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# THE AGITATOR

Devoted to the Extension of the Area of Freedom and the Spread of Wealthy Reform.

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## THE LAST PROMISE.

By Miss M. L. DODD.  
"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—Matthew 28th 20.  
Upon the misty mountain's height,  
The Savior met His chosen band,  
And with the long spring's golden light,  
He gave to them His last command.  
The fragrant breath of bursting buds,  
Floated upon the pure fresh air,  
And nature's music reached around,  
Even from His own loved land of prayer.  
All joyous sounds seemed there to meet,  
In tones of softest harmony—  
That late sad bank with trusting feet  
Now trod the hills of Galilee.  
They gazed upon their risen Lord,  
His countenanced face—His feet—His side,  
They listened to His gracious words—  
"Succurs might live since He had died!"  
To all the world He bade them bear  
The tidings of His boundless love:  
His blood to wash the guilty world,  
The heavenly home prepared above.  
To spread this truth from pole to pole,  
To every heart in prayer should bend;  
Bearing His promise to the soul—  
"Lo, I am with you to the end!"  
No earthly hopes, such joy can give,  
As huggers round those holy words,  
No friend a legacy can leave,  
Dear as that promise of our Lord.  
Oh, Christian, for thy Master's sake,  
Exult from where loved land is dead,  
Couldst thou from that promise buy?  
"Lo, I am with you to the end!"  
It is the holiest precept light,  
That ever to erring man was given,  
It shines from through the gates of life,  
And opens the shining gates of heaven.  
NEWTON, IOWA.

## Select Miscellany.

### LIBBIE MAY;

#### THE YOUNG SCHOOL TEACHER.

"Well, my dear Libbie," said Mr. Watson, "you must go and keep school." We don't know what you are, what you are going to be, or what you can do. Yes, yes, I think you had better keep school!"  
Mr. Watson was a man of property, a man of business, a thoroughly practical man, a close observer of character, and withal a lover of youthful enterprise and promise. His young niece, now just fifteen, was grown tall, red-cheeked, sun-burnt, laughing, wild, wide awake, and a keen girl, who had gone through the arithmetic, grammar, geography, and some score or two of spelling, writing, and reading books, and had dabbled a little in philosophy, and in astronomy of the heavens! She was an expert in these matters already, without being in bad sense at all, a part, and she was a roving, wild girl, being good at a run and frolic, through her uncle's orchards or tall grass, and at scrambling along the fences, and at story-telling and games. But Mr. Watson, her uncle, hardly knew whether she had a practical, every-day sort of promise in her exuberant character or not. She was a clever, sensible girl—but would she ever be a woman?  
So Mr. Watson, thinking how he might best arrive at the knowledge he desired on that point—a very essential one—concluded that it was best for Libbie to teach school.  
In this he did not so much consider the school side of the question as his own and Libbie's. It is probable, that he thought the school would do well enough, or it wasn't of much account now that might be, as all schools had to run the self-same risk that grows out of a young girl teacher. As Libbie was a stout, strong girl he knew that she could shake the scholars well, if disciplinary measures called for such use of her powers. If talking to them became necessary, as he had seen her play school under the old pear-tree and arbor, where she talked to her dumb black-pupils till they could not utter a syllable, he knew she had a quality for that. And as she scoured up the bark of the tree with her kerchief, and trimmed her pupils under the arbor till she had blistered her own hands, he thought her perfectly reliable for these things. Now whether she had any judgement, good sense, discrimination; a genial humor in the midst of trials, a power of progression under discouragements, and a method of mind that would gleam out and show a true and instinctive womanly character—that was the great inquiry—and—yes, there is no other way promising:  
"Libbie you must have a school."  
As for Libbie, why she had never thought much for self, any way. What her uncle proposed, she always esteemed about right, and prepared to execute it.  
But on this occasion she was a little thunder-struck.  
"How in the world," said she, "can I, who am but a young girl, keep a real school? and where may one be found in want of me?"  
"We will see about that, Libbie," said her uncle.  
The spring came. It was April. Mr. Watson had just taken his tea and set down to read the evening paper, when it occurred to him that he had a message for Libbie.  
"Here Libbie," said he, "come to me.—Here is a letter to me from John Howard of Halifax, a school-committee man, offering to hire you for the summer as a teacher in the south district school of that town. Now what do you say, my child—will you go?"  
"Why Uncle Watson, you know I am not fit to have the care of a public school."  
"Ooh! hoo! Not fit! That's a grate mistake of yours, Libbie. I have told Mr. Howard you were just the one."  
"Now Uncle Watson—how could you?" and the girl laughed outright. "I declare," said she, "it's too serious affair to laugh at; now can I laugh? Still it deserves a laugh—for look, how ridiculous it is," and the poor girl laughed again till she almost cried.  
"Ha! ha! Libbie. We shall make you a famous teacher yet. I shall be proud of my niece, I dare say, even though she be as at fifteen."  
The girl of fifteen, had ripened into one of

the most accomplished and beautiful of ladies. She was in the pride of her beauty, at twenty-seven; there was not a line of decay on her brow; not a blush wanting in her cheek, not a lock from her long heavy raven hair missing. Her form was symmetrical, her carriage dignified and attractive. In dress she was modest but tasteful. The labor of twelve years had but given her a fuller maturity, not induced by premature decay, too often witnessed early in our American ladies.  
She and her aged mother removed to her own handsome residence in the favorite city of—  
In a little time it became known that a gentleman of her own age, a rising, talented lawyer, who had long been her admirer, and who was entirely worthy to succeed, had made her an offer of his heart and hand, and had been accepted.  
There is no brighter ornament in the refined circles of ladies in the city of— than Mrs. George B., our young and "charmer formed" school teacher, Libbie May. She is now the respected and idolized wife of one of the best of husbands, the happy mother of two beautiful children, the influential and useful member of society in the cultivated circles of one of our very best northern cities.  
So much for Libbie May; the young and earnest school teacher whose first twenty weeks of school instruction were thought well paid in the cruel sum of twenty dollars!  
As for ourselves we go for Woman's Rights, when it is proposed to employ a female teacher for one of our district schools, five, six, or seven months' at four dollars a month! Meagre, meagre pay!  
Young girls, teachers of sixteen summers, do not despair. Refuse not even the twenty dollars for your hard, constant, in all seasons constant, and self-denying efforts.—The consciousness that you have well and truly done your duty, will bring out character that will in some future day of your history outweigh thousands of gold and silver, and lead you to despise the meanness that would rob you of a just remuneration for your services.  
A Hit at Gossips.  
Oh! no, I never gossip! I have enough to do to take care of my business without attending to that of my neighbors, Mrs. S. Why, there's Mrs. Crocker—she deals in scandal by the wholesale. It does seem as if that woman's tongue must be almost worn out; but no, there's no danger of that. If everybody was like me there would be little trouble in the world. Oh, I never gossip, but did you know that Miss Elliott had got a new silk dress, Mrs. Smith? You didn't? Well, she has it, and she's proud of it. I saw it myself. I do say it's shameful for her to be so extravagant. I mean to give her a piece of my mind, Mrs. Smith. You believe her uncle gave it to her? Well, I don't care if he did. Why, it's only two months since her father failed, and now to see her dash out in this style, it's a burning shame. I suppose she thinks she's going to catch young lawyer Stanhope; but guess she'll find herself mistaken. He's got more sense than to be caught by her, if she has a brocade silk dress. And there's the upstairs dressmaker, Kate Manly, setting her cap for the doctor's son. The impertinence of some people is absolutely astonishing. I don't think she's any better than she ought to be, for my own part. I never did like her, with her mild, soft look, when any one's around. My word for it, she can look cross enough when there isn't. Then she says she is only seventeen! Goodness knows she's as old as my Arabella Loretta, and she's more than seventeen, and I am not ashamed to own it, either; but I guess Dr. May's son will have more discretion than to think of marrying her. Some folks call her handsome! Well, I don't. She aint half so good looking as my daughter Jane. Then the way she does up her hair in such flyaway curls: and if you believe it, she had the impudence to tell me she couldn't make her hair as strait as my Maria Jane's. Impertinence! If she'd let curling-papers and curling-irons alone, I'd risk but what her hair would be as strait as anybody's.  
STYCHYRINE.—The source from whence this poison, which has gained so world-wide a celebrity recently, is obtained, is thus noticed in Dickens' Household words:  
"In Ceylon and several districts of India, grows a moderate sized tree, with thick, shining leaves and a short, crooked stem. In the fruit season it is readily recognized by its rich orange-colored berries, about as large as golden-pippins; the rind is hard and smooth, and covers a white, soft pulp, the favorite food of many kinds of birds, within which are the flat, round seeds not an inch in diameter, ash-gray in color, and covered with very minute, silky hairs. The Germans fancy they can discover a resemblance in them to gray eyes, and call them 'crow's eyes'; but the resemblance is only imaginary. The tree is the Stychyrine nux vomica, and the seed is the deadly poison nut. The latter was early used as a medicine by the Hindus, as its nature and properties were understood by Oriental doctors, long before it was known to foreign nations. Dog-Killer and Fish-scale are two of its Arabic names. It is stated that at present the natives of Hindostan often take it for many months continuously, in much the same way as an opium eater eats opium. They commence with taking the eighth of a nut a day and gradually increasing their allowance to an entire nut, which would be about twenty grains. If they eat directly before or after food, no unpleasant effects are produced; but if they neglect this precaution, spasms result. The most dangerous kind of bat that flies at night is a brickbat."

## Communications.

### School-Day Reminiscences.

"The School-boys are at play again!"  
"Yes, I saw them as I came in." The street is full of joyous fellows. They have just been released from "the benches," and are filled with ecstasy as they are permitted to breathe this cold winter air. Some of them bound like the wild deer of the forest; and others make the streets vocal with their screams. What brings up the "memory of childhood" sooner than to see a company of boys burst from the door of a school-room with faces redolent and eyes sparkling with delight. Oh, happy days! Would that I might again enjoy those pleasures. But youth once gone never returns. Those hours of peculiar happiness can no more be counted mine. Let the "little people" have it to themselves. No; I cannot be so generous. I must be permitted to share their joys with them—not as an actor but as a spectator. Let me watch their sports and listen to their shouts of laughter. I thank the Committee, or Teachers, or whoever it was that brought the "Academy" from the hill yonder, down into the village. A company of boys with good lungs, will do more to make a man cheerful than a morning bath. Let them shout as loud as they please; it will make us feel better and I presume they will not feel any worse.  
But I would not so reflect upon the old Academy on the hill. It has served its day, and generation. I look upon it as I would an old man—with reverence for what it has done. But more than aught else, I would cherish it, for some of the instructions I there received.  
Where is that company which used to assemble each morning? And where is that tall, slim, clear headed professor who used to assemble with us? They are gone—they are scattered—I can retain but a few of their names. The fact is we are all growing old, as well as the Academy. That professor told us then that our school-days would not always last. I heard him and thought but little of it. I can see it now as he then did.  
Some of that company have persevered in their studies, and are now acquainted to some extent with Philosophy and Literature. They have won prizes in the college, and there won victories in debate. Others have taken a shorter road to fame and fortune. They are active business men—merchants, farmers, mechanics, &c. Others still, have bid adieu to earth, and their bodies are now in the grave. But all who are now living of that joyous company of boys and girls, are conscious of one fact—they are growing old, and will soon be withering away from this earth with its pleasures, and go and study wisdom with their early school-mates in another world.  
Yes, we are all growing old. Humanity is passing away. The earth is waiting to receive her dead. The dearest friends must separate. Reader, you and I are growing old. The hand now writing these lines, the vigorous with youth, will soon be tremulous with age, or perhaps with disease in early life. These eyes will grow dim. This body will soon refuse to perform its office. This mind will leave its tenement. This earthly tabernacle will dissolve. We must die. Well, what of it? Millions have died before we had an existence. Is it wrong to die? If so, spend your life in mourning over it. Is it right to die? If so, have joy in the thought.  
It is indeed solemn to think of leaving this world and going to another; but it is a beautiful solemnity. The heart is sad when we think of bidding adieu to earthly friends—the heart is joyous when we think of meeting spiritual friends. There is a mingled sorrow and joy in the thought of dying.  
But why is it appointed for man to die. I should ask why is it appointed for man to live? When we have learned the philosophy of life, we have learned the philosophy of death also. Great and good men tell us that it is to develop and elevate our spiritual natures. To grow wiser and better. To raise our thoughts above the material. To be initiated into that higher life, which Channing so often points out in his sermons, and Tennyson so often breathes in his poetry.  
Reader, may you and I make it the object of our ambition to elevate ourselves into that higher life; and to revel among the thoughts of the wise and good. We shall thus be happy in life—happy in death. God will then love us as his obedient children; and the angels will be filled with joy when they greet us in heaven.  
Soiled wall papers may be made to look as well as new, in most cases, by the following expedient: Take about two quarts of bran, tie it up in a bundle of coarse flannel, and rub it over the paper. It will cleanse the whole paper of all descriptions of dirt and spots, better than any other means that can be used. Some use bread, but dry bran is better.

## Extraordinary Occurrence at the Blue Ridge Tunnel, Staunton, Virginia.

A remarkable occurrence took place at Blue Ridge Tunnel, recently. The Third set of workmen were engaged at digging, as usual, when one of them (Pat Fagan) noticed that the texture of the rock before him suddenly changed from hard to soft, and the soft was wet. Shortly afterwards a stream of water issued from the rock. This was succeeded by a heavy rumbling sound, like the cars, which so frightened the hands that they all made for the open air. Well was it for them that they did so! The sound continued to grow louder, and louder for some minutes, till a crash was heard, and immediately a vast stream of water rolled out of the tunnel. An eye witness says that the head of the stream was at least ten feet high, and that it swept cars and barges before it like chaff. The stream continued to pour a perfect river till twelve o'clock, when it gradually subsided, and was low enough at three p. m. to allow us to make a hasty survey of its cause. It seems that there is, in the middle of the mountain, an immense cavern or pocket, in which water from the melting snow has been deposited for years, and that the line of the tunnel taps this cavern near its centre. The cavern is of immense extent, and will save the State a good deal of money, since nature has opened a road through near three hundred feet of solid rock. This will expedite the completion of the tunnel greatly; in fact, I would not be surprised to see daylight shine through the mountain to-day. I do not know precisely how much remains to be cut; but Colonel Croget said, last week, that there remained only three hundred and eighteen feet, and this cavern is certainly three hundred feet wide—probably more. The Colonel will be greatly surprised when he returns. He did not expect to get through before January.  
He Drinks.—How ominously that sentence falls! How we pause in conversation and ejaculate: "It's a pity!" How his mother hopes he will not when he grows older; and his sisters persuade themselves that it is only a few wild oats he is sowing; and yet the old men shake their heads and feel sad and gloomy when they think of it.  
Young man, just commencing in life, don't drink. You are freighted with a precious cargo. The hopes of your old parents, of your sisters, of your wife, of your children, all are rested in you. In you the aged live over again their young days; and through you only can the weaker ones obtain a position in society, and from the level on which you place them, must your children go into the great struggle of life.  
Take our advice, then, young man—shun the drinking-saloon and gaming-table, and you will save many a pang to the breasts of those who really love you. You will grow up respected and loved by all, and fill a life of usefulness to your fellows, and of pleasure to yourself. There is a maddening excitement in the intoxicating bowl, which leads on to ruin and a premature grave; but there is no conscious, ever-present joy to him who partakes not of the liquid poison. He can stand erect and claim to be a man indeed—for he never "puts an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains." It is a mistaken notion with some young men that it is manly to drink. Not a living soul has ever been benefited, morally or socially, by intoxicating liquors, and never will be. We repeat it, young man, shun the drinking and gaming saloons as you would the pestilence that walketh at noonday!—*Elmira Advertiser.*  
WHAT IS A HUSBAND?—A lady correspondent of the New York Mirror gives the following answer to this interrogatory:—"He is the most acceptable, accessible, accommodating, accomplished, accordable, accountable, accurate, acquiescent, active, acute, admirable, adorable, advertant, affable, affectionate, agreeable, amenable, amiable, amusing, animated, attentive, beautiful, benign, blameless, calm, captivating, charitable, charming, cheerful, civil, reasonable, sensible, thoughtful, unoffending, unprovoked, unruined, unselfish, unwilled, of mortals—the "my dear" of all (the ladies) good wives. Oh! how I wish I had one!"  
It is said that eggs preserved in the following manner will keep forever.—Take a sieve, and cover the bottom with eggs; then pour boiling water upon them sufficient to give them a thorough wetting, permitting the water to pass off through the sieve. Take them out and dry them; then pack them in bran, the small end down.  
In the reign of Queen Margaret of Scotland, the Parliament passed an act, that any maiden lady, of high or low degree, should have the privilege to choose for a husband the man on whom she had set her fancy. If a man refused to marry her, he was heavily fined, according to the value of his worldly possessions. The only ground of exemption was previous betrothal.  
The new ten dollar sewing machine invented by a Mr. Watson, and described in the last Scientific American, makes two twisted loop stitches with a single thread by simply turning a crank, feeds itself, and occupies a space on the table of five by eight inches. It may suit old bachelors, but we prefer one that weighs at least a hundred, fills a chair, feeds itself—and wears gaiter boots.  
Florida, with 11,211 voters, has three electoral votes; Iowa, with 92,600 voters, has but four! This is one of the "wrongs of the South."  
May your coffee, and slanders against you, be ever alike—without grounds.

## A Sad Story.

When the steamship Arago came into port on Friday last, several days behind her usual time, she brought relief to many a heart which would scarce dare trust itself to dream its apprehensions, and yet could not forget how, but a few short months before, sad eyes were watching for those who should meet their gaze no more.  
No wonder, then, that when she touched the wharf, her decks were crowded with eager and happy faces, that kisses were rife, and that many hands were clasped in the warmest greeting.  
Among those who hastened on board was one whose heart, rebounding from the depth of apprehension to the summit of serene content, lent wings to his feet as he leaped upon the deck, impatient to clasp the beautiful form of her who had been pledged to him for years, and who in one short week, was to become his wife.  
Blessed with the perilous gift of beauty in its most delicate, subtle, and spiritual phase, she had inherited with it the weakness of constitution which so often cuts short the bright hopes which such rare natures inspire. And it was with the hope that the tot of Europe might restore her to health, that she left her home and friends, but a few short months ago. The voyage and the life which succeeded it, seemed to have realized almost entirely the hopes of her friends, and those who were with her sent home glowing accounts of the new charm which the rose tint of health had lent to her beauty.  
At length the day for sailing for home arrived, and from that time the hours were counted with feverish anxiety. When the regular day of her arrival passed and brought no signs of the Arago, hurried steps were pacing her wharf, through each weary night, until at last the signal gun announced her coming up the bay. Then fear gave way to perfect joy, and as she touched the shore, the eager lover leaped upon her deck and hastened to meet and greet his expectant bride. A friendly hand checked his impatient step, and a voice choking with agony, told him that she whom he sought lay cold in death below.  
Soon after leaving the shores of England she sickened with brain fever, and in spite of all that medical skill and the tenderest care could do, sank swiftly down and died, only two days sail from home.  
They bore her beneath the kindly roof which was so soon to have sheltered her puppets, and thence, decked in the snowy robes and vestal flowers which had been prepared for her bridal they took her from the betrothed of years, and gave her to the cold grave.  
Familiar as the experience of life compels us to be, with strange and sudden bereavements and reverses, we can scarcely remember an instance, in which so many circumstances combined to invest a death with tender and romantic interest.  
To the beauty of which we have spoken, were united mental and spiritual graces so rare and fascinating, that among all who knew the lost one, there was no tongue that did not speak eloquently in her praise.  
We may no further withdraw the veil from the sacredness of grief, than to add that this short and mournful history, like many another, that the world never heard of, lies hidden in the following simple notice to be found among the deaths in the city papers of Saturday:  
DIED.—At sea, on board the Arago, on Wednesday, the 2d inst. Miss Annie M., daughter of J. M. Lachaise, aged 19 years.—*N. Y. Commercial.*  
ECLIPSES IN 1857.—There will be two eclipses this year, both of the sun. The first will occur on the 25th of March. It will be invisible in all that part of the United States east of the meridian of Washington, and partial west of Washington. The second is an annular eclipse of the sun, which will commence on the 17th of September, at midnight in the United States, and therefore invisible in this country.  
POLYGAMY AMONG THE OFFICIALS OF UTAH.—From a statement in detail, we learn that the thirteen members of the Council of Utah have 171 wives; the twenty-six members of the House of Representatives, 157; and the five officers of the House, 22. Add to these the wives of Brigham Young—68—and we see the Legislature of Utah, its officers and the Governor, have no less than 438. Only forty men to four hundred and eighteen wives! Polygamy is an institution!

LIEUTENANT MAURY, in a recent lecture, expressed the opinion that there was no necessity for the heavy cable designed for telegraphic communication through the depths of the Atlantic, and that a light copper wire, coated with gutta serena, would answer every purpose. No larger wire, he said, was needed for the bottom of the sea than for the surface of the land.  
"TO CURE CORNS."—A writer in one of the agricultural papers declares on his own experience that to pare corns and then apply a drop or two of wormwood oil is a certain cure.  
A drunken man tried to get a policeman to arrest his own shadow. His complaint was that an ill looking scoundrel kept following him.  
"That's so."—If a man's worth depends on his "acres" a person with eight decayed teeth should be considered a man of property. Assessors will please notice.  
At a Fair down East, a reporter gave the following in the list of premiums:—"Best bed-comforter—Miss Thompson."