those same beautiful eyes—that I was the choice of his heart and the desire of his life.

"Answer me," said he; "I cannot wait till I see you." So I answered—a long, foolish letter, though there was no need of writing, for he had read all I could say long before, with those eyes of his. Then I watched and waited for him, but never saw him or heard one word more. If you are young, you can imagine the slow dying-out of hope and expectation; and if you are old, you know how such things can be lived over, and hidden in secret graves.

But now, as though the graves had been opened and the judgment set, came this sudden reproachful question up from the buried past. I fairly caught my breath, as I turned back my eyes, and looked him in the face again.

"Forgive me," said he directly, in a gentler tone. "I did not mean to speak. You brought it out with your eyes; that questioning turn was so familiar. Of course you were quite right, and I never blamed you. I never meant you should see me again; but the temptation to feel myself beside you, only to be in the soothing charm of your presence, was too great. It has been a blessing I shall carry with me all the rest of my life."

He was rising to go away, but I put out my hand. "I did write, Duncan Ashley," said I; "the letter must have gone wrong."

"You did! You wrote!" he cried, sinking back in his chair again, and looking at me eagerly. "What did you say?"

"There was only one thing I could say, and I said that," I answered, blushing as though I had just written the letter.

A middle-aged woman in hood and waterproof! But, dear me! it was only my face that was middle-aged, after all; my heart was as young and silly as ever. And as for Duncan's face, the marks of care, and thought, and time, fell off, leaving in it only the eternal youth of love.

It was the old story of a lost letter, and the older story of a proud man believing himself rejected and humiliated, and fleeing to the ends of the earth with his pain.

"Twenty precious years wasted!" said my New Zealander. "We will not be separated another day while we both live. There is a clergyman among our passengers, and we will be married this very hour."

That was so like his headlong decisions! Certainly he did need a sober second thought like me for ballast. "That cannot be," I cried; "the ceremony wouldn't be legal without a license or something. And I would by no means do anything so sensational and conspicuous."

But, bless your heart! I might as well have tried to wipe up the Atlantic with my pocket-handkerchief. He was so grieved, and so impatient, and so resolute (and, indeed, when one comes to think of it, twenty years is

long enough for an engagement), that I finally dropped off my waterproof and my sea-sickness, and stood up behind the bimble, and was married before eight bells that very morning—ring and all. Duncan produced it from a small casket, where he had carried it in his waistcoat pocket for the whole twenty years.

"I could never bear to put the little thing away," said he, looking at it tenderly.

The next day we came to port, with the sun shining and our flags flying. There was a flurry of good-byes, a hoisting of trunks, a welcoming of friends on the shore, and a glad hurrying to and fro.

Among the rest was an instant's nestling of Miss Armour's lips on my cheek, and a little cling of her hand in mine, the vanishing of a smile, and she was gone, like the flash of a firefly, out of my sight forever. But wherever she is, and however she fares, she has the daily blessing of two middle-aged hearts, whose way to each other she unconsciously lighted.

NOTES IN CHURCH.—A clergyman was recently annoyed by people talking and giggling. He paused, looked at the disturbers, and said—"I am always afraid to reprove those who misbehave, for this reason. Some years since, as I was preaching, a young man who sat before me was constantly laughing, talking and making uncounted grimaces. I paused and administered a severe rebuke. After the close of the service, a gentleman said to me, 'Sir, you have made a great mistake. That young man you reproved is an idiot.' Since that I have always been afraid to reprove those who misbehave themselves in chapel, lest I should repeat that mistake, and reprove another idiot." During the rest of the service there was good order.

Dr. Chalmers beautifully said: "The little I have seen in the world, and known of the history of mankind, teaches me to look at their errors in sorrow, and not in anger. When I take the history of one poor heart that has sinned and suffered, and represent to myself the struggles and temptations it has passed through—the brief pulsations of joy; the tears of regret; the feebleness of purpose; the scorn of the world that has little charity; the desolation of the soul's sanctuary, and threatening voices within; health gone, happiness gone—I would fain leave the erring soul of my fellow-man with Him from whose hands it came."

The Christian Union tells a good story: The Rev. Mr. Laurie, of Erie, exchanged with Dr. Chapin on Sunday, and soon after he appeared in the desk people began to go away. He watched the exodus a few minutes, and then rising, said in a deep voice, clearly heard throughout the church, and with just sufficient Scotch brogue in his voice to give readiness to his words: "All those who came here to worship Almighty God will please join in singing a hymn, and while they are doing so, those who came here to worship E. H. Chapin will have an opportunity to leave the church." His audience did not diminish after that.

A gentleman in Bombay, seeing an anchorite sitting under a cocoanut tree, asked for an interest in his prayers. The anchorite replied he would with pleasure grant the request, but he scarce knew what best to ask for him. "I have seen you often," said he, and you appear to enjoy good health, and to have everything that can conduce to human happiness; perhaps the best thing I can ask for you will be a grateful heart.

If the general tendencies to ecclesiastical union are the manifestations of an "epidemic," as some assert, it is not the less providential. Certainly there is no great sorrow of death in it.

A recent traveler says: "What always impresses me more than anything else in Egypt and Palestine has been the entire absence of cheerful or exhilarating music, especially from children. You never hear them singing in the huts. I never heard a song that deserves the name in the streets or houses of Jerusalem. One heavy burden of voiceless sadness rests upon that forsaken land. The daughters of music have been brought low. 'The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice ceaseth; the joy of the harp ceaseth.'"

If God needed worship He would not be God. It is you that need to worship Him.

Many who deem death too sacred a subject for jest do not hesitate to jest about God.