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THE WOODEN GOOSE.

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No. In the present state of your mother's health and intelligence a good faithful nurse can be procured that will answer as well as you, and I can have my wife again, my home it's mistress, and you some share of life. If this thing goes on, I shall begin to hate the whole kit of your relations. It seems that I am nobody, not to be considered, a cipher, a nonentity. There is nobody in the world to be thought of but your brother's pulling wives and a paralyzed old woman." "But, Charlie darling, you forget it is my mother." "You forget it is your husband." "And the end of it all was a violent quarrel between Mellicent's husband and James and Francis, all taking the same view from antagonistic points, and Charlie flung himself out of the house, and vowed he would never write or call upon his wife for a word till she returned to his house. And he kept his word. And he thought every day how he had to forego the sweet presence that others could enjoy, how he missed the hand and head, the thousand and one little devices of skill and talent, with which she beautified the home and changed the beautifying. Perhaps he had no thought of the tax at all that had been upon her, in addition to the cares of housekeeping; but he thought a great deal about the tax it was to her to be painting and selling, in addition to the keeping of her mother and her mother's home and the home of those three hulking boys. He could not comprehend or make allowance for her natural feeling, it had grown into something that so outraged his own rights and feeling; and to him her bewildered conscience seemed at last to be only an excuse for doing what she preferred. He grew more and more angry, in a sort of blind rage, that her life should be spending for these people and not for himself, and one day she received notice of a suit of divorce upon the plea of desertion. Poor Mellicent! She had felt it coming. When week by week and month by month went by at first, and her pleasant home was still so far away, she had felt it coming in her husband's impatience, that she recognized to be as righteous as it was unreasonable. Every day had been an agony of apprehension to her. But when at last the notice came, she was, at any rate, out of her suspense, and had the rest of certainty. She did not blame Charlie; she could not. She did not believe in divorce herself, she held herself as much his wife as ever; but in the silent depths of her heart she bitterly upbraided fate that had forced this cruel lot upon her, and she wore a black gown always afterward. It was at this point that Ben, the eldest of the three lads, brought home one day a young wife. Perhaps the outspoken reproaches of James and Francis made Mellicent more lenient. Ben had nothing with which to support a wife, but Mellicent felt that, at any rate, here was a help in household duties and in the nursing of the mother, and again silently upbraided fate that had brought her home a year ago, and set her free herself to go to her own home for a while, before the husband whom she so loved had taken this fatal step. But of course Mellicent was mistaken in hoping for any good fortune out of her life's events. The young wife soon proved to be only a miserable invalid, and another weight upon her hands. Mellicent dared not think; she let her mind dwell neither upon the future nor the past; she only lived from one moment to the next, and only set one foot before the other. This would have been easier for Mellicent if she had had anything to console her as she went along. The boys seemed fond of her in their way—she was an affair of their comfort, and they valued her as a part of it; they were not fond of her in a way to save her an hour's work or a moment's pang. Her mother was of course so fond of her that she would hardly let her out of her sight—an oppressive, savage fondness that made only bondage. But she had none of a daughter's friendly confidences with her; the height of their intercourse was a subdued fault-finding on the mother's part, as if it were owing to Mellicent's act that she was ill and poor and helpless and got well no faster. So Mellicent went along with her burden; now and then she found time to read a book, although usually it was in the watches of the night, and in order to keep herself awake when some exacerbation of her mother's illness occurred; and now and then Maud, the new wife, gave her a little pleasure of music, being often well enough to play the piano of an evening, and letting the strains mount to Mellicent in the sick-room, the least in the world refined and mellowed by the ascent. Whether it was that her powers ripened now with the years, or whether the strain upon her nerves wrought them to the highest expression, Mellicent had never painted so well as she did now, and her work took on a decorative character that brought fine prices. She had not sufficient suspicion in her nature to think of concealing the fact; and as soon as the brothers knew of it they saw vistas of good fortune opening before them. They were not going to ask Mellicent directly for her money; they knew a trick worth two of that. Francis had long wanted a horse and phaeton; and James' wife was longing for a velvet carpet on her parlors and hall. And then the wives quietly let Mellicent know that the boys were worrying to death over their debts, and Mellicent paid the debts. And what had been done once was presently done again. Well, if Mellicent could do that, why could she not do more? If Dolph might only go to Europe for a year and improve himself in his specialty, what an architect he would be! It was talked of

guardedly till Mellicent caught the idea and then gradually discussed openly. And at last Mellicent thought she might venture. Of course it required her to work all but night and day; and all but night and day she did. Dolph wrote her delightful accounts of what she could see only through his eyes; and he said little of other experiences that he had while she dived with her brushes and colors, and called upon a tired brain for fresh effort. One day now James decided to change his business. But it involved his leaving town for a while. And while he was away, why could not his wife and daughter come and stay at mother's? It was always mother's, although Mellicent provided everything there was there except the house. Very true, why not? Mother was delighted, in her feeble way, with the idea of added members and cheer in the house; and Maria and her daughter Helen came over. Of all the women in the world, to none was Mellicent so thoroughly antipathetic as to Maria, a mischief-making, suspicious person of a jealous temperament, obnoxious to Mellicent in her personality, her manner, her want of taste, her want of principle, and the very sound of her voice. When she saw the auction going on in James' house, and she realized what it meant—a move for life—she reeled away stunned. It did not seem to her that she could bear this last drop of bitterness, the utter bitterness of daily life with a wrangling woman, whose child had been trained to be little better than a spy. Not that there was anything to spy, but that even the smallest trifles, misinterpreted and reported, add to the boiling of the daily strife. And when Roger, who despised this sister-in-law, saw what it all meant, and Dolph, who already hated her, came home, the combat deepened. Roger and Dolph must have rooms outside the house then, and of course, Mellicent must be responsible for them. Roger had a small salary, with which he dressed himself and bought theatre tickets; Dolph played the fine gentleman while waiting for older architects to appreciate his gifts and apply to him for aid. They were perfectly secure, for according to Mellicent's view of life a debt long left was almost as dishonouring as a theft, and one owed by any member of the family was owed by all of them, and that meant owed simply by herself. "I don't see why you do work so constantly," her mother whispered, in her indistinct way. "I should think you would see I needed your attention as much as your everlasting boards and canvases." When, one day, a second attack of the disease rendered her mother's tongue powerless at last, and she really did need more attention, the canvases and designs had to suffer; but it was no relief that her mother could not upbraid her any more by word of mouth; the beseeching, following eyes were doing it all the time. Of course Maud could do nothing in this emergency, and Mrs. James was worse than useless. Mellicent had to break through the mother's prejudices and hire a nurse, in order that she might go on with absolutely necessary work less totally hindered. It is hardly surprising that this course met with a very decided objection from Mrs. James, who saw money diverted from legitimate channels by the nurse—money that would have bought Helen the loveliest of spring suits, and who always pleased herself by speaking her mind, and could not, for the life of her, see why an old woman should be indulged to the point of ruining the rest of the family. What a household it was! James had returned, and having, with his wife, organized an opposition to Maud and Ben, the atmosphere was only one of crimination and recrimination. Mellicent could do nothing for her mother that Maria did not make her uncomfortable because it was not done for Helen; she could buy herself no luxury without feeling that she deprived Dolph and Roger of its equivalent; she could give them nothing without encountering scowls and unpleasant remarks from James and Francis. The bills for Maud's doctors and message women and drugs were sums that might have made a provision for old age. She began to feel as if it would soon be an impossibility for her to meet them and all the rest, for in this atmosphere invention was deadened and the pencil palsied; sometimes it seemed to her as if every line she drew represented irreparable waste of vital tissue. Not that personally she cared for that. All the vital tissue might waste, so far as she was concerned, but not till her mother had gone; not while she was so needed by the rest, for by one of the strange contradictions there are in all of us, she loved these vampires that were sucking her life-blood. "We must stop our bills and lessen our expenses," she said one day to Ben. "There are a half-score of my things unsold at the exhibition. I am ceasing to be the fashion. My brain seems to be useless. I have no ideas, no freshness, and my hand trembles so that it caricatures my line. If I could only go away just now, and have a little rest!" A little rest. For ten years now it had been nothing but work and worry, sorrow and now was coming despair. Francis came in one evening and told her that unless she could help him about the mortgage of his house it would have to go. He had mortgaged it when he wished money for something or other, sure, probably, somewhere in his inner consciousness, if not in his external thoughts, that she would redeem it; and now the day of redemption or of loss had come. There was only one thing to do—the mother, with the consent of the rest, could mortgage the homestead. But the consent of the mother could now never be had; so there was nothing to do. Yes, one thing—Mellicent could give her note. Her dealers would doubtless

discount it. And to meet it? There was the great prize to contend for. Gained, it would discharge the note. Not gained, the note could be renewed, and constant work must wipe it out. "I have not the strength," she murmured, appalled. But, nevertheless, she tried. And any one who has called upon a brain alternate fire and lead knows what the effort was. Never before had Francis shown such interest in her work. He was in to see it in the morning, and gave it its last look at twilight. "What a devoted brother he is!" his wife said to her crouching. "I never knew a piece of yours hang on so," he said to Mellicent. "And somehow it has none of your old snap. It is leaden. You really must call up your reserves, Mellicent, if you want to win that prize." "You really must," said James. "If you want to win the prize," said Ben. Poor Mellicent! She looked at her work, and realized what they meant. The fountain was exhausted; the sparkling flow had ceased; they were drawing how the drops, the very lees of life. And why should she call up her reserves? why should she win the prize? why should she not slip away and let somebody else work now! What reward had she for all her work? Not even the consciousness of doing right, for her sense of right and wrong had always been conflicting, and never left her at ease since the second time her husband had demanded her return. And as for living for the sake of such a home as she had, was it worth the while? And if her right hand lost its cunning what then? She shuddered to think of herself then at the mercy of these ravening wolves, as for one moment they stood revealed to her—only one glancing and fading moment. She was holding the candle and looking at her picture carefully as these thoughts swept through her. Suddenly a little flash, a creeping light, a crackle, a flame. She had held the candle too near. The work was ruined. She did not care for the work; but it was hard work; there was no time for more; it was her last chance; and a thousand sharp, heart-burning thoughts darted into the air like sparks, and then a withering flash seemed to surround and blast her. They found her lying on the floor, the candle extinguished as she had fallen. She never knew what befell her, but slipped off her burden in that flash, and if there was any more work done in that family, it was not done by Mellicent.—Harper's Bazar.

NEWS AND NOTES FOR WOMEN.

Shirring is quite popular again. Large patterned brocades are much worn. Long evening gloves come with painted backs. Brown bids fair to be the favorite color this winter. Jettied braids appear among the new dress trimmings. Lace and small fichus are worn with morning dresses. Belts and sashes are tied at the side, instead of the back. Gold crowned bonnets are no longer stylish, and are but little worn. Crazy patchwork is said to have been suggested by certain Japanese patterns. Ribbed silk jerseys are the latest form of this most popular and comfortable jacket. Worsted lace is a pretty novelty and is seen in all shades. It will be much worn this season. The teller of the Granite National bank, of Quincy, Massachusetts, is Miss Flora Underwood. It is predicted that full, gathered skirts, and boots without heels, will be the next fashionable caprice. Bombay husbands cut off their wives' noses for punishment. In a single week five such cases were lately reported. As late as 1840 there were but seven vocations into which New England women had entered; in 1844 the number was 317. Miss Laura White, a sister of Congressman J. D. White, of Kentucky, has been admitted to the special school of architecture in Paris. Snakeskin belts are fashionable. The skin is highly polished and mounted in gold or silver. The rattlesnake skin is most highly prized. The old style English walking hat in pale brown and gray shades is coming in fashion, and will be worn in the street during the coming season. Turbans made of marabout feathers are coming in style again. They will be worn down on the forehead, after the old fashion, and not on the back of the head, as they have recently been worn. Bag vests are still worn, especially on the dresses made of soft, clinging materials. On the new imported dresses, the vests are invariably made of velvet of a contrasting shade to the rest of the dress. A Troy, N. Y., robin found three pieces of costly lace lying on a lawn bleaching, and carrying them off built herself a very high-toned nest of them. She was allowed to bring up a family in the nest. Painted fans are losing their popularity in Europe. At a sale in Madrid a Watteau fan, formerly belonging to the Princess of Savoy, brought only \$740. In London, fifteen years ago, one of no greater beauty sold for \$2,550. The latest novelty in bouquets was carried by the Princess of Wales at a ball after the races at Goodwood. It was of roses, and in the middle of it was concealed a miniature electric lamp, the light from which could be turned on at will by means of a little switch in the form of a lady's brooch. The hats and bonnets of the coming season are contradictions of each other. The hats are large, with tall, tapering crowns, and narrow or medium width brims. The bonnets, on the contrary, are small, and there is a tendency to revive the "gable roof" brim, a peak above the forehead, introduced two years ago. Empress Eugenie's long black coat and black cane, on which she leans constantly attract the deepest sympathy of the gay world at Carlsbad. She lives at the chateau of Westminster, near the Schlossbrunnen, and is accompanied by the wife of General Bourbaki and M. Petre, formerly prefect of the police under the empire. Belts can be worn with all waists. They are narrow or wide, according to taste. Deep belts are not suitable for women with short waists. Silver buckles are much sought after when artistically chased. Young ladies and misses wear belts without buckles. These are closed under a rosette or ribbon bow. The same bows are on the shoulder, and at the front of the neck. The director's sash is also worn. It is wide, of soft fabric, and is loosely tied on the side. One Snake Swallows Another. Colonel Bob Gillam has in a glass-fronted box five large sharks, two black and three rattlesnakes. None of them have had their fangs removed, but all are as dangerous as when captured. The largest is over five feet long and has thirteen rattles. They were all captured by Mr. Vise Sandford on his farm in Greene county. Not long since Mr. Gillam had a very large king snake in his box, and obtaining a black snake, he put the two in the box and watched for the result. For several days the king snake would eat nothing that was given him, and only watched the black. Finally, one day, sounds and a desperate struggle attracted those in the store where the reptiles were kept, and it was seen that the king snake had the black's head in its mouth, and was endeavoring to swallow him. The two fought, writhing and lashing their tails for an hour, when the black snake was dead. The king snake was three weeks in swallowing the black, and for six weeks after he had completed this he ate nothing.—Athen (Ga.) Banner. It is a wise candidate who knows his own picture on a campaign banner.—New York Journal.

IN AUTUMN-TIME.

Now comes the brilliant mornings, kindling all The woody hills with pinnacles of fire. —Bayard Taylor. The maple swamps glow like a sunset sea, Each leaf a ripple with its separate flush. —J. R. Lowell. The fallen leaves are with raindrops pearly, And southward flies the swallow; Is song then passed from the silent world? Is there no spring to follow? —Anon. I see again as one in vision sees The blossoms and the bees, And hear the children's voices shout and call, And the brown chestnuts fall. —Longfellow. The year's departing beauty hides Of wintry storms the sullen threat, But in thy sternest frown abides A look of kindly promise yet. —Bryant. The busy shuttle comes and goes Across the rhymes, and deftly weaves A tissue out of autumn leaves, With here a thistle, there a rose. —T. B. Aldrich. It was autumn, and incessant Pipe the quails from shocks and sheaves, And, like living coals, the apples Burned among the withering leaves. —Longfellow. The summer passed, the autumn came; the stalks Of lilacs blackened in the garden walks; The leaves fell, russet golden and blood red, Love letters, thought the poet, fancy led. —Longfellow. Think not, when the wailing winds of autumn Drive the shivering leaflets from the tree— Think not all is over; spring returneth; Buds and leaves and blossoms thou shalt see. —Mrs. Stowe. Whither away, Robin, Whither away? Is it through envy of the maple leaf, Whose blushes mock the crimson of thy breast, Thou wilt not stay! —E. C. Steadman. The bird wanders careless while summer is green, The leaf-hidden cradle that rocked him unseen; When autumn's rude fingers the woods have undressed, The boughs may look bare, but they show him his nest. —Holmes. HUMOR OF THE DAY. An ocean swell—a naval dude.—Siftings. Great staying powers—Those of the girl of the period.—Life. A dependant person ought never to eat bluefish.—Boston Post. A cool proceeding—Icebergs in motion.—Bradford Sunday Mail. The old bull may mellow, but he can't blow his own horn.—Blizzard. Old maids would make a very tiresome literary society, because they are always ready for the question.—Scissors. In crime as in horse racing, the fast ones come under the string first, if the judges do their duty.—Merchant-Traveler. Softly, through the garden gate he's stealing, To meet his love upon the grassy plat, The risen moon his little form just revealing; 'Tis not Adonis—'tis the Thomas cat. —Marathon Independent. "The New York Commercial says 'campaign songs are now played by the barrel.' But many of them are first ground out by an organ."—Norristown Herald. A nice, pious young man, who tried to steal a kiss from a Washington belle, got his nose so covered with red paint that he in a pastor subsequently stopped him in the street and discoursed to him for ten minutes on the evils of strong drink.—Burlington Free Press. A London physician has ascertained that there are "six deaths among one thousand married men, ten among the same number of bachelors, and twenty-two in the same number of widowers." It is believed that married men are usually too busy to die.—New York Graphic. "This is a nice neighborhood; strange that the authorities would allow a blacksmith shop around here," remarked Sanderson, when on a visit to Boston. "Oh, that's not the noise of a blacksmith shop; that's my neighbor's daughter practicing a piece of Wagner's music," replied the Bostonian.—Brooklyn Times. PERIL OF A PET. "Oh, doctor!" she cried, in a spasm of fear, "Come, fly as you never flew before, Else, ere you can save him, my poor little dear The borders of death will cross o'er!" He slacked not his speed till he entered her door. Where he found a remarkable group—Six ladies, with tear-dampened faces, hung o'er A pug-dog with symptoms of croup. —St. Paul Herald. The black death of the fourteenth century, believed by some to have been Asiatic cholera, although the symptoms, as described by the historians of the day, differ widely, actually decimated the world. It is computed that 15,000,000 perished in China, and elsewhere in the East about 25,000,000 more. Germany lost nearly 1,300,000; Italy half its entire population; London alone in excess of 100,000. In Europe fully 30,000,000 must have died, and, in all quarters of the globe, not far from 70,000,000. Penny dinners for school children have been instituted under the direction of the London school board.